

PRO2PRO BEST PRACTICES "THE TECHNOLOGY RUSH"

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As an instructor, we all feel the need to offer our students the latest technology available. Some instructors feel it's necessary to justify the price of a lesson. My advice is to not lose the ultimate goal of a lesson, (wait for it) the student improves. Golf instruction has seen an unprecedented explosion in technology over the last 20 years, yet the national handicap has barely changed.

It pains me to see instructors arguing over which launch monitor is better and how certain instructors don't give quality lessons because they don't have the latest technology. No wonder beginners are intimidated and confused when they begin. Our job as instructors is not to impress the student, but instead it's to build a relationship with them. There is no magic pill; if golf improvement was easy then everyone would improve rapidly. We need to get to know the student. Make sure you know their goals and how much they are willing to commit. I'm also amazed how many instructors do not spend time on the golf course with their students. After all we play golf on the course, not on the range.

If you want to separate yourself from other instructors become a coach instead of a teacher. Coaches work harder on putting game improvement plans into place than trying to make their swing look better on video. Technology is a great thing, just be careful how you use it. Keep learning simple for the student, use technology more for your clarification. The student probably doesn't need to know all 26 parameters off the Trackman for every shot. It's your job to control the flow of information. I recommend not giving more feedback than necessary.

Time is a very valuable thing. Quality coaches spend time on areas that will yield the fastest improvement. Don't trust the student to tell you what they need to work on. Go out on the course and formulate an improvement plan with data the student will buy into. I use skill evaluations and stat gathering software to show the student areas for improvement. The old lesson model of charging by the hour is dying. It's time to get out there and start building relationships!

