

Content Title: Methods of Guidance

Key points

- Knowledge of different methods of guidance
- Understanding of how and when they should be used

Guidance refers to any information we give to learners to help them develop their skills. The type of guidance used is affected by several factors:

- The stage of learning of the individual – cognitive, associative or autonomous.
- The nature of the activity – complexity of the skill, safety etc.
- Individual preferences – most people have preferred styles of learning e.g. most people like to see what the skill they are learning looks like.

There are 3 basic forms of guidance that a teacher/coach may use to transmit information:

1. **VISUAL** – used in all stages of learning, but particularly valuable in the cognitive stage. Examples include **DEMONSTRATION** – this includes physical demonstration by teacher / coach or other competent performer, visual aids e.g. charts showing stages of a skill, video of 'ideal' performance and modifying the display e.g. putting markers on the floor when teaching a layup shot to ensure correct foot placement. The important point here is that the demonstration must be accurate so that the learner builds up the correct picture.
2. **VERBAL** – this is used a lot by teachers/coaches to explain the task and describe the actions. It is also used effectively to highlight important performance cues e.g. counting beat out loud in dance. It is most often used in conjunction with visual guidance.
3. **MANUAL/MECHANICAL** – This form of guidance involves physical contact/ support. Often used when there is an element of danger e.g. use of safety harness in trampolining.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES

TYPE OF GUIDANCE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
VISUAL	<p>Learner can see accurate performance.</p> <p>Demonstrations can be repeated.</p> <p>With video 'slow motion' can help individual learn skill accurately.</p> <p>Useful in all stages of learning.</p> <p>Helps to form a mental image of correct performance.</p>	<p>Problems if no accurate image available.</p>
VERBAL	<p>Effective questioning by coaches/teachers can enhance learning and understanding.</p> <p>Effectively combined with visual guidance to paint a more accurate picture for learner.</p> <p>It is immediate.</p>	<p>Some verbal instructions are too long and complicated – beginners often have short attention spans (limited capacity to process information).</p> <p>Some movements cannot be accurately explained.</p>
MANUAL/MECHANICAL	<p>In potentially hazardous activities it can be used to prevent learner making inaccurate movements.</p> <p>In dangerous situations it can help a performer deal with fear by providing a safe environment.</p> <p>Helps individual to develop kinaesthetic awareness (the feel) of the motion.</p> <p>Useful in early stages of learning when teacher/coach can position limbs/body parts of learner e.g. correct hand position on ball when shooting in netball</p>	<p>Should not be overused as performers can become dependent on support.</p> <p>Can give learners an unrealistic 'feeling' of the motion e.g. they do not take their full body weight and can therefore experience failure on removal of manual/mechanical guidance.</p>

Practical Application/Explanation

HOW AND WHEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF GUIDANCE ARE USED:

TYPE OF GUIDANCE	HOW AND WHEN USED
VISUAL	Very effective in cognitive stage of learning but useful in all stages. When using video in associative and autonomous stages, demonstrations can be slowed down to highlight points of detail e.g. looking at the different phases of a gymnastics vault.
VERBAL	Explanations should be brief and to the point especially during cognitive stage of learning due to limited capacity to process information. It is more useful in later stages of learning when attention capacity is greater.
MANUAL/MECHANICAL	Very useful in cognitive stage of learning, in helping learner to experience the 'feel' of the movement. Gymnastics uses a lot of manual guidance when learning more difficult moves e.g. supporting a gymnast learning to perform a flic-flac. In some activities manual/mechanical guidance is used by more experienced performers because of safety issues e.g. rock-climbing.

Top Tips:

Don't forget to link with stages of learning.



Exam Style Questions

1. How might the methods of guidance provided by a teacher or coach vary when an individual is at:
 - (i) The cognitive stage of learning
 - (ii) The autonomous stages of learning?

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