



# Roadmap To Becoming An NSP Instructor

## OVERVIEW

This process establishes a basic flow for an NSP patroller to follow to become an instructor. There is some flexibility with experienced instructors. Consult the Mentor, Instructor Trainer or Region Administrator if you have any questions or concerns. The Instructor of Record for the course must be aware that you are an Instructor-in-training.

## PREREQUISITES:

Becoming an Instructor requires several key elements, one of which is time to dedicate to the development of *instructing* and the development of teaching skills. Another is to be an Instructor you must have a very strong concept of the Program requirements as outlined in the most current edition of the Program book. You must be willing to accept criticism and compliments during ongoing evaluations and reviews. The process is performance-dependent *and your levels of achievement dictate the time it takes to become an Instructor.*

## Basic Flow

1. *Successfully* complete the *NSP Instructor Development* course.

Two Options – Either the Traditional course or the Hybrid Course

2. Mentor assignment (follow Region/Division Policy)

a. Meet with your mentor

- Discuss expectations, goals, process, game plan, responsibilities, timeline, etc.
- Review paperwork, especially *Instructor Application* and *Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form*
- Review Mentoring manual – *NSP Guide to Mentoring New Instructors*

3. Observe other instructors w/ mentor—debrief

4. Prepare and review lesson plan(s) with mentor

5. Teach lesson(s) – *this is program specific and performance-dependent.*

6. Final *Instructor Trainer* evaluation & approval

7. *Final paperwork completed with program administrator and/or division supervisor (program and Division specific.*

## STEP ONE: INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT COURSE

The first step in becoming an instructor in any NSP discipline is to complete the Instructor Development course. This is currently offered in two formats. The traditional format is a one-day or two-day course consisting of academic (didactic) presentations, discussions and practice presentations.

Another option is based upon the *Hybrid* online course available through the NSP.org website. This course consists of eleven chapters that the prospective instructor candidate may take at his/her own pace. Upon completion of this portion of the course, the candidate will be able to print a certificate of completion. This is **NOT** the completion of the Instructor Development Course, only the online portion of the course. The next step is to contact the ID Instructor of Record for the time and place of the second part of the class (face-to-face portion). One of the things to do here is present the "Six-Pack" you prepared. Your Instructor Development IOR will be able to discuss this with you in more detail.

## STEP TWO: YOUR MENTOR

*As part of the Instructor Development course you will complete an Instructor Application. This document will then follow the path as determined by the region/Division specific process and a mentor will be assigned to you.*

You will be working closely with your mentor throughout this process, so make sure the two of you can work well together. This not only means you have compatible personalities but also that your schedules and communication styles are compatible as well.

Items that need to be covered together include, but are not limited to:

- NSP Guide to Mentoring New Instructors
- General administrative procedures, such as:
  - How to create and register courses
  - How to administer courses
  - How to close courses
- Paperwork
  - Review the Instructor Application and begin completing it. Discuss how the rest of the document will be completed. This is your responsibility, but you'll likely need some guidance from your mentor.
  - Review the Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form and begin completing this as well. Discuss the flow of the process as it appears in this document. Understand who signs what and when. You should be proactive in obtaining these signatures as you progress through the process.
  - Track and maintain all of your instructor paperwork and bring this with you to each class you teach. Those who evaluate you may want to review this. Your mentor will want to review it, and all signatures should be obtained as milestones are completed.
  - Course Evaluation Form

- QA IT Course Evaluation Form
- Event/Training Release Form
- NSP.org instructor resources - *using the Instructor Development program as an example for resources.*
- Instructor Development Instructor Manual
- Instructor Development CE Manual
- Instructor mentoring form
- Review of the NSP Programs Quality Management Program
- Lesson planning and contingency planning (e.g., “Plan B” should things not go according to your plan)
- Your plan of action, such as:
  - Realistic goals—how much time and energy can you (and your mentor) devote to becoming an instructor; are your schedules compatible?
  - How will you work together? Best modes of communication (phone, email, text, face-to-face, etc.)
  - What kind of learner are you? How can you, as a team, best capitalize upon this?
  - Your “game plan” to becoming an instructor. Keep in mind this is a dynamic process and will likely change as you progress.
    - What are your responsibilities as an instructor candidate?
    - What are your mentor’s responsibilities?
    - What is your timeline? You will likely have to work with your course IOR as he/she will need to schedule you to teach specific classes.

