

The Four-Step Method of Instruction (I.P.A.T.)

The four-step method of instruction is a natural procedure applicable to any instructional situation. It will fit teaching situations in any industry, in any area, or at any level. It seems basically logical to proceed by first getting the attention and interest of the individual; when this is accomplished, presenting the information to be learned, then giving the learner a chance to practice the material to be learned; and finally determining that the learner has actually learned. The four-step method is as simple as that.

Step 1: Introduction

The first step of this teaching process should result in the arrangement of the ideas and experiences already present in the learner into such an order that he will be receptive toward the new ideas and experiences to be taught. No new knowledge is added. The instructor is interested in developing a basis upon which the instruction can rest. It is also essential that the introduction step be designed to focus the interest of the student on the lesson to be learned and to provide him with a motive and enthusiasm for learning. **Performance objectives must be explained.** These steps must all be thorough and complete if the new instruction is to have effective reception.

Step 2: Presentation

The objective of the second step of the teaching process is to **impart the new knowledge** or skills to the learner. This step must be related to known ideas and experiences. The instructor's problem is to arrange the material to be taught in an effective order, placing emphasis on the most essential aspects.

Step 3: Application

The third step of the teaching process affords the learner the **opportunity to put to use** the information prepared for and presented in the previous steps. It should disclose the learner's grasp of the details of the new subject matter and his ability to progress. It is the instructor's responsibility to assist the learner when necessary.

Step 4: Test

The last step of the teaching process may be regarded as an evolution of the learner's progress. The instructor is concerned with determining the present abilities of the learner and his/her readiness to move on to a new phase of instruction. Whether the instructor gives an oral test, a written test, or a performance test, the student must know the nature and extent of his successes and failures. The instructor can use the learner's progress as an indication of the effectiveness of his teaching. **The step holds the learner accountable.**