

The Professional Ski Instructors of America Eastern Division



Cross Country Level I Assessment Guide

PSIA-E Cross Country Level I Assessment Guide

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Published by: Professional Ski Instructors of America
Eastern Division
5 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203

Printed in the United States of America
Revised – September 2022

Introduction

This manuscript contains information about the Cross Country Certification Program of the Professional Ski Instructors of America - Eastern Division. It outlines assessment procedures, content, and standards. This manual also includes essential study material excerpted from the *PSIA Core Concepts Manual*, *ATS: Nordic*, *National Website*, and the *Eastern Website*.

The basic purpose of the PSIA-E Cross Country Certification Program is to evaluate a candidate's knowledge and skills relative to established standards of professional ski teaching and other related information. PSIA-E, like other divisions, certifies ski teachers in the American Teaching System (ATS), our national model. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive, working knowledge of ATS throughout the examination process. Certification is awarded to those who demonstrate the required level of proficiency in People Skills, Teaching Skills, and Technical Skills during the assessment and have met the prerequisite requirements. Training and continuing education in these areas are acquired through PSIA-E educational programs, ski school clinics, personal study, and experience.

The PSIA-E certification pin identifies highly qualified instructors to the ski industry and the skiing public. It is an assurance that a specific level of knowledge and competency are present in such areas as skiing, teaching technology and methodology, guest service, and safety/risk awareness.

As a desirable credential, certification becomes an expressed goal for many ski teachers, thus raising the overall standards of professional ski teaching in the United States. Ongoing educational requirements for retaining certification assist in assuring that high standards of performance are maintained. Most professionals view certification as a foundation, rather than an end in itself, and continue to grow and develop far beyond the minimum standards.

PSIA offers certification events as a member benefit. Certification is encouraged but not required. Most of the organization's events are primarily educational in content. It is acceptable for members to attend only the required educational events. However, if you *are* interested in certification, be assured that PSIA-E strives to deliver a fair, consistent, and relevant certification process. It is our goal to examine for success in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible within a structured and meaningful evaluation environment.

You may also find the Performance Standards for certification levels useful. It can be found at https://thesnowpros.org/download/Cross_Country_PG_10_21.pdf

Preparing for Level I

Level I events are primarily educational and are designed to provide participants with basic information about *many different facets* of skiing, ski instruction, and the ski industry. You can select to be assessed for Level I at any Level I event as listed in the Cross Country Course Descriptions section toward the end of this guide except backcountry. In addition to being a comprehensive educational experience, the Level I event is also an assessment. This manuscript is very important in helping you to prepare for this assessment.

Read each section of this manuscript carefully. This will provide an overview of many different areas of information. During the Level I event you will be assessed on your familiarity and knowledge of this information. You will also be provided with more information about the topics in this guide, as part of the educational process of the Level I event.

If you are going to be evaluated for your Level I at an event, you will need to complete the [Cross Country Level I E-Learning Course](#). It is required that you complete this course prior to coming to the event where you intend to obtain Level I certification.

The Level I education certification standards below describe the requirements for becoming Certified Level I. These standards are an essential checklist in successfully preparing for a Level I event. They define areas of knowledge, as well as specific skiing and teaching activities that should be practiced before attending a Level I event. Understanding and utilizing the American Teaching System will be essential for the professional development of your teaching career.

If you are currently a Level I or higher member in another discipline and are crossing over to Cross Country, some of the information will be a review for you. However, the best foundation for your Cross Country development will be received in a Level I event. The applications of the Technical Skills will be different, as there are fundamentals which are slightly different. Reading this manuscript will enhance your base of knowledge in both Cross Country and your current discipline.

Becoming a Certified Level I member of PSIA-AASI is the first major step in your development as a professional ski instructor. Commitment and conscientious preparation, on your part, will ensure you of a quality experience at the Level I event, and the best possible opportunity for success. Create a plan to prepare yourself to meet the following standards. Expect areas of ownership and begin to understand the areas you are unfamiliar with. Have fun, and good luck!

Certification Path

Becoming a new registered member: Registered is the entry level of membership. Registered members receive all divisional and national publications, a membership card and registered lapel pin. Prerequisites for becoming Registered are the same as listed below for Level I, with the exception that it is not required that one attend and pass a Level I event. Your ski school director can provide more details or call the PSIA-AASI Eastern Divisional office at (518) 452-6095 for more information on how to join.

Becoming a new certified Level I member: Take a Cross Country event that allows you to obtain Level I Certification and pay Level I dues to the Association. Due to the nature of Cross Country, you may not have a Ski School Director or a training program. If not, you still can participate in a Level I Event (review this guide and come prepared) and place your name in the Ski School Directors' section. If you are part of a school, please have your Director sign your card. Due to the limited number of clinics offered each year, you may be in a mixed clinic with people who are interested in being a registered member, people training for a Level 2 or 3 exam, or even at times there may be a mix of Level 1, 2 and 3 candidates.

Level II Assessment Prerequisite: If you intend to take the Level II exam, you need to take a preparation clinic in the ski season that you intend to take the Level II exam. There are two scenarios for this. If you become certified Level I you may use that event as preparation for the Level II exam in that same year. If you wait a year or more after your Level I certification exam and intend to take the Level II exam you must take another educational clinic to help you prepare in the ski season that you intend to take the Level II exam.

Level II Assessment: You first need to take a prerequisite upgrade as mentioned above. See PSIA-E website for event schedule. Typically the Level II and III exams are given in early March. Further details are in the Level II Assessment Guide.

Level III Assessment Prerequisite: May be taken your second year or in subsequent years but you must take a Cross Country clinic in the same season as you intend to take the Level III exam. See PSIA-E website for event schedule.

Level III Assessment: May be taken the second year after fulfilling the prerequisite. Or in subsequent years as long as you take a preparation clinic in the same season as you intend to test.

If you are scheduled to take a clinic intended as preparation for an exam and that preparation clinic is canceled, contact the Nordic Coordinator to see how to prepare for your exam.

Certified Level I is the primary entry point for new members to enter the education and

certification track. This level is where new members build a solid foundation of information and experience necessary to be an effective and skilled ski teacher. The broad base of education received at this level will also help new members identify future goals. The following prerequisites must be met in order to become a Certified Level I member:

- Be 14 years of age or older at time of application.
- Be an employee or volunteer of a recognized Ski School, Nordic Program, club, organized group, or recreational facility.
- Complete an in-house training and on-snow teaching program (if it is available to you). This should familiarize the candidate with an introduction to ATS teaching and skiing concepts. If this is not available, the candidate must have some understanding of ATS concepts, PSIA, and safety education. For more information visit the PSIA-AASI (www.thesnowpros.org) or the PSIA-Eastern (www.psia-e.org) websites. Candidates are expected to conduct themselves in an organized and professional manner.
- Complete an online event registration from the Eastern calendar (<https://www.psia-e.org/calendar/>). Note, if you do not have a ski school director or major organizer due to the uniqueness of your group, you may sign your name in the ski school director's section. Include a check, credit card, or money order payable to PSIA-E by the deadline on the event schedule. The event schedule can be found at www.psia-e.org or by calling the division office at 518-452-6095.
- Attend a PSIA-E Level I event and meet the Level I PSIA-AASI National Outcomes assessment criteria stated below.

Certified Level I members must maintain their membership by attending a credit event at least once every two seasons and pay dues to the Association on an annual basis. Level I members may hold committee seats.

Level I eLearning Course

Once a participant is a member, to sign up for their Level I event they should go here to complete the [Cross Country Level I E-Learning Course](#) and complete the course prior to registering for their event. You will need to login as a member to access the [Cross Country Level I E-Learning Course](#).

The Level I Assessment Process

The Certified Level I process consists of primarily *an educational* workshop that includes an assessment of **basic People Skills, Teaching Skills, and Technical Skills** (which refers to technical and mechanical knowledge as well as movement analysis and skiing skills). The event is two days in duration; it is an educational event that will be highly interactive for all. Our goal is to share the information in these categories (which are outlined later in the guide) with you through different activities. We will practice each skill, check for understanding, share your ideas/experiences, and ski different types of trails, conditions, terrain and drills.

The best way to prepare for your Level I clinic is to complete the Level I work book and to read this guide. It is recommended that candidates have 25 hours of teaching, skiing, and/or training experience within the Cross Country discipline. This will make their participation more meaningful. If not, no worries, just make sure you check the criteria and you feel comfortable meeting the standards after some coaching.

The PSIA-AASI National Level I Standards will also serve as a guide for training for the Level I event. These standards can be found at:

https://www.thesnowpros.org/download/psia_xc_standards-9_30_21_final.pdf

It is not expected that Level I candidates will have in-depth knowledge and experience in each of the areas of competence listed in the Level I Standards. It is expected, however, that candidates will be able to show basic competence and knowledge in all of these areas.

Since some Cross Country candidates are crossovers from other disciplines, we incorporate a level I in most of our upgrades. Remember that upgrades are on mostly Green and Blue Square terrain. If you are just starting you can participate in any of the Cross Country Clinics as each clinic can incorporate people of varying experiences.

Registration begins at 8:30 (until approximately 9:00) and on the trail no later than 9:00 on Day 1 of the event. *Please be on time.* If you are late, go to the ski school desk or information area. The time frame for the two days will be from 8:30-4:00, with an hour break for lunch. Approximately 75% or more of the time will be outside.

Assessment is often done by one course conductor as clinics tend to be small groups.. In order to become a Certified Level I member, you must meet the National Standards criteria and assessment activities defined below. The assessment is done on a 6-point scale with an average score of 4 to be successful.

Results will be announced at the end of Day 2. An awards ceremony will be held at the conclusion of the event, at which course conductors will hand out new member packets and Level I pins. Please remember we are here to coach, show, explain, and create the best atmosphere for your learning. The learning and assessment environment will be fun, interactive, and activity based with lots of sharing of information. The goal is to have everyone learn, question, practice, and meet the standard. You probably won't even know it is an assessment. You will be told verbally at the conclusion of the event if you pass Level I or not and you will be emailed a more detailed assessment form within a day or two of your event.

