Student Handbook
AYSO Instructor Certification

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a resource for you to refer to, confirm and reflect upon as you begin your journey as an AYSO instructor. Thank you for your commitment and for your personal effort in "enriching children's lives."

VISION AND VALUES

The founding fathers of AYSO were true visionaries whose revolutionary ideas about the development of youth as athletes and citizens were the early inspiration for the current vision statement of AYSO.

It is our value system that separates AYSO from other sports organizations. It is vital we communicate their importance to new instructors. We must refresh their purpose and relevance for today's volunteers.

Vision   To provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

Mission   To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on AYSO's Six Philosophies:

Everyone Plays   Our goal is for kids to play soccer – so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game. Founding Philosophy.

Balanced Teams   Each year we form new teams as evenly as possible – because it is **fair** and more **fun** when teams of equal ability play. Founding Philosophy.

Open Registration   Our program is open to all children who want to register and play soccer. **Interest** and **enthusiasm** are the only criteria for playing. Founding Philosophy.

Positive Coaching   Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

Good Sportsmanship   We strive to create a safe, fair, fun and positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO. Added 1991.

Player Development   We believe that all players should be able to develop their   soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as a member of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game. Added 2010.

AYSO STRUCTURE

As an ambassador of AYSO, you must understand the general structure of the organization.

AYSO is organized into Sections, Areas, and Regions.

There are three categories of members:

1. Executive Members   National Board of Directors, Section Directors, Area Directors and regional Commissioners. Each has a vote on certain AYSO matters and in the election of the NBOD.

2. Participating Members   Registered youth players, region, area and section registered volunteers other than Executive Members.

3. Honorary Members   Extended by the NBOD to individuals who have given extraordinary service to youth soccer in America.

YOUR WHY

The instructor position carries great responsibility for everyone involved in AYSO and we should all be cognizant of why we want to embark upon this journey. Only once we are familiar with our own "why" will we continue to challenge ourselves to be the best instructors we can be.

[Check out Simon Sinek's Golden Circle on finding "your" why.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZoJKF_VuA&feature=youtu.be)

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EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

Considering our nationwide scope and geographic and social diversity, it is important that we educationally align in key areas of instruction. Our educational philosophy is built on 3 tenets: ORGANIZING, TEACHING and LEADING.

Purpose
- Teach discipline-specific content
- Educate and inspire to deliver the best possible program in their region
- Create interactive, candidate-centered learning environment (moving the candidate from passive receivers of information to active participants in their own discovery process, where they also take responsibility for their learning)
- Lead and mentor

Responsibilities
- Represent AYSO with integrity and authenticity
- Use AYSO curriculum
- Follow guidelines and manages course efficiently

Versed in *current* materials, PPTs and Lesson Plans. Plans logistics, technology, equipment needs, i.e., flip charts, a/v, field needs, etc.

Collaborates with S/A/R to ensure effective course, including facility, advertising, scheduling, etc.

Navigates AYSOU to maximize course success, including rosters, pre-course work, feedback, certificates, etc.

Evaluates the course.

Fluent with lesson plan, i.e., content, time, interactions, etc.

Teaches based on AYSO curriculum and Education Philosophy.

Effectively creates candidate-centered classroom and practical sessions.

Represents AYSO with authenticity and integrity.
Builds *rapport* with each candidate and identifies development stage of candidate
and group (to customize delivery).
Guides candidate through the course and stimulates personal development plan (to include continuous learning).
Self-reflects.

ORGANIZING
- Plans
- Proficient
- Collaborates
- Administrates
- Evaluates

TEACHING
- Authentic
- Candidate-centered
- Engaging
- Experiential
- Efficient and Effective

LEADING
- **Example**
- Mentor
- Inspires
- Reflects

ANDRAGOGY

The goal is to agree that people learn through different ways and that people can demonstrate different modalities of intelligence. One size doesn't fit all; therefore, we must deliver our content in numerous ways to accommodate the numerous intelligences people possess.

Adults learn best when the learning is:
- Received and processed in more than one way
- Delivered through multiple modalities (visual, auditory, hands-on)
- One size doesn't fit all! Are we reaching every student?

Additional research on Multiple Intelligences developed by Howard Gardner, Ph.D., Professor of Education at Harvard University:

Gardner's early work in psychology and later in human cognition and human potential led to the development of the initial six intelligences. Today there are nine intelligences and the possibility of others may eventually expand the list. These intelligences (or competencies) relate to a person's unique aptitude set of capabilities and ways they might prefer to demonstrate intellectual abilities.

