

# Effective Teaching

## CALLERLAB 2012

(Written By Jerry Reed)

### INTRODUCTION -

1. Teaching is the transfer of knowledge from the instructor to the student
2. Effective Teaching is accomplishing this transfer efficiently
3. It has been said that teaching is one of the most important jobs we do as callers
4. It has also been said that teaching can be one of the most difficult AND rewarding jobs
5. Many callers simply teach they way they were taught, without thinking about the different and sometimes challenging aspects of teaching other to square dance, or to improve the dancer's abilities
6. Research has revealed that different people learn in several different ways called "Learning Styles",

This paper will provide information on the following:

- A. Define the different Learning Styles
- B. Explain how people learn
- C. Provide brief examples of each Learning Style
- D. Emphasize that an instructor needs to employ more than one Learning Style
- E. Help you become a more effective and efficient instructor

### LEARNING STYLES -

This paper describes four different Learning Styles:

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| A. Observing | C. Reading |
| B. Listening | D. Doing   |

### HOW PEOPLE LEARN -

1. Learning to do something is different from learning to know something
  - A. Generally, learning to do something requires the student to actually perform the action of the thing being learned.
  - B. While learning to know something does not, normally require physical action by the student
- B. Learning to dance
  - (1) The students are (primarily) learning to DO something
  - (2) Requires the students to DO ERROR-FREE PRACTICE
2. Some people learn better from one method while others learn better from a completely different method.
3. Because of the differences in the way people learn, callers should present information using these various methods.

## EXPLANATION OF LEARNING STYLES -

### 1. Observing

- A. Students watch demonstrations
- B. Demonstrations using the smallest practical number of dancers are best
  - (1) Do Sa Do = 2 People
  - (2) Right & Left Thru = 2 Couples
  - (3) Spin Chain Thru = 4 Couples
- C. A majority of the Mainstream and Plus calls can be demonstrated with 2 Couples

### 2. Listening

- A. Instructor explains calls
- B. Also called "Talk Thru"
- C. Instructors are encouraged to use different terminology to reach different learners

### 3. Reading

- A. Definitions
- B. Illustrated Handbooks, or
- C. Other books/publications

### 4. Doing

- A. Students first "Walk Thru" the dance action
  - Also called "Walk Thru"
- B. After the Walk Thru the learners dance to practice what they have been taught
  - (1) This "practice" MUST be Error-Free
  - (2) Error-Free repetition is the ONLY way to learn the dance action
- C. Caller/instructor provides dancing by calling
  - (1) With just the "right mix" of smoothness and challenge
  - (2) This is a skill which can be learned

## EMPLOY MORE THAN ONE LEARNING STYLE -

1. Different people learn in different ways
2. When teaching a call instructors should use as many different Learning Styles as is practical
3. Instructors should also use different terminology to teach the same call
  - Teaching Tips, posted on the CALLERLAB web site, provide information about different ways to teach the calls
4. The information presented here is intended to help make your teaching more effective and help you reach and teach the wide variety of students you are likely to find in your classes

## GOALS FOR THE INSTRUCTOR -

- 1.The goal is for the learners to be able to perform the dance action automatically
2. This is accomplished through error-free repetition

Dancers may not be able to recall the name of the calls they know well -

Example -

Dancer asks -

“What is the name of that call where we turn half and then center turn and boys move up?”

Caller answers -

“Spin The Top?”

Dancer -

“Yes, that’s it!”

## CONCLUSION -

### 1. LEARNING STYLES -

The four Learning Styles are:

- 1) Observing
- 2) Listening
- 3) Reading
- 4) Doing

### 2. Our goal

A. Train dancers to be able to comfortably enter the local square dance activity

B. Dancers should be able to respond properly to calls they hear, from the formations and arrangements that they are most likely to encounter

### 3. Teaching is VERY IMPORTANT and must be done well - the dancers deserve no less

PRACTICE DOES NOT MAKE PERFECT

PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

IF THE DANCER CAN'T DANCE, THE CALLER HASN'T CALLED.