National Standards 2021

Contributors and Developers

- PSIA-AASI Cross Country Task Force
- PSIA-AASI People Skills Task Force
- PSIA-AASI Teaching Skills Task Force
- PSIA-AASI National Team The Pennsylvania State University – College of Health & Human Development; Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management

Introduction: PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards, August 22, 2020

American ski instruction demands versatility. The PSIA-AASI membership is expected to teach guests in a wide variety of skiing environments, facilitating learning outcomes that range from hard snow to powder, and genres including recreation, race, backcountry. The objective of the *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* document is to identify fundamentals to great skiing, teaching and connecting with the learner. The Learning Connection Model provides the framework to balance people skills, teaching skills and technical skills and highlights fundamentals that apply to a variety of technical and tactical situations through the three assessment zones of beginner, intermediate and advanced students.

To this end, the Learning Connection Model provides the framework for a balance of crucial people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills; highlighting fundamentals that apply to a variety of technical and tactical decisions based on student ability, motivation, personality, and more.

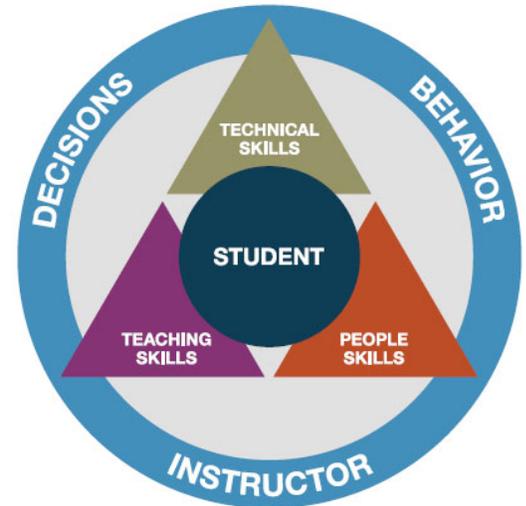
As outlined in PSIA's *Cross Country Technical Manual*, the American Teaching System™ specifies three skier zones: Beginner/Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced. The *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* align the skier zones with assessment parameters for three levels of instructor certification.

- Beginner/Novice-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level I Instructor
- Beginner- to Intermediate-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level II Instructor
- Beginner- to Advanced-Zone Guests – PSIA-Certified Level III Instructor

Level I certification is meant to affirm that the instructor is qualified to teach beginner/novice guests, primarily on beginner/novice terrain (typically identified as “green”). Level II certification generally means that the instructor is qualified to teach through the intermediate zone, in which students are primarily on intermediate (blue) and some green terrain. Level III certification generally means that the instructor is qualified to teach ALL students and on expert (black) terrain.

These *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* provide the assessment criteria for the people skills, teaching skills, and technical skiing skills necessary for an instructor to successfully complete a specific certification. For example, Level I instructors are assessed on their development of these skill sets, and as they progress in their professional development they enhance and expand skill sets to teach a wider range of students – in more variable conditions and terrain. This sets the stage to seek higher levels of certification. PSIA-AASI offers many resources to aid instructors’ professional development with regard to fundamentals of people, teaching, and technical skills.

At a minimum, this *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* document complements and should be consulted in combination with the following publications.



- The *Cross Country Technical Manual* - Explores content related to performing and evaluating the technical skills of skiing.
- The *Teaching Snowsports Manual* - Content evaluated in People Skills and Teaching Skills.
- Skier Level Descriptions - Specific performance characteristics that create context for the skiing and learning outcomes in each skier zone.
- *PSIA-AASI National Performance Guides* – Cross Country Technical Skills, People Skills, and Teaching Skills

Assessment Activities and Assessment Criteria

Evaluating a certification candidate's skills requires well-defined, measurable assessment criteria – as presented in PSIA-AASI's *Performance Guides*. When performing skiing assessment activities, the duration, intensity, rate, and timing of movements (DIRT) will vary, based on the conditions and skill sets being assessed. Assessment activities are performed at the speeds and degree of accuracy outlined in the assessment criteria.

Assessing people skills and teaching skills requires an evaluation environment that simulates a ski lesson. Teaching situations and scenarios are relevant to the guest's skier zone, with assessment based on the level of certification sought. They need to allow enough time and/or frequency for demonstration of all assessment criteria. Those that take place on snow should be on terrain that's suitable for the related skier zone – beginner/novice, intermediate, or advanced. People skills may be assessed throughout the entire certification process by assessing the instructor's ability to build and maintain the trust that fosters continued learning at the required level.

Throughout the assessment process, divisions will use a variety of assessment activities – based on terrain and prevailing conditions – to evaluate instructor competency as outlined in these *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards*. Not all assessment activities need to take place on snow.

These *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* describe how the fundamentals of people skills, teaching skills, and technical skills are assessed at each level of certification. Effective use of the national standards, combined with a wide range of educational resources, creates an efficient environment for consistent evaluation.

The Language of Learning Outcomes and Assessment

The *PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards* rely upon the following Learning Outcome Framework to create a consistent language for assessment. The learning outcomes clearly state what the instructor can demonstrate upon successful completion of the certification assessment.

Learning Outcomes: (Also known as goals or learning objectives)

Learning outcomes represent what is to be achieved upon completion of each level of certification. Learning outcomes do not vary between examiners or divisions.

Learning Experiences: (Also known as tasks or drills.)

These are the training experiences that lead to achievement of the learning outcome. NOTE: The learning experiences listed in this document are *recommendations* of what an **instructor** may do in order to gain the knowledge and understanding relative to the given subject area. These are *not* requirements; they are suggested approaches to aid individuals in their development as professional Snowsports educators. For more details, refer to the associated *Performance Guide*.

Assessment Activities: (These are activities that you will do or teach to demonstrate your skills.)

Representing *how* a person is assessed, (These have historically been described as tasks or maneuvers.) NOTE: The assessment activities listed in this document are *recommendations* of what an **examiner** may use to assess the knowledge and understanding relative to the given subject area. The examiner is free to use variations and alternatives. Those listed provide an idea of how an assessment can be conducted. For more details, refer to the associated *Performance Guide* or divisional assessment guides.

Assessment Criteria: (This is the level that is expected from a candidate.)

Representing the “level of standard,” assessment criteria outline performance details that specify to what level the learning outcomes have been met. This does not vary between examiners or divisions.

Assessment 6-point Scale: Throughout the PSIA-AASI professional development and certification system, all assessment criteria are measured by means of the following 6-point assessment scale.

1. Essential elements are not observed or not present.
2. Essential elements are beginning to appear.
3. Essential elements appear, but not with consistency.
4. Essential elements appear regularly at a satisfactory level.
5. Essential elements appear frequently, above the required level.
6. Essential elements appear continuously, at a superior level.

People Skills

Fundamentals

- Develop relationships based on trust.
- Engage in meaningful two-way communication.
- Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
- Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.**Level I**

Overview of People Skills at the Level I proficiency

Level I (L1) instructors exhibit a basic understanding of the people's fundamentals, using them to develop trust within the learning environment. They show awareness of the likely needs and emotions of people new to Snowsports and communicate clearly to the group, showing respect, patience, professionalism and providing objective feedback. A Level I instructor demonstrates self-awareness by reflecting on their own emotional tendencies, and adapting to feedback from others.

Upon successful completion of the assessment, a Level I instructor...

	Communication	Self-Awareness (Professionalism on assessment form) and Self-Management	Relationships with others
Learning Outcomes	<i>Engages</i> in meaningful verbal and non-verbal, communication with <i>the group as a whole</i> .	Explains and demonstrates the basic concepts of self-awareness and self-management.	<i>Identifies</i> likely motivations and emotions of <i>individuals</i> and <i>understands</i> group dynamics.
Learning Experiences	Benefits from learning experiences for instructor development to this level, which include E-learning modules, individual teaching sessions, guided debriefs of teaching sessions, small group teaching sessions and in-person training focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognizing</i> verbal and non-verbal communication with trainers, peers, and mentors. • <i>Understanding professionalism, behavioral responses to emotions</i>, and the roles instructor self-awareness and self-management play in the Snowsports learning environment. • <i>Identifying active listening strategies, motivation tactics</i>, emotional needs of the <i>group</i>, and the role of social awareness in <i>group dynamics</i>. 		
Assessment Activities	Performs assessment activities - which vary between divisions and also between examiners depending on conditions and group experiences, that may include activities such as an online exam, individual or group interview with examiner(s), analyzing video footage, simulated or real lesson environments, presentations and discussion of self-reflection to examiners, trainers and peers.		
Assessment Criteria	Consistently demonstrates their ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use verbal and non-verbal communication in a professional manner. • Ask questions to learn about others. 	Consistently demonstrates their ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the concepts of self-awareness and self-management, and identify basic tactics to manage behavioral responses to emotions. 	Consistently demonstrates their ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate group interaction to build group dynamics. • Anticipate and address group and individual <i>safety and physiological needs</i>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver objective feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive behavioral changes in response to feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the emotional needs and motivations of students.
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Teaching Skills

Fundamentals

- Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
- Manage information, activities, terrain selection, and pacing.
- Promote play, experimentation, and exploration.
- Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
- Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
- Manage emotional and physical risk.

Level I

Overview of Teaching at the Level I proficiency

A Level I (L1) instructor applies the Teaching Fundamentals, allowing them to plan and organize an engaging learning experience. They select a basic progression in the beginner/novice zone using any study, training, and teaching experiences. A Level I instructor makes minor adjustments to learning experiences based on students' needs, desires, and abilities. They facilitate learning by communicating changes in student performance relative to outcomes.

Upon successful completion of the assessment, a Level I instructor...

