

## Self-Critique: The Why's and How's

"Let us strive to improve ourselves, for we cannot remain stationary; one either progresses or retrogrades."

Mme. Du Deffand

Evaluating your instructor skills may seem overwhelming and intimidating, and many instructors avoid evaluation and fear the outcome. However, WATERinMOTION® encourages you to embrace the process and enrich your professional development through self-critique. It is your way to have a direct voice in honing your craft and defining your future. Ultimately, instructor evaluation and development will improve client satisfaction and exercise adherence. Performing a self-evaluation puts the decision-making process in your own hands and shows supervisors and management that you are pro-active, interested in personal growth and meeting client needs.

### WHY

Self-evaluation will help you:

- Identify your strengths
- Define areas in need of growth
- Decide what kind of training to research and obtain
- Combat burnout

### RIPPLE

The RIPPLE sheet used in WATERinMOTION® Certification Trainings is a great resource for performing a self-evaluation. This tool is separated into six areas: Remember, Instruct, Perform, Personalize, Lead and Excite. Each area has various skills listed that would be favorable for an instructor (of any format).

Did I Remember my choreography?

Did I Instruct with sufficient and proficient verbal cues?

Did I Perform the moves to inspire proper form and technique in my students?

Did I Personalize my instruction and connect with individual clients in my class?

Did I Lead the group and build a community within my class?

Did I Excite my students and build a sense of drama to motivate, energize and invigorate?

Strive to earn a "Yes" in each category.



## STEPS

Follow these steps to create an accurate self-evaluation:

1. Read the RIPPLE sheet
2. Grade yourself in each area on the RIPPLE sheet
3. Take note of any areas graded “No”
4. Video tape yourself teaching a live class
5. Watch the video tape
6. Re-grade yourself based on the video taping
7. Compare previously graded “No” areas with an updated evaluation
8. Define three areas to develop/improve
9. Research needed training (may include: workshops, reading articles, mentoring, practice)
10. Write out action items
11. Attend workshops, read, consult a mentor, practice
12. Re-video tape and repeat steps 5 -12 at least once a year, preferably every 3 months

## BEYOND THE STEPS

Other considerations that will help you perform an effective self-evaluation include scheduling the time to perform the evaluation. Schedule an appointment with yourself to review the videotaping. Also, choose a quiet setting where you will not be interrupted. Give yourself undivided attention and create a relaxing approach to evaluation by reflecting on your individual goals and accepting that you are human, not perfect. Expecting perfection will sabotage your goal to improve. Acknowledge your strengths FIRST and then get down to the nitty-gritty by choosing three things you'd like to improve upon. Refer to the WATERinMOTION® release videos to observe skills on which you've decided to focus. Emulating a fellow instructor or mentor can be helpful in learning new skills. Teach like them until it becomes second nature to you.

## OUTSIDE INPUT

You may want to share your self-evaluation with your immediate supervisor and ask for their feedback, input and guidance. If that is not available to you, approach an instructor that you admire or a mentor about reviewing your self-evaluation. Others' perspectives can be helpful in accurately assessing your skills and prioritizing areas needing improvement. Ultimately, the best evaluation is your clients' reaction to you, ability to follow your instruction and progress in their own fitness. Be confident yet open to feedback when approaching your clients for evaluation. You can keep it simple by asking for their unrestricted feedback after class. Just understand that your clients are not

trained as fitness professionals and may not be able to express their feedback in ways that could be helpful. Try to hear them, thank them and then decide what message they intended.

Just like you would listen to others with a grain of salt, also do that for yourself. You should be kind and encouraging since we are all on the journey together. What's that old saying? Life is a journey, not a destination and so is fitness instruction. Self-evaluation helps you choose the road to take while setting your own course for your personal destination.