1. Verbal-linguistic intelligence (well-developed verbal skills and sensitivity to the sounds, meanings and rhythms of words)
2. Logical-mathematical intelligence (ability to think conceptually and abstractly, and capacity to discern logical and numerical patterns)
3. Spatial-visual intelligence (capacity to think in images and pictures, to visualize accurately and abstractly)
4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (ability to control one's body movements and to handle objects skillfully)
5. Musical intelligences (ability to produce and appreciate rhythm, pitch and timber)

6. Interpersonal intelligence (capacity to detect and respond appropriately to the moods, motivations and desires of others)
7. Intrapersonal (capacity to be self-aware and in tune with inner feelings, values, beliefs and thinking processes)
8. Naturalist intelligence (ability to recognize and categorize plants, animals and other objects in nature)
9. Existential intelligence (sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence such as, What is the meaning of life? Why do we die? How did we get here? (Source: Thirteen ed online, 2004)

Adults learn best when the learning is:

Collaborative:
- Collegial and directed at solving specific problems
- Structured to allow opportunities for *group discussions*
- Structured so that group projects and discussions have *clear expectations for participation*

Thought Provoking:
- To *reflect* on their new knowledge
- To process their knowledge via free-writing
- To process their knowledge via one-on-one discussion

Continued:
- They are provided with ongoing support
- They have access to a *mentor*
- They are able to gather together periodically with their learning cohort to share thoughts and ideas

What turns off adult learners?

- Lack of connection or situational relevance

- Sitting too long! (can we get them up and moving every 7-10 minutes?)

- Being made to feel incompetent

- Being judged by other people

- *Lack of instructor variance*

GROWING DENDRITES

Adult teaching techniques and creative delivery methods. Marcia L. Tate, EdD, is currently an educational consultant and has taught over 450,000 administrators, teachers, parents, and business and community leaders throughout the world. Ten of Tate's Teaching Tools:

1. Drawing and Artwork "When people draw or add doodles to their notes, they create visuals that help them understand, process or encode information, and recall new information as well (Allen, 2008a)."
- Review content by drawing a picture (i.e., head *over* ball)
- Work in groups to create a wall mural
- Illustrate the meaning of specific concepts

2. Graphic Organizers "When people create their *own* graphic organizers, those organizers become more memorable because people conceptualize and design them and are intimately connected to them (Allen, 2008a)."
- Venn diagrams (6U-8U)
- Web organizer
- Sequence charts

3. Mnemonic Devices "People who use mnemonics learn at least 2 to 3 times as much as those who learn through regular learning habits (Markowitz & Jensen, 2007)."
- Create slogans
- Develop acrostics (arithmetic)
- Create acronyms

4. Movement "17 separate action research projects relate that using movement during learning can ready the brain and body for learning, increase the level of motivation, create a positive state for learning, increase the level of participation and engagement, and help people remember and recall information (Lengel & Kuczala, 2010)."
- Respond to questions by moving to a space (or stand)
- Carousal or gallery walk (i.e., technical, tactical, physical, psychosocial)
- Hold signs (or stand) with agree/disagree, yes/no

5. Music, Rhythm, Rhyme, Rap "Use music to set a mood in the classroom, change the state of brains, and create a positive learning environment (Perez, 2008)."
- Play upbeat music as attendees enter the room
- Use music to signal transitions between activities
- Bring a topic to life

6. Project- and Problem-Based Instruction "Professional learning opportunities that are directed at solving specific, real-world, job-related challenges are the most effective for making lasting behavior change (Collins, 2000; Snyder, 1993)."
- Work in *groups* to design a training session
- Work in *groups* to analyze problem to correct

7. Reciprocal/Cooperative Learning, Peer Coaching "Healthy human brains are wired to connect and to be social. For example, mirror neurons in the brain are activated when we see another person engage in an act, such as eating (Hyerle & Alper, 2011)."
- Create roles to expedite group functioning (scribe, timer, speaker)
- Work in *pairs* to compare answers to assignment
- Work in *pairs* to reteach a concept

8. Role-plays, Drama, Pantomimes, and Charades "Physical performance is probably the only known cognitive activity that uses 100% of the brain. Since our knowledge is dependent on the state of the brain, things that are learned during role play may be accessible later on should that same situation occur (Jensen, 2008)."
- Physical performance uses 100% of the brain!
- Role play lessons are accessible later

9. Visuals "Visual information is highly memorable, since it is fast and easy for the brain to take in (Allen, 2008)."
- Design PowerPoints based on best practices
- Use color markers on flip charts

10. Writing and Reflection "A neurotransmitter called acetylcholine that aids the brain in forming long-term memories is released when neurons connect through speech and through writing (Hannaford, 2005)."
- Use classroom assessment techniques; i.e., exit ticket
- Use two-minute paper to process content
- Participants write words and phrases in response to instruction

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTIONS

As you gain more experience, you will undoubtedly gravitate towards your own tried favorites but in the meantime, here are a few easily applied interactions to engage candidates and stimulate learning.