	Assess and Plan	Implement	Reflect/Review
Learning Outcomes	Plans learning outcomes and <i>organizes</i> progressive learning experiences relevant to <i>novice</i> students.	Facilitates learning experiences that <i>guide</i> students toward the agreed upon outcome and engage them in the process.	<i>Communicates</i> performance changes that target the learning outcome <i>to help students identify a change has been made.</i>
Learning Experiences	Learning experiences for instructor development to this level include videos, E-learning modules, The Matrix, reading, work books, home area training programs, individual teaching sessions, guided debriefs of <i>novice zone</i> teaching sessions, small group teaching sessions and in-person training focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Planning learning outcomes in the novice zone.</i> • <i>Implementing learning experiences in the novice zone learning environment.</i> • <i>Identifying and communicating performance changes.</i> 		
Assessment Activities	Assessment activities for these learning outcomes vary between divisions and also between examiners depending on conditions and group experiences but may include activities such as Online Exam, individual or group interview with examiner(s), analyzing video footage, presentation and discussion of self-reflection to examiners and peers or a simulated or real lesson environment demonstrating ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plan effective learning experiences for students in the novice zone that work toward desired learning outcomes.</i> • <i>Teach effectively in the novice zone learning environment.</i> 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify and communicate performance changes.</i> 		
<p>Assessment Criteria</p>	<p>Consistently demonstrates their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assess</i> students to identify student motivations, performance, and understanding. • Collaborate with students to <i>select</i> a basic progression with clear direction and focus. • Plan lessons that involve productive use of movement, practice time, and terrain. 	<p>Consistently demonstrates their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace a <i>clear progression</i> to allow students appropriate time to explore and/or play toward desired outcomes. • <i>Organize</i> the learning environment to align with the <i>initial assessment of the group</i>. • Provide <i>the group</i> relevant information (<i>basic</i> descriptions, demonstrations, and feedback) that encourages learning. • <i>Limit</i> physical risk. • Manage levels of emotional risk to <i>maintain</i> engagement in the learning environment. 	<p>Consistently demonstrates their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Communicate</i> changes in performance. • <i>Relate</i> changes in performance to <i>lesson outcomes</i>. • <i>Suggest</i> activities for further practice

Technical Skills

Technical skills bring teaching concepts to life with practical applications adapted to the student's ability level or desired outcome. These skills relate to the instructor's understanding of fundamental skiing mechanics and applying that understanding in lessons. Technical skills represent the ability to perform, understand, and explain the sport. In sharing technical skills, the instructor communicates certain discipline-specific aspects of movement and gives accurate demonstrations.

Professional Knowledge Fundamentals

- Convey and apply accurate technical information.
- Observe, evaluate, prescribe.

Cross Country Skiing Fundamental Skills

- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the ski(s). (balance)
- Control the timing of body movements while regulating power application through the skis and poles to optimize propulsion (Push-Off).
- Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support from ski to ski (Weight Transfer)
- Utilize body movements to manage momentum (Glide).

Level I

Overview of Technical Skills at the Level I Proficiency

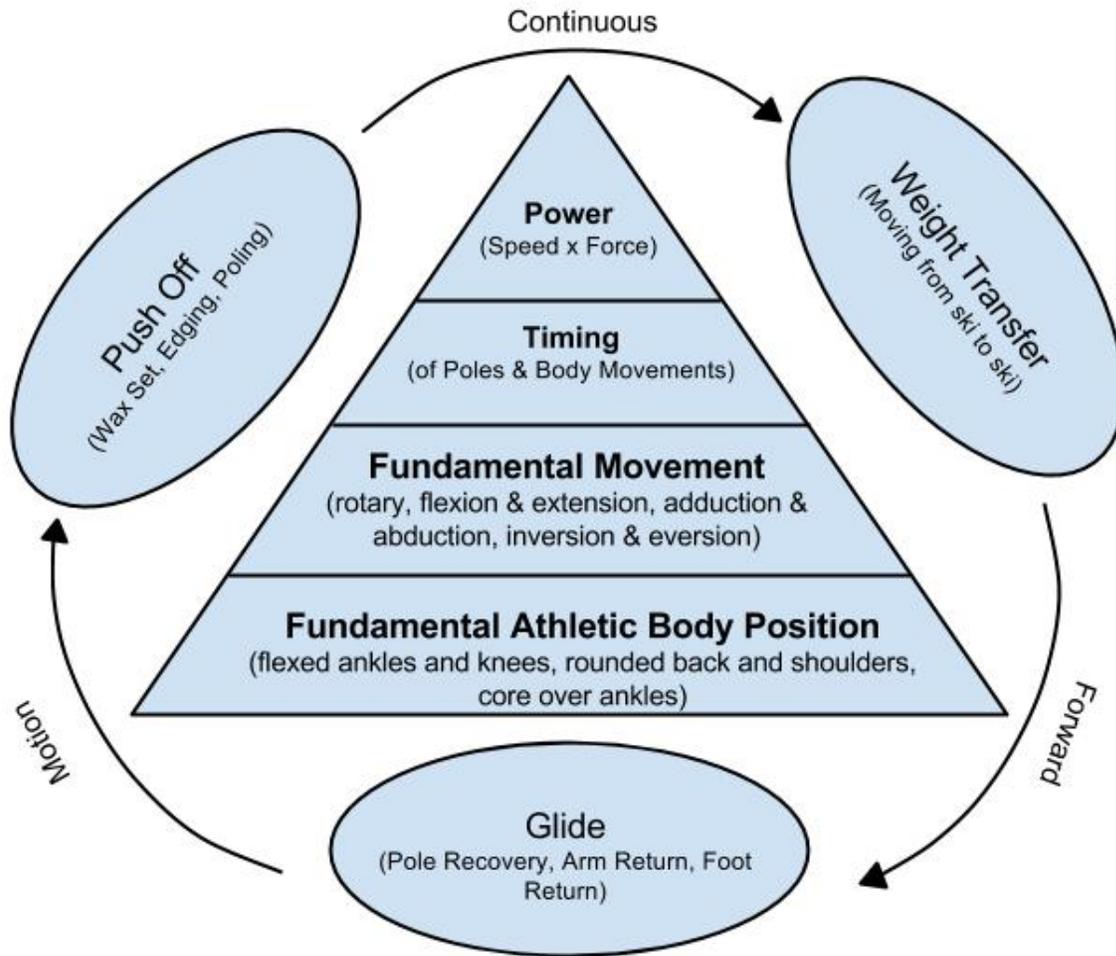
A Level I instructor regularly applies a blend of fundamentals to reproduce specific outcomes in the beginner and intermediate zones. Cross Country Technical Model (XC Technical Model)

The PSIA Cross Country Technical Model can be used as a framework to organize, understand, teach, and analyze the fundamentals of cross country skiing.

The Cross Country Technical Model has two interrelated components. At the center of the model is the Sports Performance Pyramid, which highlights the essential elements of a skier's body mechanics – body position, body movements, timing, and power. The outer circle of the model, known as the Cross Country Skills Concept, represents the three skills of cross country skiing – weight transfer, push-off, and glide. These three skills blend together to produce continuous forward motion.

The model illustrates how a skier's body mechanics, the Sports Performance Pyramid, connect with the three cross country skiing skills (outside circle). Skiers control body mechanics of the Sports Performance Pyramid (inner triangle) to perform the skills (outer ring) and affect ski performance.

The four fundamentals of cross country skiing are incorporated in the whole Cross Country Technical Model. A fundamental statement defines each of the three skiing skills found in the outer ring. The fourth fundamental statement relates to maintaining an athletic body position while applying movements, timing, and power (see figure below).



Technical Skills

Upon successful completion of the assessment, a Level I instructor...

	Skiing Performance	Technical Understanding	Movement Analysis
Learning Outcomes	Adjusts and adapts the XC Fundamentals to demonstrate specific outcomes for both classic and skate technique at the beginner skill level in beginner and some intermediate terrain.	Uses current PSIA cross country resources to identify and describe a skier's performance at the beginner skier level.	Accurately describes cause-and-effect relationships between body and ski performance and provides a relevant prescription for change for beginner skiers.

	Skiing Performance	Technical Understanding	Movement Analysis
Learning Experiences	<p>Benefits from learning experiences that can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing cross country fundamentals in isolation and blends; incorporating various tempos, speeds, and power in beginner and intermediate terrain and varied snow conditions. • Receiving and incorporating feedback at a preparation clinic or from a coach/mentor. • Off-snow activities, such as watching video, taking e-learning courses, and reading manuals and associated education materials. • Increasing overall fitness and athleticism (endurance, strength, agility, kinesthetic awareness), and gaining an understanding of pacing while skiing. This can entail skiing continuously for at least 15 minutes (solo or by participating in citizen ski events and/or races) and cross training.. 	<p>Benefits from learning experiences that can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group activities, with instructors referencing the XC Fundamentals and XC Technical Model while performing and describing various tasks. • Analyzing inspirational, highly accurate skiing to better understand ideal applications of the cross country fundamentals. • Exploring how different choices related to DIRT (duration, intensity, rate, and timing), equipment, and wax affect the cross country fundamentals, based on task and tactics. • Taking e-learning courses and studying recent PSIA-AASI educational materials in various formats. • Attending local, regional, and national education events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing how a skier’s performance is affected by different types, adjustments, and sizes of equipment – and wax choices – in various terrain and snow conditions.
Assessment Activities	<p>Performs assessment activities that can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks from the Level I section of the <i>Performance Guide</i> that isolate and blend skills in the beginner skill level in varied terrain. • Adjusting speed and the power applied to achieve a desired outcome. • Free-skiing in beginner terrain for up to 15 minutes. 	<p>Performs assessment activities that can include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing recent performance(s), referencing XC Fundamentals and the XC Technical Model and identifying the ideal performance of skiing outcomes. • Describing differentiating characteristics of classic and skate ski equipment. 	<p>While watching a beginner skier via video or live action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the cause-and-effect relationships of the skier’s body position and body movements relative to ski performance in one skill of the XC Technical Model. • Provides a prescription for change, focusing on body position and body movements for one skill of the XC Technical Model. • Observes and describes the skier’s equipment choice and compares it to the ideal choice the student could make with regard to equipment.

	Skiing Performance	Technical Understanding	Movement Analysis
<p>Assessment Criteria</p>	<p>Demonstrates the cross country fundamentals at beginner classic and skate skill levels by adjusting tactical choices, speed, and ski performance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage ski and pole push to create forward movement. • Control the center of mass (CM) over the base of support (fore/aft and side to side). • Glide on one ski. • Control speed and change direction on downhills. • Show versatility in beginner terrain. • Continuously ski in beginner and some intermediate terrain for up to 15 minutes. 	<p>Consistently demonstrates their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately identify and describe personal and/or an observed skier performance, using body position and body movements of one XC skiing skill. • Accurately describe ideal skier performance using body position and body movements of one XC skiing skill. • Convey understanding by changing personal skiing performance based on feedback at the beginner level. • Identify and reference information from current PSIA resources relative to skier performance and desired outcome. 	<p>Consistently demonstrates their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a skier's performance, focusing on body position and body movements for one XC skill. • Describe the cause-and-effect relationship between a skier's body position and body movements with regard to the skis' performance for one XC skill. • Provide a relevant prescription for change in a skier's body position and body movements for one XC skill to create a desired outcome at the beginner level. • Observe and describe how equipment choices affect performance and safety for beginner skiers.