There is much to discuss before moving on to the next step. This may be better achieved with “bite size” pieces and covered over several meetings. When complete, have that part of the mentoring form signed.

## **STEP THREE: OBSERVE OTHER INSTRUCTORS**

Before getting too invested in creating your own lesson plans, observe a lesson or two and debrief them with your mentor. What did they do well? Are there any techniques that were particularly effective with this class that you could emulate? What techniques didn't seem to be very effective? What learning styles did you observe among the students? What methods could you employ to engage this class? What challenges do you see?

Your insights will be valuable as you create your lesson plans.

Experienced teachers and instructors might be able to skip this step.

## **STEP FOUR: PREPARE AND REVIEW LESSON PLAN(S) WITH YOUR MENTOR**

Now that you have a good idea about the students and have given some thought as to what teaching styles might be most effective for this class, you can begin to develop your lesson plan. Use the tools and techniques you learned in your Instructor Development course, such as the “Six-Pack.” Once you have developed your lesson plan, think about what could possibly go wrong and consider ways to deal with these issues. Some of your contingency plans might address things such as: audio-video equipment failures, Wi-Fi/internet problems, teaching assistants showing up late or not at all, uncooperative weather, room changes, etc. Having thought through all of these scenarios will reduce your stress levels dramatically, even if nothing goes wrong.

If you have questions along the way or get “stumped,” confer with your mentor. That’s what he/she is there for and can help you work through it.

Once you have developed your lesson plan, let your mentor review it. It never hurts to have a second set of eyes on it. Once the two of you are satisfied with the lesson plan, practice it a few times to get comfortable with the material and your delivery. If possible, run through it with family, friends or patrollers in the roles of your students.

## **STEP FIVE: TEACH LESSON(S)**

Once you and your mentor have coordinated with the Instructor of Record, it is time to teach your class. Make sure your mentor is there to observe.

It is best to take a few minutes to debrief as soon after your lesson as possible. Tell your mentor how you felt it went. What did you think went particularly well? Did anything take you by surprise or catch you off guard? Were there any issues that you felt you were unable to handle or could have handled better? What would you do differently if you were to do it again? You and your mentor should have a good two-way discussion on your positive takeaways and one or two items (if there were any) that you should work on in the future.

After considering all the input from you and those who observed you, talk to your mentor about an appropriate next step. After you have completed being observed for two lessons, your mentor may recommend continuing on practicing the lessons by teaching another class and incorporating any lessons learned from your debriefings. You may want to teach additional multiple classes to give yourself the opportunity to hone your teaching skills while being observed.

Remember at the end of each observation to have your mentor sign the mentoring checklist.

## **STEP SIX: FINAL IT EVALUATION**

Once you and your mentor feel you are ready, have your mentor coordinate a time with the assigned Instructor Trainer (IT) to observe and evaluate your performance as an instructor. Follow Division Guidelines for the coordination of this step.

This is a particularly important event for you, so make sure you work closely with your mentor. Review your past evaluations and make sure that you build upon your strengths and address any areas for improvement that have been noted in prior evaluations.

The IT, your mentor, and you will debrief the lesson, just like you have done in the past. The only difference here is that the IT will either recommend that you become an Instructor, or he/she will make some suggestions for improvement and ask for an opportunity to evaluate you on another lesson.

At this point ask for the signatures of the mentor and Instructor Trainer and complete the mentoring form.

When the IT is recommending that you become an Instructor, it is time to collect the final signatures and make a final review of your application paperwork—your *Instructor Application* and *Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form*. The Instructor Trainer should take the final paperwork and send it to the Region Administrator or Division Supervisor for approval of you as an instructor (see Region/Division specific policy).

Keep copies of this important paperwork. The Instructor Trainer should sign and send the original (or email a scanned image) of both the mentoring form and Instructor Application to the Region Administrator who will review everything and forward it on to the Division Supervisor who will take one last look at everything and instruct National to update your records by forwarding just the approved Instructor application to National.

You should see a change in your member profile within several weeks. If an approval does not show up check with your Regional Administrator or Division Supervisor for follow up.

## **CONCLUSION**

We hope that your success in becoming an Instructor was filled with learning and shared experiences. Keep in mind that this guide is controlled at the Division level and additional requirements may be added but not removed. If you find that this guide did not prepare you for the outcome that you expected, please let your mentor or Regional Administrator know so it can be clarified or changed.