Think, Pair, Share
- The instructor asks participants to think about a specific topic.
- Then pair up with another participant to discuss their thoughts and process.
- Then, the individual or pair share their perspective to the larger group.

Role Play
- Physical performance uses 100% of the brain!
- Role play lessons/experiences are accessible later.

Guided Questions
- Using open-ended questions, we ask and *guide* candidates to *find* the answers…which is motivating.
- Frontload the necessary information; ask the question and then participants reflect, analyze and demonstrate knowledge of underlying concept to find the solution or answer.
- Our learning environments are based on inquiry (where real-world situations are related).

Review Appendix A to review more insight to asking questions effectively.

Feedback
The main objective with introducing a feedback model (of course there are many others), is to value the process of feedback and use the opportunity effectively.

We must not take our feedback process for granted! Our observations can be extremely helpful to a candidate's development.

I Like, I Wish, What if

"I like that you were so passionate presenting this morning."
"I wish you would spend a little less time focusing on the slides."
"What if you engage with the candidates more to communicate the message?"

We must be efficient and effective!

Formative vs. Summative Assessment
Pending the course design and requirements, at AYSO, considering our primary student is a volunteer donating their time to a program, only looking at their ability in an isolated few minutes seems unfair. We should ideally provide ongoing assessment and guidance throughout the course (more formative) as opposed to one final test at the course end (summative).

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

1. Tips for managing the environment and establishing a positive culture for learning.
2. Set expectations and standards from the start (set the culture)
3. Maintain authority
4. Give candidates an opportunity to get up and move around periodically
5. Use timer to set time limit for activities
6. Allow peer correction
7. Plan ahead to consider timing and attendance related to your group activities
8. Check for understanding constantly*
9. Provide example scenarios introduced to help model a concept or term that is introduced
10. Create a safe haven for creativity and freedom (*normalize error**)
11. Know your equipment needs: A/V, flip chart, pens, markers, timer, music, etc.

*Normalize Error!
- Remember, mistakes are vital road maps to improvement.
- Getting it wrong is part of getting it right.
- Create a safe-haven
- Normalizing mistakes encourages candidates to try new things, be creative and work with freedom.
- Get comfortable being uncomfortable!

*Checking for Understanding!
- Assess comprehension constantly, including after explanation and during execution. "Does this make sense?" "Is this clear?"
- Anticipate likely errors and act quickly in response to difficulties.
- If you check for understanding and there is a clear disconnect, it is better to stop and provide more information, demonstration, perspective or time to master.
- When gauging learning, "cold-call" on different candidates to respond, not just the ones who raised their hand. This keeps candidates engaged and provides you with a more diverse picture of the groups' progress.
- Using guided discovery questions can help facilitate understanding and learning:
    - How do you feel that went?
    - What other ideas did you have?
    - Can you show me?

Answering questions, handing too many questions or distractions
Answer questions by following the process of RAMP:
- **R**epeat question so everyone can hear
- **A**nswer correctly, clearly and completely
- **M**ake sure you have answered the question
- **P**roceed with rest of lesson – don't get sidetracked

Build a parking lot. A place for participants to "park" their questions until adequate information or time is available to answer them

Dealing with Disruption
Handling issues that detract from learning.

- **Treat with respect:** demonstrates that although ideas and opinions are welcome, we should recognize other students' perspective as well.

- **Eye contact:** can be used to acknowledge or ignore a disruptive participant. When trying to gain attention through dominant behavior, make eye contact with another participant and open a dialog (while ignoring the disruptor).
- **Close distance:** by moving nearer to the disruptor while making eye contact can signal that you want to regain control. (By moving closer to someone, you effectively invade their personal space which can signal disapproval.)

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Considerations to help your development as an Instructor.

Style

Do consider your own teaching demeanor and how your style can aid with the learning environment. Consider your body language and positioning during the class…don't create unnecessary noise, i.e., pacing, shifting weight, covering screen, visible by all candidates.

Review [Amy Cuddy's TED talk on body language.](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are#t-6333)
https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are#t-6333

Certainly learn, borrow as needed, but develop your own style! Be yourself!

Mentoring

Mentors provide information and knowledge
A mentor can help shorten the learning curve since they have the experiences you can learn from to prevent making the same mistakes beginners make.

Mentors offer encouragement and help keep us going
A mentor can be a cheerleader while still providing guidance in the right direction.

Mentors can be connectors
Mentors have likely dealt with the people that you might need to be in contact with. They can point you in the right direction when you need help.

Mentors are free, which makes them priceless in more ways than one
A mentor does not do it for the money. Instead, they are driven by the satisfaction of helping and paying it forward from a similar experience.
Building a relationship with a mentor can create a lifelong contact and friend.