Assessment Scorecard

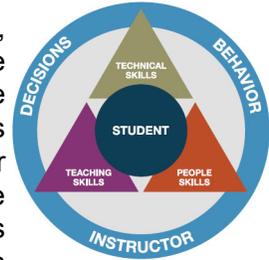
Draft copy of Level I Assessment Form (final version will be inserted when finished)

Telemark Level One Assessment

Instructor Decisions & Behavior	Attained	Did not Attain	Score	Teaching Skills	Attained Level	Did not Attain	Score				
Professionalism and Self Management: Maintains a professional environment by demonstrating self-awareness and self management. (Continual Assessment)				Assess & Plan: Plans learning outcomes and organizes progressive learning experiences relevant to beginner/novice students.							
Needs/Safety Address group and individual safety and physiological needs.				Assess Identify student motivations, performance, and understanding.							
Feedback Exhibits positive behavior in response to feedback.				Collaborate Select basic progression with clear direction and focus							
Overall Professionalism: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome				Plan Lesson Plan lessons that involve productive use of movement, practice time, and terrain.							
				Section Average: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome							
Comments				Implement: Facilitates learning experiences that guide students toward the agreed-upon outcome and engages them in the process							
				Pacing Pace clear progression to allow appropriate time to explore/play toward desired outcomes.							
People Skills (Assessed when teaching)				Organize Organize the learning environment to align with the initial assessment of the group							
Communication: Engages in meaningful verbal and non-verbal communication with the group as a whole.				Descriptions, Demonstrations, Feedback Give the group relevant information that encourages learning							
Communication Use verbal and non-verbal communication in a professional manner.				Physical Risk Limit physical risk							
Active Listening Ask questions to learn about others				Emotional Risk Manage levels to maintain engagement in the learning environment.							
Actionable Feedback Deliver actionable feedback				Section Average: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome							
Relationships with Others: Identifies likely motivations and emotions of individuals and understands group dynamics.				Reflect/Review: Communicates performance changes that target the learning outcome to help students identify that a change has been made.							
				Describe Change Communicate changes in performance							
Interaction Initiate group interaction to build group dynamics.				Relate Change Relate changes in performance to lesson outcomes							
Motivations/Emotions Identify the motivations and emotions of students.				Section Average: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome							
Overall People Skills				Overall Teaching Skills							
Comments				Comments							
Movement Analysis				Skiing Performance							
Articulates an accurate cause-and-effect relationship between body and ski performance within any single Telemark fundamental in a specific turn phase to offer a relevant prescription for change.				Regularly applies a blend of fundamentals to reproduce specific outcomes in the beginner and intermediate zones.							
Consistently demonstrates their ability to:				Applies a blend of fundamentals with the ability to vary 1 or more of them through any phase of the turn							
Describe Performance Observe and describe ski and body performance in one fundamental in one phase of the turn				Integrate Fundamentals Reproduce specific ski performances with moderate accuracy							
Cause and Effect				Versatility							
Evaluate and Prescribe				Telemark Stance and Movement							
Equipment											
Overall Movement Analysis: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome				Overall Skiing Performance: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome							
Comments				Assessment Activities Utilized							
				Blended							
				Highlighted							
Technical Understanding				<i>[Tele Task Force discussed including the following in this 'Comments' box, for reference/shorthand/notes/fe</i>							
								Uses current PSIA resources to describe elements of ideal performances, using the telemark fundamentals separately.			
								Consistently demonstrates their ability to:			
Understanding of Ideal Describe ideal performances, referencing at least one of the telemark skiing fundamentals in any turn phase in the beginner/novice zone.											
Understanding of Biomechanics/Physics Understanding of Biomechanics/Physics Reference biomechanics and physics principles relevant to skiing outcomes.											
Equipment Accurately discuss how equipment choices and issues affect performance and safety in the beginner/novice skier zone.											
Utilizes Resources Use Level I-specific information from current PSIA resources relative to the desired outcome.											
Overall Technical Understanding: Must be 4 or above to meet Learning Outcome											
Comments				Overall Comments							

The Level I Assessment: What to Expect

- Candidates for level one will be evaluated in three areas: technical skills, skiing skills, and people skills. Successful candidates will demonstrate the proficiency necessary to teach beginner skiers. It is important to note that skiing skills include both classic and skating techniques. Participants at cross country events may have different goals and reasons for attending. Members of PSIA may choose to be assessed and will receive their level one pin and certificate if successful. Unsuccessful candidates will retain the benefits of membership at the registered level. Regardless of outcome candidates will receive written feedback via email after the event with a detailed scorecard as shown on the previous page. Members who are already certified at level one, two, or three will not be formally evaluated but will gain credit toward the maintenance of their certification. Some participants may be members with certification in other disciplines such as alpine or snowboard. Other attendees may be members of the general public who are participating as non-members and will not be formally evaluated.



In general, evaluation for level I in cross country is less formal than it may be in other disciplines that have specific events for level one. There is an exam each spring for members who wish to pursue certification at level II or III. Details on this process will be found in the Cross Country Assessment Guide Levels II and III.

Technical

Skills

For Technical Skills you will be assessed in skiing performance, technical understanding, and movement analysis through activities. Skiing activities should be performed as if the candidate were working with a student. Ideally candidates will practice and master the following assessment activities before coming to the event. Due to the nature of cross country and the training available at ski areas, clubs etc. this may not be obtainable. There is ample time and coaching available if you need the time at the event to prepare.

Level

I

Technical

Skills:

Possible assessment activities may include performing the following maneuvers along with a technical explanation of the movements and some cause-and-effect movement analysis discussion. Other maneuvers, not listed below, may also be included.

- Diagonal Stride
- Herringbone
- Double Pole
- Step Turns
- Gliding and braking wedges
- Wedge Turns
- Diagonal skate
- V-1 Skate
- Identify V-2 Skate

Teaching Skills

Level I Teaching Skills: Your assessment activities will be based on Assessing the Plan, Implementation of your Plan, and Reflecting and Reviewing your activity.

A trend of beginning guests at ski centers is that students arrive on a variety of equipment, with scores of different motivations for being there, and with diverse backgrounds of related activities and experiences. Occasionally you do get the first timer that has no experience on snow. Be prepared for guests who are unaccustomed to the resort environment. Oftentimes cross country skiers are used to the woods and trails that are ungroomed.

Ski equipment is changing all the time. Ski companies are constantly altering the shapes and sizes of their skis to offer the public excitement and ease on the snow. The ski industry has figured out that varying side cut, length and width make skiing easier in variable conditions and terrain. Beginning skiers can experience success more easily due to the design of modern equipment. For example modern boot binding systems provide more precise control over the ski and skis that are sized to the skier's weight provide an appropriate amount of grip and glide. Beginner lessons will vary depending on the desired outcome of the guest. In general the goal will be to help the guest be comfortable and gain confidence navigating beginner terrain while developing skills that allow for efficient and controlled travel. Assessing and then understanding a student's profile is critical to the success of guests, particularly at the beginning level. As such, the options for developing a teaching plan for beginning skiers is quite broad and is dependent upon appropriate selection of activities that will lead to the development of a skilled blend of movements. Candidates for level one should prepare for any student and be ready to offer coaching and solutions specific to the guest's profile, skills, and background. Candidates will have opportunities to present brief teaching segments geared toward the beginner level for the group and will demonstrate awareness of a basic teaching process (i.e., introduce an activity, develop that activity, offer feedback, and summarize).

Here are examples of different student profiles. How might you plan your lesson to address the needs of these individuals?

- A 16-year-old boy who has never skied. He is athletic, and lives in North Carolina where he spends all his time in-line skating and surfing. What is the path you might take to get him to handle beginner terrain? He has an old pair of leather ankle high boots with 75mm three pin bindings and 205 cm skis.
- A 62-year-old man who is taking up skiing after a career as a backpacker. He has not been very active recently as his wife has been sick and he has been caring for her. What is the path you might take to get him started cross country skiing? He is on a pair of Rossignol Evos rented from your ski area.
- A 42-year-old woman who had some experience alpine skiing in college. She is an avid road biker and wants to learn to skate ski. She and her boyfriend are going on a ski trip to Yellowstone. He bought her a complete set of skis, boots and poles for skate skiing that she has brought for her lesson but not used yet.

Rely on your experiences as a ski teacher for this portion of the assessment process.

People Skills

Include communication, self-awareness/management, and relationships with others throughout the delivery of your plan.

Level I People Skills: Assessing these people skills will be dictated by your basic understanding of people fundamentals. Showing awareness, emotions, clear verbal and non-verbal communications, professionalism, and providing objective feedback. The ability to be patient, respectful, professional, self-aware, and provide objective feedback are key to your success. These qualities will be assessed through your delivery of Technical and Teaching Skills.

Elements of People Skills:

- Delivery
- Active listening
- Reading non-verbal cues
- Tonality
- Eye contact
- Overall understanding of your concepts

Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.)

Considerations for PSIA-E Certification Assessment

The A.D.A. requires testing entities such as PSIA-E to make “*reasonable modifications*” in testing procedures for candidates with disabilities who need such modifications in order to take the test. Only certain types of modifications are “*reasonable.*” **Under the A.D.A., PSIA-E is not required to make any change to testing procedures that would “*fundamentally alter*” the test; that is, to change what is being tested.**

It is imperative that members with disabilities, who are considering applying for a certification assessment, contact PSIA-E office to discuss their situations.

What is being tested is clearly presented in this guide. The standards are national in scope and their maintenance is necessary in the interests of public safety, effectiveness, value for the consumer, and guest/employer expectations.

As examples, PSIA-E certification tests a candidate’s ability to, “Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support to direct pressure along the length of the ski(s). Control the timing of body movements while regulating power application through the skis and poles to optimize propulsion (Push-Off). Control the relationship of the center of mass to the base of support from ski to ski (Weight Transfer) Utilize body movements to manage momentum (Glide).” (PSIA Cross Country Certification Standards TOC Technical Skills p. 17)

These test requirements cannot be modified without changing what is being tested. All candidates will, therefore, be tested on their ability to perform these and other stated standards. PSIA-E recognizes that these specific standards, and others similar to them, require candidates to ski upright, on two skis, and that this is not possible for some skiers with disabilities. While PSIA-E cannot fundamentally alter what is being tested by removing or modifying these standards, it does offer two alternatives to candidates who are unable to meet these standards due to disability.

