

MOTIVATING THE STUDENT

Many wise words have been spoken but not understood because the student was not sufficiently motivated. And many lessons have been taught where the horse has not benefited due to the student's lack of motivation. No one can benefit from the work if they are not wholeheartedly motivated.

To some extent, we can expect students to be self-motivated when they come to their lessons, as it is mainly a question of self-discipline. However we as trainers must also take on some of the responsibility for students' motivation. By using the word "motivation" I mean to inspire the student and to make him willing to listen; in essence to give him the impression that what I am now explaining is the most important thing in his life at this moment, or at the very least, of huge significance to the continuing education of both that student and his horse.

But keep in mind that in order to motivate others, you must be motivated yourself. ***You do not only motivate by what you say, but by the manner in which you say it.*** In this respect I am thinking of your voice, which should not be monotone, but modulated in order to keep the student focused on you. Try to explain things as simply as possible without leaving anything out. Do not explain too many things at once and make sure that everything you explain makes sense and has continuity. And use eye contact to hold the student's attention.

Motivation depends to a large degree on the ability of the student to understand and succeed in his assignments. It is very important to create a clear picture of the exercise toward which the student is working. By doing so, it should become clear to the student how important it is for him to pay attention.

Gathering feedback from the student is also very important. By including the student in the decision-making process, you will also increase the motivation. No student likes it when his trainer ignores him by single-handedly making all the decisions about the goals and the methods used. Motivation prospers from a mutual respect that takes the individual into consideration when planning the training.