

**WADOKAI WORCESTER**



# **COACHES FOR THE FUTURE:**

**A guide for Karateka**



## INTRODUCTION

**One of the biggest challenges that our clubs face is working out how to provide fun and engaging sessions for all the new members to take part in.** The questions below reflect those that are regularly asked or provided as challenges, so we have aimed to provide some guidance and suggestions to help you work around these.

What are the best ways to provide sessions to increased membership of different ability levels?

Make it Fun and Engaging - No lines, laps or lectures!

Whoever you are coaching or delivering sessions to, it's important to ensure it has the right ingredients. Using the Golden Thread will ensure that your sessions are fun and engaging, whoever you are coaching.

The most effective way of developing highly skilled karateka, keeping students coming back to your sessions and delivering fun and engaging sessions is through fun, game-like activities rather than repetitive drills. Games or game-like activity should be an essential focus of each session.



Delivering fun, engaging and safe Karate sessions is the most important thing. This is the best way to keep children and adults coming back to your club sessions and enjoying all the experiences of doing and staying involved in Karate.

To do this, it's important to understand what the students want in order to deliver a great experience for them and the below outlines the key headlines of what Children and Adults want from Karate.

### Children

- To feel involved
- To feel like they are doing well, encouragement
- Progressing through the grades, achieving- increases fun and enjoyment (however cannot reward lack of effort)
- Winning isn't crucial, let everyone play
- Simple rules

### Adults

- Positive & encouraging
- Keeps social groups together
- Fun that incorporates drills & skills
- Progression, understanding and knowledge
- Creating an enjoyable & relaxed atmosphere

The role of the coach/leader in delivering this experience is crucial and WadoKai Worcester have provided guidance on the what you need to deliver fun, engaging and safe sessions, see below;

## DELIVERING FUN SESSIONS

You should always start and finish a lesson on a high, the best way to do this is to start and finish the lesson with a game.

Not only do games help with the warm up progress but can always be used as a constructive cool down and recap at the end of the session, here are some examples below;

WARM UP; (High energy, fun, set the tone for the lesson)

- Floor is LAVA!
- Animal Walking
- 1,2,3
- Races
- Chase Tag
- Bull dog
- Stuck in the mud
- Bridge crawls



COOL DOWN; (fun, Constructive, team work, recap)

- Jodan, Chudan, Gedan
- Hajime, Yamae!
- Karate kid in the middle
- Limbo
- Memory game

Throughout the session it is important to keep that element of fun however still have control and concentration from the group. To do this you must gauge how active your students are or who you have in your class.

Lesson plans usually consist of the comprehensive grading framework- the grading requires skills, techniques and knowledge to be performed at a certain level depending on the grade, repetition is the best way to get this right however repetition isn't fun- so the question is how do you make it fun?

Your personality will need to shine through to make it enjoyable- explaining things is a fun and creative way such as doing a soto uke is like pulling a sword out from their belt- kids have great imaginations use that to your advantage!

Also saying things in a funny voice helps to liven up the session such as when explaining a gedan barai- when you say UP do it in a high pitch and DOWN in a low pitch.

## DELIVERING ENGAGING SESSIONS

This maybe where your lesson plan can go out the window- which is why it is important to have more than 1 lesson plan. You have a responsibility as a coach to keep everyone's attention majority of the time- if you don't they won't learn, won't grade and won't come back (retention will drop).

You have to engage yourself with the students from your own enthusiasm for that you are doing or what you are trying to achieve- if you are not enthused why should the students be? This is why at WadoKai Worcester it is so important that you tell an instructor if you're having a bad day- it is up to the instructor to gauge whether you can change that around.

When you're finding that you can't keep a group's attention then move on, change it to something else for example if you're working on gradings change to Kata/ Kumite or pad work! You have to watch and see your group's mood and change a bad mood to a good one.

## DELIVERING SAFE SESSIONS

Firstly, before anyone enters the room or before a class starts you should assess the room and make sure that it is safe. For example, making sure there are no pins on the floor- If you do find something that could be of danger either remove it or make sure it doesn't become a problem by not allowing children to touch or go near it such as mirrors or tables.

Your approach to the children is also extremely important when it comes to safety- no child should feel threatened or scared of you- your friendly approach should make a child and parent feel comfortable and fully trusting.

The lesson plan should also take into consideration potential risks such as;

- take downs- they shouldn't be done with lower grades and if done plenty of instruction and under close observation
- Pair work- must be explained that they are not allowed to hit each other under any circumstances at junior grade level.
- Padwork- children are not allowed to hold the pads for other children unless under strict instruction and supervision
- Kumite- must be explained that they are not allowed to hit each other under any circumstances at junior grade level.
- Breakfalling- Under extreme supervision and explanation
- Enough room- It is your responsibility to make sure each student has the space to do said task. Such as splitting the lines for kata or when dropping into shikodatch so they don't stamp on each other's toes.

The final part of delivering a safe session is predicting that someone will not do as they are told. You must be vigilant and full concentration to what is going on in your class. If you have someone in your class who is known for being a problem/issue/learning difficulty more supervision must be applied to them.

### Understand your workforce – what you need:

- What do your participants need and want from taking part?
- What kind of person you should be?

What do your participants need and want from taking part?

You should always consider the following questions; Which participants will you be working with, and what is their background? And What sport/activity do you want to provide?

What kind of person you should be?

Different things can motivate someone to coach. What motivates you:

- to give something back
- to help my local community
- because I can't play anymore and want to stay involved
- to help others become active
- to share my love of sport
- because my child is involved
- to gain skills for my CV
- to help my club
- to meet new people.

Consider the following:

age; gender; socio-economic group;  
black, Asian or minority ethnic with  
religious and or cultural considerations  
group; geographic area

their current activity level

current level  
of ability

potential barriers to getting  
or staying involved.

their motivations  
for taking part

Some motivations may be more internal, like wanting to develop themselves rather than the people they are coaching. Some could be driven by more external factors, such as gaining skills or because they are being paid. At WadoKai Worcester our motivation is to improve Karate in this country and to give everyone the opportunity to reach their potential- this must be ingrained into you as a coach.