First, candidates may consider PSIA-E/Educational Foundation Adaptive certification. While there are still physical standards to meet, and the required level of professional knowledge is high, the Adaptive process and the Adaptive examining staff are geared to accommodate most disabilities.

Second, candidates unable to meet the skiing skill requirements of the assessment due to disability, may take the non-skiing skill portions of the PSIA-E certification assessments along with other candidates, and be tested on their teaching ability and professional knowledge. If successful in these two categories, they will receive a Certificate of Accreditation.

The Teaching and Professional Knowledge portions of PSIA-E certification assessments test candidates on their ability to observe students skiing and advise them accordingly. PSIA-E recognizes that such observation may not be possible for visually impaired candidates. PSIA-E is not required to change what is being tested by removing or modifying this requirement.

Candidates who are deaf, or otherwise hearing or speaking impaired, such that they are not able to hear and/or speak independently to students, are not necessarily precluded from taking an exam, and may meet the communication requirements through the use of an interpreter. Of course, all candidates, including those with hearing or speaking disabilities will be held to the same standard of substantive knowledge, and their ability to “get the point across” with maximum accuracy and clarity.

The next topics and articles are part of the American Teaching System that has been utilized over the last decade and has brought us to the current LCM (Learning Connection Model). All

these teaching tools are important and all can be used at your discretion in Snowsports teaching as they fit into the LCM correctly.

Overview of PSIA / PSIA-E

PSIA (**Professional Ski Instructors of America**) is a professional organization of full-time and part-time ski instructors who are dedicated to reaching the highest levels of professionalism and performance within the skiing industry. The national PSIA organization is an alliance of its nine geographical divisions (**over 30,000 members**), and its affairs are governed by representatives of each of those divisions. When you pay your dues each year, you are billed once for membership in two associations, your local division (PSIA-East or PSIA-E) and PSIA itself.

PSIA's eight regions differ from each other in size and geography. They range from a few hundred members in a single state, to several thousand in a multi-state area. Some divisional offices are part time operations, with budgets of only a few thousand dollars; others are fully staffed, year-round business offices with budgets well over \$1,500,000.00. **PSIA-E is one of eight geographical divisions of PSIA. It is the *Eastern* division. It covers sixteen states and has the largest membership (about 11,000) of any division. Nordic members (which includes Telemark and Cross Country) number 2,000 nationally, with approximately 400 in the Eastern division. Members are counted according to their first discipline they were certified in. Instructors may be certified at different levels and sometimes in two or more disciplines. If we counted these crossover members Nordic would be above 650.**

Regional dues are used locally to fund such administrative functions as staffing and maintaining an office, keeping membership records, board of directors and committee activities, publishing a newsletter and manuals, marketing, and supporting educational functions. In general, the divisions provide most of the direct membership services of both associations because they are PSIA's membership base. In addition, they maintain a personal touch through their events and communications. All divisions generate revenue from sources other than dues. Clinics, exams, and educational material sales are examples. Some regions, such as PSIA-E, have tax-exempt, non-profit education foundations that bring in funds from grants, sponsorships, and corporate or private donations.

In contrast to the regions, with their local focus and high visibility, PSIA's focus is national and international, and its efforts are often not readily visible to the membership. Dues represent roughly only 37% of PSIA's total revenue, the remainder is largely generated through advertising and the sale of accessories and educational materials. PSIA also has a non-profit education foundation and a capacity to procure grant money. National has a full time Marketing Director who works continually to bring in money from outside the organization and to market PSIA and its members to the public. Like the divisions, part of PSIA's total revenue is used to support administrative functions, such as running an office, computer systems, funding a board of directors and various committees, and supporting educational projects. After this, PSIA's focus diverges from that of the regions.

PSIA publishes teaching manuals, produces instructional films, and other materials. PSIA's dollars have underwritten the development of ATS, assuring teaching consistency across the country for instructors, and ski school customers alike. PSIA has been the catalyst in the adoption of uniform certification standards and membership categories in all nine divisions. This

has led to reciprocity, which means that you, as a PSIA member, can transfer your credentials to any part of the country.

PSIA funds the selection and training of the National Demonstration Team where team members specialize in one of five disciplines – adaptive, alpine, cross country, snowboard, or telemark. Members of this team represent the U.S. internationally, assist in educational development and also train divisional clinic leaders and examiners. That process is designed to assure consistency in the delivery of our message to every ski instructor, from the international forum to your local ski school. Every four years, members of our demo and educational teams represent this country at INTERSKI, an international ski-teaching symposium, where they have earned us world-wide respect and a leadership role.

Your PSIA dollars are also used to represent the interest of ski instruction to legislative bodies and other national ski industry groups, such as the United States Ski Coaches Association, the National Ski Patrol System, the National Ski Areas Association, and Ski Industries of America. Risk management materials, including manuals and films developed in cooperation with NSAA, have assisted in promoting consistent, professional, and visible risk awareness programs.

Communication with the membership is one of PSIA's highest priorities. Each year they produce three issues of *The Professional Skier*, a comprehensive journal for ski instructors. National committee meetings also help to facilitate a healthy exchange of ideas and information among the divisions. Ongoing research and development activities assure this country's place as a leader in international skiing. Children, seniors, and the disabled are examples of populations being given special consideration. Snowboarding has grown and evolved to where PSIA has founded a subsidiary organization, the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI), to represent that discipline and its members. PSIA continues to play an increasing role in the entire ski industry.

Members pay dues both divisionally and nationally. The divisions conduct and administer regional events, provide membership services, and day-to-day administration. PSIA provides unity and a means of achieving unification; it focuses on those areas where it is necessary to rally the collective talents and resources of the entire country and to speak with one voice. Both associations exist because ski instructors, ski schools, lesson customers, the ski industry, and the skiing countries of the world require it.

PSIA-Eastern, to whom your divisional dues are paid, is a not-for-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors, and serving 14 states, from Maine to North Carolina. There are currently over 11,000 active members, served by a full time, year-round administrative staff of 9, located in Albany, NY. In addition, there are several part time/seasonal employees, and a per-diem staff of over 175 Alpine, Adaptive, Nordic, and Snowboard course conductors and examiners who conduct the educational programs and certification exams. Operating on a \$1.5 million budget, PSIA-E provides numerous member benefits and services. They publish five divisional newsletters (*Snow Pro*) each year, offer a job placement service, consulting and in-house services, educational resource materials, and a diverse menu of over 400 events to satisfy the needs and goals of members in all the disciplines. In addition, development and administration of certification programs is a divisional responsibility.

Purpose:

To promote the sport of skiing through:

- Determining educational needs of its members.
- Providing educational leadership.
- Developing and providing educational material for its members.
- Caring about the sport of skiing and those who participate in it, now and in the future.

Goals:

- To serve its present clientele.
- To help create new clients.
- To make its programs:
 - As safe as possible for an active sport. Fun for the customer and instructor.
 - Centered on learning.
- To serve the ski areas where members work.
- To serve the ski industry.

PSIA Seeks To:

- Promote the sport of skiing.
- Encourage participation in ski instruction.
- Promote recognition of its members.
- Enhance opportunities for self-improvement.
- Help instructors to be valued members of the ski industry.

PSIA and PSIA-E Education and Certification Programs:

- Training for Registered and Certified Level I members is provided first by ski schools, clubs, colleges, and organized groups and then enhanced by participation in divisional (PSIA-E) educational functions.
- Continuing education and development is provided at the divisional level for all membership levels. This includes all skiing disciplines and all student populations.
- Validation that qualifications and standards are met for achieving Level I, II, or III certification is done by the division.
- Advanced training is provided at the National Academy and National Symposiums under the direction of the PSIA staff and the PSIA Steering Committee, with the National Demonstration Team as trainers.

What Every New Instructor Should Know About Guest Service

by Paul Brown; edited by Mickey Stone for Nordic

Your Role in Customer Service

A Level I ski teacher should understand that you serve as an ambassador for the mountain, resort or organization for which you work. You are highly visible and are probably, for the most part, unaware of the influence you may have on the image of the resort. You should be aware that the immediate and future success and prosperity of the resort depends on the customers and how they are treated.

Ski instructors are different from other employees because of the scope of influence they have on the guest. Other mountain employees such as parking attendants or lift loaders may spend only a few seconds with a guest. An instructor, however, spends a minimum of one hour with a guest and may spend days or weeks. While ski industry statistics indicate that something like 10% of skiers actually take lessons, many resorts see percentages of 20% or higher at peak times. That means that one out of every four or five skiers at a given resort may be swayed one way or the other by their ski school experience.

Since Nordic areas are often small, and other duties may be part of your job description, you might see the customer in other departments. This adds more incentive to keep a friendly personality and insure your guests a pleasant experience.

Financial

A ski resort is a business. Skiing is only the medium of that business. A ski area must make money or it is destined to go out of business. The ski school is a profit center and is expected to contribute substantially to the “bottom line”. Customer service and profitability is a real challenge to most ski schools; it is often difficult to achieve a satisfactory balance between the two. However, the better the profit that a ski school produces, the better life usually is for its instructors (new tuning area, higher wages, new programs, props and costumes for festivals, etc.). Providing excellence in guest service and high-quality lessons for ski school customers usually means a higher volume of lessons and return business, and thus a greater profit for the ski school.

Due to our diverse market Nordic represents many types of businesses, some for profit and non-profit. Girl/Boy Scouts, college outing clubs, recreational town clubs, backcountry areas and organized groups that put-on telemark festivals are all part of the Telemark market. Whatever the case we are in the service and educational business. The more you can meet your guest's needs in a safe manner the more repeat business you will have.

Industry Trends

As of January 2022 Covid-19 has brought a renewed interest in outdoor sports including cross country skiing. Demand for equipment is up at the same time retail shops are facing limitations on pre-orders for next season. Most successful cross country ski areas have found ways to gain revenue throughout the year. A growing number of cross country ski areas have made an investment in snowmaking equipment to provide reliable conditions - if only on a limited amount of terrain. This has been a crucial step in maintaining the viability of competitive and recreational cross country skiing programs at the high school, junior, and collegiate levels. It also helps to ensure skiable terrain for guests at destination resorts that rely on revenue from lodging. As a new instructor, you can help keep skiers coming to your area by providing a fun, safe, and exciting skiing experience each time you give a ski lesson. Cross Country skiing has grown in popularity with the general resurgence in outdoor recreation in response to the current pandemic and will hopefully continue that trend.

