

The First Tee of Central Coast – What and How we Deliver our Classes.

Creating an optimal learning environment for participants to maximize his/her development of life skills, golf skills and healthy habits is the foundation for everything we do at The First Tee. Please allow me to share with you a little bit about our coaching philosophy and what our objectives and intentions are during classes.

As most of you know, The First Tee is much more than "just golf." The First Tee is also a Youth Development Program. We not only introduce young people to the game of golf and assist in their golf skills development; we also introduce our participants to life skills, which in turn, helps young people acquire The First Tee Nine Core Values: **Respect, Courtesy, Responsibility, Judgment, Perseverance, Confidence, Sportsmanship, Honesty and Integrity**. We strive to develop quality golfers and even better people.

That being said, each lesson plan has the following three (3) components:

- 1 - **Golf Skills / Fundamental:** For example, "Putting & Full Swing / Distance Response"
- 2 - **Life Skill / Core Value:** For example: "Meeting & Greeting / Confidence"
- 3 - **Healthy Habits:** For example, "Physical Activity, Safety Awareness, etc."

All three of these components are then "blended" together, and "poured" out, into what we call a "Seamless" lesson plan.

We deliver each lesson plan using specific coaching strategies, which we call "Building Blocks". Coaches use these strategies to create optimal learning environments and build positive relationships with young people. There are four Building Blocks and each are described briefly below.

1. **Activity Based** - This means in our classes there is a lot more doing than telling. We design our activities/games to do most of the teaching. You might think of our coaches as "master game designers," who create activities/games that facilitate the development of skills. Young people learn much more, and better, when being active, and where there is opportunity for exploration and self-discovery. Kids want to "do" much more than they want to be "told" what to do.
2. **Mastery Driven** - This is where our coaches balance the Process and Outcome. We keep our attention on the intention. Example: If we were working on the golf fundamental of swing balance on a particular day, we would stay focused on swing balance and not "jump" into the grip, alignment/aim, etc. (we believe that could be overload). Also, we positively reinforce and provide feedback to the participant based on swing balance, and not just on the outcome or quality of shot.
3. **Empowering Youth** - We ask open ended questions and allow the participant the time to formulate and respond; we listen to our participants. We invite participants to add to the class by being involved with decision making, etc. We strive to bring out the "expertise" from the participants.
4. **Continuous Learning** – In general, we provide a learning experience where each time participants come back to a class, we are building on what they have been exposed to and/or started applying in a previous class. Additionally, we create opportunities for the participant to "check in and see where s/he is at" and help formulate a plan for ongoing improvement.

I hope this gives you a better picture of what The First Tee experience is all about: What we deliver and how we deliver it. For more information regarding The First Tee, I invite you to check out www.thefirsttee.org and/or www.tftcc.org