



## TEACHING ON THE WATER

### MAKE IT FUN!

- I) Assessment
  - a. Setting the stage building rapport
  - b. 2 way communication on expectations
  - c. Which of the clients is the more skilled and/or knowledgeable
  
- II) Readiness
  - a. Reinforce it's ok to make mistakes – we all do
  - b. Be very sure you don't assume knowledge, skill, physical ability, or adequacy of their equipment
  - c. Make the whole experience as non-threatening as possible – we don't learn the correct lessons when we are nervous or frightened. **MOST PEOPLE ARE MOST AFRAID OF MAKING A FOOL OF THEMSELVES.**
  
- III) Review Equipment
  - a. Rod, Reel, Line, leader & Tippet. Do not assume your client has an understanding of a balanced outfit.
  - b. Assess the amount of detail your client would like to go into. **ALWAYS ASK.**
  - c. If their equipment is not appropriate for the fishery suggest they try using your already prepared outfit. **BE DELICATE**, the outfit they have, though not the latest in technology may have sentimental value.

- IV) Making a Plan and Sharing the Plan with the Clients – Get their consent
- a. Give them a run down of the entire day. Ask if they would like to make any changes.
  - b. If you will be spending time between two clients make sure not to leave one alone for too long a period.
  - c. Try not to leave their line of sight. If you must leave a client's line of sight make sure they know how to find you. **DON'T BE GONE FOR LONG.**
- V) Prepare for Hooking, Fighting, Landing, and Releasing Fish
- a. Do it on the bank first; the guide is the fish, have 'em do it.
  - b. Take, Strike, Managing Line, Getting the fish on the reel (if appropriate – practice both playing a fish on the reel and managing line).
  - c. Stripe set verses lift set.
  - d. Try to keep the fish in the water. Handle the fish with gentle but firm hands. Ask the client if they would like to land the fish or if they would like you to handle the landing.
  - e. When possible and appropriate use a net.
  - f. Before and between photo's keep the fish in the water (while still in the net).
- VI) Reading the water before you start
- a. Describe and if possible point out different types of water (runs, riffles, pockets, flats...)
  - b. Share why fish will be found in these types of water.
  - c. Begin drawing the connection between what takes place under the surface and above the surface (multiple currents).
  - d. **OBSERVATION IS EVERYTHING.** Share those you make.

VII) Reading the Water; Reading the Situation

- a. This is a great opportunity to share some entomology/fishery lessons. All clients are interested in learning.
- b. Link reading the hatch/fishery to reading the water. OBSEVATION IS EVERYTHING. Share those you make.
- c. Use a screen and gather nymphs and adults or observe baitfish, crabs.
- d. Recognize the difference between fish feeding on fish on the move.

VIII) Choosing the fly

- a. Draw on all the observations to choose the fly. Do this together.
- b. If a selection of patterns have been productive, share this with the client. Let them know you could be changing flies. Don't let them flog the water without suggesting to change an unproductive pattern. If the client wants to fish an unproductive technique (example – dry fly when no fish are moving to the surface), be assertive but not belittling and suggest an alternative method. If they are adamant about fishing the technique let them do so. It is their day on the water. You could learn something from the client.
- c. Get alignment with your client. Make them feel they are involved in the process.

IX) Positioning before the first cast

- a. Make a plan.
- b. Ease into position, good stalking techniques can make all the difference.
- c. Either stay next to or position yourself to assist your client (4 eyes are better than two).

X) Presentation

1. Choosing the tippet, leader, and line
2. Making the approach – positioning the body
3. Getting the float/drift/depth –
  - a. Special casts
  - b. Managing the line
4. Giving the fly action or not.

XI) THE END OF THE LESSON

1. Teach all day, but allow clients to work things out and have some time to experiment without the obvious watchful eye of the guide.
2. Make it fun – ALWAYS!!! DO NOT TURN INTO A DRILL SARGENT!
3. Laugh WITH your clients about the trials and tribulations of the sport (everyone's a learner)