A Brief History of the Ski Teaching Profession and PSIA

(Compiled and edited from several sources)

The history of skiing goes back thousands of years. It provided a means of transportation over snow and was useful in both hunting and warfare. There are many accounts to indicate that it has long been viewed as a sport, as a basis for competition, and as a skill that required instruction. Petroglyphs (rock carvings on cave walls) date back to over 4500 years ago in Russia depicting three men with poles and skis proving the use of skis for life skills. In Norway above the Arctic Circle on an island in a cave there is a single man depicted on long runners with a hunting implement, dating back over 4000 years ago. There have been skis found in bogs in Finland and Sweden that have also been dated back about 4500 years ago. There are theories and artifacts that support China having the first skiers dating back from 5000-9000 years ago. Due to the size and isolation of China it has been hard to research the area. It is thought that some of the first trans-Siberian people moved across on skis or primitive snowshoes.



The “Modern era” might be said to have begun when skiing evolved to more closely resemble our current sport; when it became more organized and publications on the subject started to appear. The first organized ski teaching occurred in 1713 in Norway within the military, and a handbook for the Norwegian troops was written in 1733. The first “ski club” was founded in 1813, also in Norway.

Some of the more notable early pioneers of skiing and ski teaching were:

Cross-country skiing evolved from a utilitarian means of transportation to being a worldwide recreational activity and sport, which branched out into other forms of skiing starting in the mid-1800s.

Early skiers used one long pole or spear in addition to the skis. The first depiction of a skier with two [ski poles](#) dates to 1741.

Traditional skis, used for snow travel in Norway and elsewhere into the 1800s, often comprised one short ski with a natural fur [traction surface](#), the *andor*, and one long for gliding, the *langski*

[Ski warfare](#), the use of ski-equipped troops in [war](#), is first recorded by the [Danish](#) historian [Saxo Grammaticus](#) in the 13th century.

- Fridtjof Nansen a Norwegian polar explorer crossed Greenland and published *Crossing Greenland on Skis* in 1890. It was published in three languages and what was Norwegian text was now public knowledge.
- Mathias Zdarsky, Austrian. Considered the “Father of Alpine Skiing”. Founded one of the first organized military ski schools and taught thousands of new skiers. Developed equipment and a technique. (1890’s-early 1900’s). Created the riff between the binding

war of Nordic and alpine.



- Modern cross-country skiing is similar to the original form of skiing, from which all skiing disciplines evolved, including **alpine skiing**, **ski jumping** and **Telemark skiing**



Safety and Risk Management

To be a success at LI, you must be aware of safety issues, live up to students' expectations, provide value, and understand your responsibilities. Mountain sports are inherently risky. People who choose to explore the alpine environment must accept this fact. However, when they do so under the care and guidance of a resort professional, the risks are minimized. Creating an atmosphere of risk awareness and providing basic information on safety are among your responsibilities as an instructor. By following seven simple rules – the “do’s” of safe skiing – and sharing them with your students at frequent intervals, you’ll be doing yourself and everyone else on the slopes a big favor. Those rules are known as Your Responsibility Code, and are endorsed by the National Ski Areas Association, PSIA-AASI, and the National Ski Patrol. [Know the Code NSP](#)

Your Responsibility Code

1. Always ski in control and be able to avoid other people or objects.
2. Uphill skiers should yield to downhill skiers.
3. Stop in a safe place for you and others.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging, look and yield to oncoming skiers.
5. Observe signs and warnings and keep off closed trails.
6. Be aware that some trails may be one-way and plan accordingly.

Other guidelines to make for fun, hazard-free skiing:

Body Basics

- Use minimum 15 SPF broad-spectrum sunscreen, regardless of cloudiness or sun.
- Drink frequently to avoid dehydration.
- Layer with breathable, water-wicking layers that can be added or subtracted with changes in the weather.

Learn Your Limits

- Turn back before you become tired.
- Understand trail difficulty markings while knowing that they are relative to the trails at that area and will be greatly affected by snow conditions and grooming or lack thereof.
- Ski at your own level. Test your skills to improve, but know when you’re crossing over into dangerous territory. Ski patrollers say this is the number one safety issue at resorts.
- Control your speed. Respect others on the trail system, especially in high-traffic areas where trails are merging.

Principles of American Skiing

The American way of skiing is simply effective and versatile skiing based upon skiing principles. Versatile skiing can have many images, but it has a core that starts with basic movements and skills. These movements and skills evolve with time and practice and take into account a variety of body shapes, terrain, equipment choices, and snow conditions. We get to functional skiing by starting with a desire, an outcome and an image of what we want to do and where we want to go. We make the ski bend, engage, twist, and release by building a solid base of movements and skills that have purpose and direction. We teach skiing effectively by developing and using strong movement assessment skills and understanding how to translate our observations into helpful teaching that is valuable to our students. Below is a list of skiing principles that define American ski teaching and the characteristics upon which our philosophies are based.

The Principles of American Skiing include:

1. Having outcomes and images of contemporary skiing

Everyone has an outcome in his or her head of what they want their skis to do and an image of what they want to look like while they are skiing. The skiing image that PSIA aspires to be is efficient, functional, precise, clean, elegant, fresh, effective, accurate, exciting, contemporary, and incorporates full use of the equipment available.

2. Making the skis perform

Understanding the interface between your skis and the snow will allow you to not only get the results that you desire, you will be able to help others understand how to get the results that they crave. It is crucial to understand how skills affect the performance of your skis in and on the snow. Remember the movements you teach are not the 'end result' of your lesson. The 'end result' of your lesson is to get the skis to do what your student wants them to do.

3. Understanding skiing movements

As a teacher, the ability to assess movements (Movement Analysis or MA) is a key factor to improving other people's skiing. MA is a process of identifying and reinforcing the strengths of your students and recognizing and targeting areas that need development. Once you can assess what your student's needs are, you can then tailor feedback and teaching to each individual's needs. Knowing 'where we want to go' and 'how we get there' are important keys to the MA puzzle. The ability to observe and describe what you see is one piece of the puzzle. Utilizing the Telemark Components as a template will be a useful tool. Another piece of MA involves recognizing and understanding the movements that you see in others and how those movements affect the ski as it passes over and through the snow. Sharing the correct information with your students and coming up with a game plan for reaching desired outcomes allows you to create valuable experiences for your students.

A Simple Plan for Delivering an Effective Lesson

by Mermer Blakeslee

Managing a class effectively takes organization, awareness, and skill. Remember that one of the most important things is simply to provide for a lot of skiing time. The article below is an example of how the Teaching Model can be integrated into a useful, yet simple plan for delivering an effective lesson.

Teaching a Lesson

Introduction (Goal Setting)

- * Introduce yourself.
- * Open a dialogue with your student so you create the feeling that learning is easy and fun.
- * Ask questions so you learn about your student and what (s)he wants from you.
- * Watch your student so you can discern his skill level (and what (s)he needs the most).
- * Plan what to do to reach an achievable goal, one that satisfies what your student wants and what you can offer.

Body (The Progression)

- * Speak concisely in simple language. Ask, "Am I being clear?"
- * Show clearly what to do. Make sure students can see you.
- * Point out parts of the body they should look at. Ask, "Could you see that?"
- * Let the student do it.
- * Give necessary logistics (follow you? follow another student? where to stop, etc.)
- * Give feedback.
- * Be specific. Check for reaction. End on a positive note.
- * Repeat or progress to the next step based on your student's performance and attitude.

Movement Analysis

During the lesson you will be observing the students' motor skills in order to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of their movements. Based on this, and with your knowledge, you can develop a lesson plan, tip, drill, game, or feedback for your student(s). Pay particular attention to:

- * Overall Performance using the Performance Model
- * Body Position
- * Movements
- * Timing
- * Power or push off

Observe your student(s) discreetly, in order to relieve performance anxiety. Remember, a good instructor conducts movement analysis throughout the entire lesson to determine both the students' progress and the lesson's success.

Summary

- * Review and reinforce what is gained from the lesson.

- * Give practice tips.
- * Tell your students what they could learn in a future lesson and if appropriate, when you are available.

Developing Working Relationships

The number one goal of any resort or ski teaching area is to provide a fun-filled experience for its guests. All staff, from maintenance workers to senior managers, make decisions based on this vision. When customers come to your area to benefit from your knowledge and experience as a Snowsport instructor, they come with ideas, motivations, and beliefs that have been shaped by their life experiences and environment. As a ski teacher, you have two service jobs to do; you need to function as part of your resort team and you need to provide the best experience possible for your guests. Although coaching students on the hill may seem to be a separate activity from resort operations, a lot of teamwork is needed to set the stage for the clinic experience. From lifts to snow, from tickets to equipment, from lunch to hotel rooms, the extended members of your team help meet the needs of your students. Like your extended family, these teammates often do their jobs in a place remote from where you are. You may hardly give a second thought to their roles unless something is amiss. Yet, their contribution is fundamental to your job. Imagine teaching a Snowsport without snow. Imagine teaching without lodges, lifts, or rental gear. You notice if the snow quality isn't right, the rental gear doesn't fit, or the lift smacks you in the back of the knees. You are in ecstasy if the grooming is perfect, the burgers are juicy, and the administrative staff gets your schedule booked correctly.

On the other hand, those who perform the other tasks at the resort notice your effect on the resort as well. For many, Snowsports instruction is their introduction to the mountain lifestyle. New visitors to the mountains rely on your expertise to make a lasting impression; the resorts rely on you to keep the visitors coming back—and bringing their friends. You provide the image and soul of the mountain lifestyle. Even those who don't participate in lessons see pros on the mountain and gauge their performance against what they see. Staff members in other departments support what you share with the guests: the mountain experience. You can enhance your personal success by building relationships with other staff members at the resort.