[Suggested TED Talk on the benefits of having a coach or mentor…Atul Gawande, Surgeon.](https://www.ted.com/talks/atul_gawande_want_to_get_great_at_something_get_a_coach?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)
https://www.ted.com/talks/atul_gawande_want_to_get_great_at_something_get_a_coach?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Reflection
A key component in development and continuous learning. Remember, in a 1-2-3-4-hour class the expectation is to inspire the candidates to take responsibility for their own learning.

The journey to being an AYSO Instructor starts with this course…this is NOT the destination. Our goal is to inspire the candidates to begin the journey.

Through reflection, we can look at our *glows* and *grows* and consider improvements that can impact student learning.

- Assess student learning and understanding of concepts.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in our lesson plan design.
- Identify how well our AYSO goals and course objectives were met.
- Consider interactions, participation and responses.
- Assess timing of lesson plan and amount of student engagement.
- Identify personal delivery strengths and areas for improvement.

Reflection is *not* only about improvements; but our instructional strengths!

AYSO RESOURCES

AYSOU: YOUR responsibility as an AYSO Instructor is to be able to navigate this site and like most online platforms, the more you use it the easier and functional it becomes.

Lesson Plans: Lesson plans, slide decks and/or Master notes may have been created for a course. It is important for you to know what is required content and what is supporting documentation. DO NOT change content.

APPLE Questioning Technique

A - ASK THE QUESTION – Ask the question clearly and concisely. When possible, the question should be considered or planned before it is asked. If a question is complicated it may be necessary to rephrase it or pose it more than once. Ask the question before naming the person to respond.

P - PAUSE – After the question has been asked, pause so that everyone will have time to think. Watch students for nonverbal feedback to determine how long to pause. Read the class – eyes are a good indicator of readiness to answer. Nonverbal communication may also indicate a necessity to repeat, restate the question, or seek the reason behind it.

P – PICK AN ATTENDEE BY NAME – When learners are faced with the possibility of being called on to answer the question, they are more likely to try to formulate an answer. Learners should be randomly (cold called) selected to answer factual questions. If the instructor develops a pattern of selecting learners to answer questions, the purpose of the technique has been defeated.

L - LISTEN TO THE ANSWER – Emphasize the importance of listening to the answer. A technique that may be used to ensure that all learners are focused on the idea presented is to ask someone else to respond to the answer given. This also gets other learners out of a mode of passive learning because they were not called upon and helps ensure other learners understand the answer given.

E - EMPHASIZE THE CORRECT ANSWER – This should be done without embarrassing the responder. It may be necessary to ask guided questions to have respondents clarify the response to support a point of view, or to extend thinking. If possible, use a co-instructor to model how to address an incorrect response and ask guided questions. Impress upon the attendees that there is a right way and a way to emphasize correct or incorrect answers to questions.

Instructor TIP – Check for Understanding! When you have asked questions and it is obvious that the attendees do not have a clear understanding of the information, STOP and make sure that you properly present the information before moving on to new material. Remember that if you leave attendees with incorrect information it leaves a lasting impression as being correct information.

Appendix B

Using Visual Aids

PowerPoint Presentations
- Position projector so the audience doesn't have to look around it to see the screen.
- Make sure the screen is visible to the back of the room and large enough to be easily read.
- Stand to the side of the screen and only look at the slide if you are pointing out something.
- Maintain eye contact with audience and glance at but don't focus on the PowerPoint.
- ***Don't simply read the slides***. Use the slide as a guide to support your instruction.
- Pause a few seconds as each slide appears to allow time for the audience to read the slide.
- Begin and end your session without using a slide, unless it is the title of a workshop or dynamic close. The audience should focus on you and connect with you rather than the screen.

Flipcharts or whiteboards
- Position the flip chart so that it is visible (consider numbers and shape of room).
- Write large and legibly - people in the back need to be able to read the visual.
- Can a drawing or diagram be more impactful?
- Use color to emphasize items.
- Limit each sheet to just a couple of main ideas.
- Hang each sheet around the room so that the information is available to the audience.
- Write from one side with your body angled so that the audience can see both your face and the message on the visual (right-handed instructors should place the flip chart on the left side of the room and vice-versa).

Props or Objects
- The use of objects or props must be purposeful and directly related to the objectives.
- Make sure the object is large enough to be seen or pass it around so that it can be viewed.
- Don't allow the group to become distracted by objects.
- Where feasible, use branded props or objects.

Handouts
- Reinforce important concepts directly connected to the objectives.
- Provide a graphic organizer for note taking.
- Provide an agenda or outline of the presentation.
- Provide more detail on information in your presentation.
- Provide references, i.e., books, websites, articles for additional information.
- Consider the best time during a presentation to distribute.

Expect the unexpected! Technology fails; items are left at home; the dog eats your handouts. We can't plan for everything, but we can still be prepared to teach if something goes array. Have a backup zip drive, a spare tablet with your presentation, spare clicker batteries, printed lesson plans, know your material, etc.