*The following is a "snapshot" of your assessment results. Refer to your program Manual and Release DVD to continue to develop the skills/elements marked with a "No."*

<b>R- REMEMBER (Choreography)</b>	
Memorized the choreography efficiently	Yes/No
Executes movements in the correct sequence	Yes/No
Executes movements on the correct beat and musical cues	Yes/No
Leads on the correct side to mirror participants	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>I- INSTRUCT (Verbally Cue)</b>	
Uses precise pre-cueing	Yes/No
Uses cues for form and technique	Yes/No
Projects voice accurately	Yes/No
Uses a blend of verbal and visual cues	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>P- PERFORM (Visually Cue)</b>	
Demonstrates safe movements for instructors and participants	Yes/No



Demonstrates proper form and technique	Yes/No
Accurately simulates water movement by:	
a) Loading down	Yes/No
b) Executing strong, crisp, resistant movements	Yes/No
c) Performing suspended and rebound movements as demonstrated on Wave release	Yes/No
Appropriately cues with body parts (hand, arm, head, facial cues)	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>P - PERSONALIZE (Connect with individual participants)</b>	
Makes eye contact with participants	Yes/No
Smiles, uses humor appropriately and exhibits enjoyment	Yes/No
Addresses participants by name (at least one)	Yes/No
Offers positive reinforcement with corrections and follow-up cues	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>L - LEAD (Interconnect the entire group)</b>	
Creates memorable track introductions	Yes/No
Is organized and commanding	Yes/No
Understands and communicates track focus	Yes/No
Creates a team environment with participants	Yes/No
Engages participants by interacting with them	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>E- EXCITE (Celebrate Success)</b>	
Acknowledges participant and group success	Yes/No



Demonstrates genuine enthusiasm for the WATERinMOTION® Program	Yes/No
Creates celebratory atmosphere by using positive language	Yes/No
Offers thanks at the end	Yes/No
Comments:	
<b>COMPETENCIES REQUIRED: 6</b>	<b>Competencies Achieved:</b>

## Bibliography

*Hein, 10 Tips for Making Self-Evaluations Meaningful, CIO, Apr 10, 2013*  
*Lead@UVA, Conducting a Self-Evaluation, Employee Development, 2009*

# Educational Installment 25: Review Quiz



1. WATERinMOTION® encourages you to embrace the evaluation process and enrich your professional development through:
  - a. Continual practice
  - b. Management led evaluations
  - c. Self-critique
  - d. Multiple video assessment reviews by our assessment coordinator
2. Instructor evaluation and development will:
  - a. Improve client satisfaction and exercise adherence
  - b. Weed out instructors who work part-time
  - c. Demand a huge investment of your time
  - d. Deter your ability to remember choreography
3. Self-evaluation will help you identify your:
  - a. Manager's responsibilities
  - b. Areas of wasted effort
  - c. Appropriate number of days to teach
  - d. Areas of strength
4. The acronym "RIPPLE" represents:
  - a. Re-evaluate, Instruct, Perform, Personalize, Lead, Excite
  - b. Remember, Instruct, Perform, Personalize, Lead, Evaluate
  - c. Remember, Instruct, Perform, Personalize, Length of class, Excite
  - d. Remember, Instruct, Perform, Personalize, Lead, Excite
5. Strive to earn a "Yes" in \_\_\_\_\_ categor(ies) of RIPPLE.
  - a. Each
  - b. 2
  - c. 3
  - d. 4
6. One of the steps to create a valuable self-critique is to:
  - a. Video tape another WATERinMOTION® Instructor's live class
  - b. Video tape your students in class
  - c. Video tape yourself teaching a live class
  - d. Video tape yourself performing the class moves in private
7. How many areas of development/improvement should you define for yourself?
  - a. 1
  - b. 2
  - c. 3
  - d. 4
8. In order to execute your self-evaluation, set an appointment with:
  - a. Your students
  - b. Your immediate supervisor
  - c. Yourself
  - d. Your fellow instructors
9. Expecting perfection will \_\_\_\_\_ your goal to improve.
  - a. Sabotage
  - b. Guarantee
  - c. Encourage
  - d. Promote
10. Ultimately, the best evaluation is your clients' reaction to you, ability to follow your instruction and:
  - a. Number of client injuries
  - b. Progress in their own fitness
  - c. Increase in pay
  - d. Decrease in expended energy