The second aspect of your job is to understand the customer's needs and motivations and to propose a plan to satisfy and benefit that customer. Ideally, you not only meet the customers' needs, but you exceed their expectations. Your resort is in the business of selling service. While the mountain itself is the attraction, the amenities and facilities are important to the experience, which is shaped by interactions with staff members. As a Snowsports teacher or coach, many things are beyond your control: the weather, the facilities, and snow conditions. However, the things you can control, such as your ability to interact in a positive way with each guest you encounter and your own personal contribution to resort operations can make all the difference.

By the time you greet guests for a clinic, they will already have had to pass through a variety of hoops. Consider a family that arrives at a resort for the first time. Imagine bringing two small children through multiple parking lots, with gear, only to find they must walk another quarter mile to the children's center.

Or consider the group of friends who bring their buddy to learn to ride a snowboard only to find that they need to rent equipment at the base of the mountain, which will cause them to be late for the lesson. Take a moment to walk through your resort and see it from your customer's eyes. Familiarity with the common challenges your students face will give you added patience and empathy in the meeting area and allow you to help them solve any problems that could threaten their experience.

When guests know you understand and appreciate what they go through, they will be more able to move on to the learning experience. When you show them how much you love not just your sport, but your resort, they will realize that their effort was worth it and want to be part of that experience again.

Overview of Childhood Development

As you begin your journey as a ski instructor, it is important to gain knowledge about the growth and development of human beings as it relates to skiing. With more experience, you will need to gain more understanding of how this development can affect what and how you teach, and as a master teacher, you will rely on developmental information to help you truly individualize instruction for any student you encounter.

To help you organize your thoughts regarding developmental issues, we refer to the information as “The C.A.P. Model.” The acronym merely helps you to remember the three basic categories [Cognitive, Affective, Physical], which make up human development as it relates to skiing. One goal as we teach skiing is to help children understand how to behave and move in desirable ways. The level at which a child understands, behaves and moves depends on growth and development.

The C.A.P. MODEL [Cognitive, Affective, Physical]

Your ability to communicate skiing information to children (cognitive) depends on:

- ◆ How children process information.
- ◆ How children express themselves.
- ◆ How children reason.

Young children understand the world in concrete or experience-based terms. This means they comprehend only what they *can* see or touch, or *have* seen or touched before. Abstract thinking begins to develop by age eleven or twelve.

Concepts such as cause and effect, time and space, and distance and speed, are developed over time. A child’s understanding of these ideas can affect their understanding of communication attempts.

The ability to process information grows with the child. Very young children may not be able to attend to putting on skis while receiving stimuli from another source.

Very young children may have difficulty sequencing more than one or two tasks, while older children may be able to sequence three or more.

Processing of cause and effect, and rules and their consequences, develops with age.

Motivation to ski (*affective*) depends on:

- ◆ How children relate to their peers.
- ◆ How children relate to adults.
- ◆ How children think about themselves.

Egocentricity, the principle that the child is the center of the universe, affects children's behavior. Young children often think they are the cause of any ongoing event. They also have difficulty putting themselves into “someone else’s shoes.” Older children show egocentricity by thinking that others are always watching them, even when it is obvious, they can’t be. This causes everything from shyness to cockiness. Younger children are anxious to *fit into* the group and please others. Older children are more concerned with their position *within* the group. They are



more readily influenced by their peers. Younger children are usually not competitive; playing alone is enough. Older children may be competitive, and have their self-worth tied to their accomplishments.

Development of appropriate skiing movements (*physical*) depends on:

- ◆ How children’s bodies are proportioned.
- ◆ The amount of strength children possess.
- ◆ Spatial awareness.
- ◆ Whether a child has developed the ability to use parts of the body separately.



Young children’s heads and trunks are large in proportion to their limbs. By 8 or 9 years the proportions approximate that of adults. As a result of a higher center of mass, a small child may have a “back” stance with a reliance on heel pressure.

Younger children move the whole body as a unit. The development of fine motor skills is apparent by age’s 9-12. Separation of upper and lower body and left and right sides of the body occurs over time as the child grows.

The muscles of a young child function as if more loosely attached than those of an adult, affording less strength, yet greater flexibility.

Children's Lesson Plan for Instructors

A Plan for the Day (The ATS Teaching Model)

A lesson plan for the day provides structure and enhances learning. There are many formats to use depending on class times, student needs, and programs. To capitalize on a child's sense of fun and their excitement to ski, we have developed the following lesson format:

Play	Get the lesson off to a great start! Introduce the lesson as FUN! Assess the children's abilities in a relaxed, happy atmosphere.
Drill	Determine goals and objectives that target specific skills. Work with activities that are challenging, fun, and success oriented. Present information in short time spans and provide lots of demonstrations. Keep it interactive!
Adventure	Take what the students have learned and apply it to our wonderful mountain playground. Expand skills in a wide range of experiences during practice time. Transfer learning to new situations, and check for understanding.
Summary	Reinforce learning with reminders throughout the day. Use easy to remember cue works, (e.g., "we learned edging today"). Refresh memories before going home and take time to talk with parents.

Appreciating Diversity

One way to stay excited about developing your teaching skill is to learn about a special population or learn to teach another Snowsport. Diversification will provide new perspectives on learning, coaching, and performance. Through diversification, you will become more valuable to your alpine, Nordic, or snowboard school in addition to providing yourself with an antidote for getting stuck in a rut.

Women

Recent industry publications are targeting women as the decision-makers in the family when it comes to vacations. If “mom” isn’t crazy about winter sports, she’s not going to agree to hang around for long, shopping or reading, while hubby and the kids have all the fun. Helping make women passionate about Snowsports is critical to keeping the family coming back for more.

Most programs now include clinics specifically for women. Some women feel more comfortable learning new skills with and from other women. There’s a different atmosphere in a group of women than in a mixed group. In a group of women, it can be easier to ask questions and focus on learning, so progress is quicker.

It’s exciting to see the support and camaraderie that women can provide in a group. The atmosphere stays just as competitive, just as intense, yet the competition is within, not between, individuals. The intensity goes toward pushing each other as far as possible without sacrificing self-worth by comparing one’s own goals or progress with those of others.

Children

Nationally, children represent 50 to 60 percent of all lessons taught. What better place to leave a legacy than with a group of kids who come back year after year and ask specifically for you? Children are exciting to coach: they are energetic, learn quickly, and push themselves willingly.

The main challenge in teaching children is to keep them safe and learning while having more fun than they dreamed possible. This can be the easiest task for you on some days, and the most difficult on others.

The best thing about coaching children is that they have a unique way of reminding you of why you came to the mountains in the first place. If it isn’t fun, it isn’t worth doing. This forces the teacher to connect the drills and teaching activities with the fun they were designed to produce...something we all lose sight of from time to time.

Learning to tap into your imagination to capture the attention of a group of young children will help you bring the same creativity to all aspects of your coaching. What you need to know:

- ◆ How to motivate children.
- ◆ Ages and stages of development.
- ◆ Physical capabilities for different age groups.
- ◆ Recognizing limitations in equipment.
- ◆ How to involve the parents in the process.

Seniors

Everyone's getting older. It's inevitable. Yet, growth in Snowsports participation among seniors is disproportionately small compared to the population at large. Aging Snowsports enthusiasts are heading to other activities, such as golf, at a rapid and, from some perspectives, an alarming rate. Happily, the ones who stay are realizing that they can continue to enjoy the mountain environment far into their later years.

Seniors' groups are springing up all over the country. With names like "Silver Wings" and "Prime Time," the focus is on enjoying the thrill of winter sports and the mountain environment. Their purpose also includes a social component as they look for ways to meet and interact with others now that they don't have jobs to go to and their children have reached adulthood and are busy with their own lives and families.

While elders are less energetic and slower at showing improvement than younger groups, teaching them has its own rewards. These are people who have learned to savor life, to appreciate a gorgeous day and beautiful scenery, to revel in seemingly minor accomplishments, to draw from the energy of their younger instructor—and to make every run count.

PSIA-AASI members age too. As we age, we discover tricks to help us "keep up" longer. Sharing these insights with other aging participants can be gratifying and exciting both for older professionals and for younger ones seeking wisdom from their senior peers and mentors.

Adaptive

For any winter sport professional that wants to gain a sense of what really matters, coaching in an adaptive program may fill the bill. To coach students with special physical or mental needs, a pro must look for what each student can do, instead of what they can't. This is often a monumental challenge that forces you to change your own definition of success.

Adaptive teaching doesn't mean lowering expectations, but realizing that success has many facets and that finding a path to success for each student is the ultimate challenge. Helping someone with one leg learn to be independent with outriggers, or a paraplegic learn to negotiate the mountain on a sled, can open up a whole new world of possibilities for growth and appreciation of the sport—and of life—for you as well as the student.

Ski Equipment - Design and Function

Reprinted and adapted from the PSIA- NRM Level I Training Manual

Skis - Design: Every ski has characteristics, which determine how it will perform for different people with different needs.

- Length affects the stability of the ski and its ability to turn and track. A longer ski will be steadier at higher speeds, while a shorter ski turns more easily. Recommended ski lengths are based on weight, skill level, speed, and conditions. In cross country skis there are traditional length skis, mid size skis and even some short skis. Skate skis tend to be shorter than classic skis. If you are not familiar with sizing skis, check with the manufacturers recommendations.
- Camber is the bend or bow in the skis when the two bases are put together. The function of camber is to distribute the weight of the skier along the entire running surface of the ski. For diagonal stride skis, the bend or bow in the skis will be large and pronounced. This is the area that kick wax is applied to (referred to as waxing the pocket). The center is pushed down to the grip. This is called the "kick" phase. When the skier lets go and slides on the tip and tail, this is called the "glide" phase. For skating skis, a quicker rebound or stiffer pocket under foot will allow for more efficient movements going from skate to skate.
- Sidecut is the dimension of a ski whereby the width of the tip and tail is wider than the middle of the ski. In general, alpine skis have a more pronounced sidecut, while cross country skis can have little or no side cut.
- Flex is the springy resistance of the ski on snow. A stiff ski is more difficult to flex than a soft ski. Heavier and stronger skiers need stiffer skis than lighter skiers. Also, more skilled skiers who ski at greater speeds need stiffer skis than less skilled skiers. The above refers to longitudinal flex; another kind of flex would be from sidewall to sidewall, known as torsional flex. Classic skis typically have double camber while a skate ski has single camber. Skate skis typically have greater torsional rigidity than a classic ski.
- Waxable/Waxless: Waxless skis have a pattern molded into the base of the ski. This pattern is always there, allowing hopefully for optimal grip in all conditions. A wax ski needs to have an application of grip wax applied under the stiff cambered section in the middle, called the wax pocket. A wax ski has the potential to be the best performance ski, if you match the ski and the wax properly to the skier type and size, as well as to snow conditions. Modern skin skis have come close to performing like a waxable ski although they typically do not ski sideways well impacting movements such as wedging and skidded turns. It is difficult to ski at an intermediate or advanced skill level on traditional waxless skis unless it is a performance waxless ski. This is because an entry level waxless ski allows for a longer and softer kick down in order to grip the snow. Thus someone skiing on such a ski does not develop the complex timing needed in order to compress a skin, waxable or higher level waxless ski.

