

Habits of a Highly Effective Instructor

By Suzanne Meledeo

Think back to your favorite instructor or teacher. What made this person your favorite? What does it take to become a beloved instructor? My favorite [instructors](#) were kind and supportive, but also firm and direct. They pushed me to excellence by not accepting excuses, but instead helped me see past the “I can’t” and foster the desire to conquer every challenge. Being a relevant, effective and successful Pilates instructor takes a lot of hard work, but it is so rewarding to watch your clients progress and develop a love of Pilates that mirrors your own.

How do we do this? How do we become highly effective instructors?

Stability and Consistency

Cultivate an atmosphere of stability and consistency with your clients. Exhibit a genuine interest in their lives and health. When you take the time to show that you care, they will come back. Hold your clients accountable to their workouts and yourself accountable to excellence in instruction. Clients won’t progress without consistency, and it is up to the instructor to motivate them to continue and be consistent in their practice.

Just as classes aren’t cancelled on a whim, clients shouldn’t be allowed to cancel at the last minute except for circumstances beyond their control. If they have to miss a class, immediately schedule a makeup. This demonstrates that you take their practice seriously. Respect their time and progression by motivating them and pushing them to excel and

try new exercises when they are ready. As they see their bodies transformed over time, they will learn to trust you and your expertise.

Continuing Education

[Continuing Education](#) may be a requirement for our certifications, but it is so much more than a checkbox we mark off every two years. There are so many new and exciting things to learn about Joseph Pilates and his methodology from different perspectives voiced by the experts in the field. They have walked the path ahead of us and provide knowledge and expertise that only comes with experience. Seminars, conferences, and masters programs provide us with new insights to apply to our teaching. Your [certification](#) is just the beginning!

Practical Experience

The more we teach, the more we learn about how the body works and how it moves. The more we practice the method ourselves, the better we understand the movements and how to articulate them to our clients. As we teach, we develop an eye for common errors, muscle movement and the ways to help clients go deeper into the work. As our own practice deepens, we will also be better equipped to guide our clients to success.

To become a more effective and respected instructor, spend time on your personal practice, find Pilates mentors, grow in knowledge through continuing education, observe other instructors, and maintain consistency in your business. If we don't grow as instructors, our clients won't progress either, and we risk losing them. There are also times of change beyond your control where you may lose clients for a variety of reasons. While this can be disheartening, don't let it dampen your love of Pilates. Keep pressing on and never stop learning. As Joseph Pilates said, "Patience and persistence are vital qualities in the ultimate successful accomplishment

of any worthwhile endeavor.”

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