



Prep Zones

Is Your Student Experience Referral Worthy?



The International Masters' Council
www.internationalmasterscouncil.com

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Prep Zone #1: The Front Door

This is where you meet and greet people. Now there are two ways to handle the front door. One way is to have the door closed and have people come up and open it themselves; the better way is to have someone stationed at prep zone #1 to open it for them. Much classier right! As a matter of fact, I remember one time I went to visit Master Bertrand up in Vancouver Washington. It just happened to be raining. As I was approaching, one of his staff members ran out with an umbrella to greet me and bring me in the door so I didn't get soaked. That's class! If you want people to shout from the rooftops about the experience at your school you need to implement prep zone number one. Have someone at the front door to greet people with a smile!

Prep Zone #2: The Lobby

The lobby is an amazing place because it gives you an opportunity to set the tone for the evening. Enthusiasm is contagious and so is the lack of it. If you meet people with enthusiasm that's an opportunity to get them in the right state for a great class. It's also a good opportunity to catch any issues or any kind of negativity on the way out the door. Maybe somebody got popped in the nose sparring or something like that. That's a red flag so somebody has to be there and be paying attention to what's going on as students are coming and going.

Prep Zone #3: The Front Desk

Between classes is not the time for someone at the front desk to be behind the computer entering attendance or any other tasks that need to be done during the evening. That's the time where the person behind the desk is attentive. That way if people are coming up and they want to ask a question or are interested in buying something in the pro shop, they've got that person's undivided attention. They are inviting conversation, human interaction and even a possible sale. It's all about the service and the experience.

Prep Zone #4: The Parent/Guest Seating Area

It is really important that you control what happens in the parent/guest seating area. You should be going around meeting and greeting anybody that you didn't get a chance to say hello to, shaking hands with people, asking them how they're doing so on and so forth. You also want to make sure that the people that are sitting there are paying attention to what's being taught in class and are being active listeners because you're constantly reselling the benefits. If you look over and you see that people in the guest seating area are looking down at their phones or reading a book that means that you haven't captured their attention. The people on the floor are your audience but so are the people that are on the sidelines. You want to make sure that those people are paying attention to you so you can point out a particular benefit of what your teaching. There's nothing wrong with calling out to the parents or the guests in the audience and saying "Hey guys take a minute and just pay attention to what I'm going to talk about here. This is a really important concept and I want everybody to really understand why we're teaching it". I'm bringing their attention back to me and getting them more involved in what I'm doing.

Does this take work to learn how to do? Yes it does, but we're not looking to be mediocre are we? We're looking to be the best and the most

professional, so this is something that you can work on not only with yourself but with your staff as well.

Prep Zone #5: The Floor

The floor should always be spotless. It should show the discipline that you have as martial artists. There shouldn't be clutter and junk lying around. Make sure that your floor is clean, neat and tidy because the overall appearance of your school is the first impression that you make when somebody walks in the door. You only have one chance to make a great first impression so look at it with a very critical eye.

Prep Zone #6: The Changing Rooms

I don't know how many times I've gone into a changing room where kids had their stuff thrown all over the place. That does not exude discipline whatsoever. You've completely missed an opportunity to teach those kids discipline. Make sure their clothes are folded up, put away in their bags and everything is neat, orderly and clean. Also, make sure there's not any garbage or leftover stuff sitting out. Lost and Found items should not sit there for weeks on end. We want to make sure that the changing rooms are spotlessly clean and that it smells good in there.

Safety, safety, safety! I don't know how many times I've gone in and seen little kids in the back room completely unsupervised. That is not a good safety habit. Certainly you wouldn't want your child left in the back room by themselves. Please make sure that you have somebody back there monitoring the kids and even the adults just to make sure that the transition between classes and anybody who goes back there has a safe and meticulously clean experience.

Prep Zone #7: The Bathrooms

I cannot stress to you how important it is to have a spotlessly clean bathroom. It should be like a hospital in there. Who wants to walk into a bathroom where there's no toilet paper, no paper towels, someone pee'd on the seat and there is hair all over the place. It's just disgusting and it definitely doesn't show good discipline. Bathrooms are a critical thing to pay attention to if you want to be seen as a professional. A clean facility allows you to charge more and also earns you referrals. So what do we do with bathrooms? Before classes start, they have to be clean. Have an instructor or staff member attend to the bathrooms between classes on a regular basis to make sure that everything is in clean, neat and smelling fantastic.