Boots - Boots should fit well, support the skier's feet, and fit the skier's lower leg. The skier's weight, height and skill level should determine the amount of flex needed for optimum skiing performance. Nordic boots, tele and track, should fit snugly in the instep and heel and be roomy enough in the toes to allow movement. Basically, the heavier and longer the ski, the higher and stiffer the boot. The converse is true with lighter skis and lower boots. Boots are the most crucial link between you

and the skis. A classic boot allows for the foot to flex and for a skier to feel the foot on the skier. A skate boot is stiffer, often with little flex in the mid part of the boot yet has great torsional control and is very stable.

- Flex: A heavy, powerful skier will lose performance in an overly flexible boot because the energy transmitted to the ski will be lost in the boot's excessive give. A lighter, less aggressive skier in a rigid boot will be locked at the ankles and will bend at the knees while skiing, causing the hips to drop behind the center of mass.
- Forward Lean: Most telemark or alpine boots cause the skier to flex forward in the ankle. A cross country boot is designed to allow the ankle to move and a skier's stance and flex forward is controlled by the person at their ankle while allowing a flat foot on the ski.
- Canting: Designed to accommodate an uneven stance, canting can be: An adjustment under the sole of the boot to evenly weight the two edges of the ski or an adjustment, usually at the ankle hinge of the boot, to fit the lateral curve of the lower leg. The latter is called ankle canting or leg canting.

Poles - Are important for timing, power and balance. The proper fit depends upon the type of Nordic skiing (see below). For track skiing, poles are used for propulsion. In telemark skiing they are used for timing and balance. Backcountry skiing utilizes poles for propulsion, timing and balance.

- Telemark skiing - Slightly shorter than alpine poles.
- Backcountry - Place pole upside down on a hard surface and grasp the pole beneath the basket; the elbow should form a right angle for ascent/descent type skiing. If touring mostly with no major downhill, then the poles should be armpit to shoulder height. Many backcountry skiers use adjustable poles.
- Track-classical cross country - Armpit to top of shoulder height.
- Freestyle - Mouth to upper lip height.

Straps and handles are designed for specific ski disciplines, comfort and performance. Baskets are often determined by snow/track conditions. There is a great diversity of sizes and styles. Comfort and the right length are the keys.

Bindings - Are the critical link that attaches your boot to your ski. Unlike alpine, cross country bindings do not release in the event of a fall. Twisting forces on the legs and ankles during a fall are somewhat different than in alpine skiing since the heel does not attach, the skis are lighter, the boots more flexible, and the speeds are slower. There is generally a reduced risk of severe injury than there may be with alpine skiing. There are many types of bindings and binding systems. Older boot binding systems for cross country skiing were mostly 75mm. Modern classic and skate boots are primarily a system compatible with NNN becoming the most common. Some Salomon pilot bindings and SNS boot bindings can still be found. For telemark skiing, cable bindings, three-pin cable, NTN (New Telemark Norm), TTS (Telemark Tech System), step in releasable, and combinations of all are now on the market. There are also mid weight binding systems such as Backcountry NNN that are sturdier than their track counterpart but not as sturdy as leather or plastic boot/binding systems. Currently there is an explosion of binding types out there. Even if we categorized them in types within the categories, they all can be different. Unlike alpine ski equipment cross country ski boots are only compatible with corresponding bindings. A knowledgeable instructor will be familiar with the various

boot/binding combinations and be able to spot difficulties quickly.

Personal Development Plan

by Mickey Stone, Nordic Coordinator

On behalf of PSIA-E, welcome and congratulations for participating in our Certified Level I event. The membership of PSIA encourages you to continue to develop your skills as a professional ski teacher. Continued professional growth will benefit you, your ski area and ski school, and ultimately your students. When we, as members of PSIA and PSIA-E collectively strive to improve our skills, we create a positive reflection on our profession; one that benefits us all. It is to that end that we ask you to reflect upon your interests, goals, and performance at this event in order to chart a path for your future development.

We have entered the years where we will not be surprised by what we see on the hill or what athletes are doing in the off-piste. These times of the “Extreme” are here and the freedom of expression and belonging to a specific group is here to stay for a while. It is really not all that different than the expression and diversity of the 60’s and early 70’s. It is time to try lots of things. Telemark skiing has been around since the dawn of time and now in the pipes and parks as well as the backcountry. To us it is truly the most diverse and explorative of all the disciplines. To be able to learn how to ski, parallel, tele, climb, skate and stride all on one ski is truly the master of all trades. Share your passion and expertise with others so they can explore the same world we do and have the camaraderie and relations that we do (don’t show everyone your secret stashes though).

Share your passion and expertise with others so they can explore the same world we do and have the camaraderie and relations that we do.

Currently, ski schools and areas are going through cycles of understanding diverse equipment, safety procedures and what the visual picture looks like to the guest. It becomes more and more obvious each year the commonalities of movements with all the diverse gear. Telemark is a hybrid right now of x-country movements and downhill movements. 250-300 years ago, it was known as downhill skiing and traveling. Our goal and yours would be to help your organization to understand that Telemark has far more similarities than differences with alpine skiing. All instructors should be diverse in their teaching and tasks to accommodate many types of gear in classes. For now, try to promote rentals in the telemark field at your resort and nearby ski shops, be realistic and professional, and work within your parameters. Learn parallel techniques as well as the many types of turns you can do on these skis. Try to be the best model you can and support the sport.

We offer many different events in the East that are tailored to meet the needs of our members. The events have credit values; 1 credit per 1 day of participation. These accumulate on your membership record much as college courses are logged toward a degree. As your skills grow, so does your professional skiing resume. Continue to assess your strengths and weaknesses. Keep in mind your job responsibilities, duties, and your home area training. Plan your steps and start to grow! Free the heels and the mind will follow.

addendum by Hal Westwood PSIA-E Cross Country Examiner

While much of the above applies to telemark skiing it also relates to modern cross country skiing. All skiers, regardless of equipment, share the same roots. While telemark skiing usually refers to a style of skiing that uses metal edged skis and sturdy boots the telemark turn can be made on any freeheel gear including lightweight cross country skis. The ability to perform and teach basic telemark turns are assessed at levels two and three.

Expert cross country skiers are able to utilize a full range of downhill maneuvers that include wedge christies, parallel turns, stem turns, wedge turns, step turns, skate turns, and telemark turns to adapt to terrain, snow conditions, and to reach their desired outcome. Master them all to become a more versatile skier and have more fun!

Cross Country Course Descriptions

Due to the number of people teaching cross country skiing PSIA-E offers several educational clinics each year. The clinics are designed to accommodate people geographically rather than topically. It is possible to achieve a Level I certification in cross country at any clinic on the Eastern cross country schedule. However the only clinic where members can achieve Level II or III is an exam clinic typically held in early March of the year. If you are taking a clinic in preparation for taking the Level II and III exam later let the course conductor know so that you can maximize your preparation for the exam.

For all certification events the candidate should:

- Review Nordic Movements
- Know how to use the sports performance model and fundamental movements when teaching
- Review movements and skills appropriate for the level of certification being tested.
- Be prepared to teach other course participants at the level of certification being tested.
- Be able to apply movement analysis.
- Personal skiing improvement and coaching.
- Review commonly seen movement patterns at the level appropriate for the certification
- Expect to ski and teach classic, skating and downhill maneuvers appropriate for the level of certification being tested.

If uncertain about the appropriateness of a cross country clinic for you contact the Nordic coordinator to have a discussion.

Level II / III Assessment - commonly held in early March each year.

- **Eligibility:** Certified Level I or II members.
- **Equipment:** Both classic and skate equipment. The classic skis should be waxable, skin or high performing waxless.
- **Course Description:** This two-day clinic deals specifically with the skiing and teaching at an intermediate level for Level II certification or advanced skiing for a Level III certification.

(These are explained in depth in the Level II / III Cross country Assessment Guide.)

Professional Development • Cross Country Recommended Reading List

Having the skills and knowledge to be a competent, well-rounded skier, and snowsports teacher requires a well-rounded and diverse education. Use the reading and video resources listed below to help develop a substantial foundation of skiing related knowledge.

Recommended Reading

The following list of books, manuals, and magazines are directly related to ATS and are great resources for instructors to continue forward on their path toward professional development.

- Teaching Snowsports Manual (2018)
- Cross Country Technical Manual (2015)
- Fitness for Skiing and Snowboarding
- Cross Country Technical Manual (2015)
- Teaching Children Snowsports (2021)
- Snow Pro Newsletter PSIA-E
- 32 Degrees Magazine by PSIA-AASI

Additional Reading

The following books are suggested as additional resources for ski instructors and exam candidates.

- PSIA-AASI Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors Manual (2001)
- Alpine Technical Manual, Skiing and Teaching Skills. PSIA
- Nordic Manual 2003 New (released in spring of 2004)
- ATS: Nordic Skiing 1st ed. PSIA
- PSIA-AASI Children's Instruction Handbook PSIA
- Children's Instruction Manual
- Allen & Mike's Really Cool Backcountry Tips, 1998, Falcon Press
- John Dunn, Winterwise, AMC, 1996

Websites

There are numerous websites that are useful for teaching cross country skiing. Some of these are:

- Nordic ski Lab- <https://nordicskilab.com/>
- XC Ski Academy, Dave Lawrence-<http://www.xcskiacademy.com/about>
- Faster Skier- <https://fasterskier.com/>
- Movement Matrix- PSIA- https://matrix.thesnowpros.org/wp-login.php?redirect_to=https%3A%2F%2Fmatrix.thesnowpros.org%2F

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