

# Anatomy of a Successful Martial Arts School

Sometime all that is missing from the puzzle is that one piece.... Without it, the art is incomplete. Once we identify what is missing in our studios, the puzzle is complete.

## **Part 3: ARMS**

The ARMS of our company are what we use to reach out and grab hold of our students. It is what we use to show our students that they rock and that we value them in our program!

Here are 4 ways to use your A.R.M.S.!

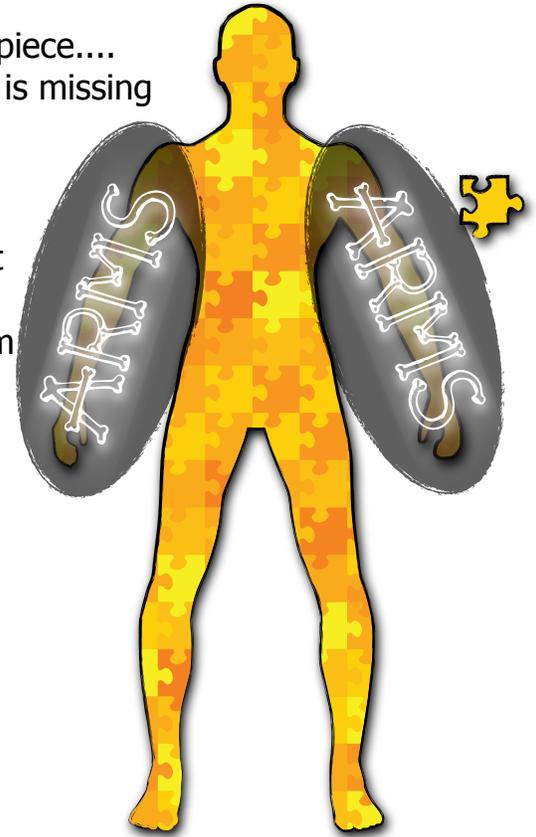
- Acknowledge
- Reach out
- Multiply
- Spotlight

### **1.** cknowledge:

Everyone wants to know that we as instructors notice them and are glad that they came to class. As an instructor we could have the tendency to be stand offish toward students. We feel like there needs to be a professional distance or a students/instructor wall between us. The truth is that we are sometimes afraid to make connections with students because we subconsciously know that one day we may have to deal with them quitting our program. The truth is that is correct. They will quit one day (95% of students do). However, when we acknowledge students and give them attention we will keep them longer and even when they quit, they are more likely to eventually return if they feel connected to you and your team. Here are 5 ways to acknowledge students:

-Greet each student: I know how obvious this seems but there are always days, times, classes and moments when we don't "feel like it". It is imperative that we say hello to students, give high 5s, and smile before the class begins. Even (or maybe especially) adults have a need to feel like they belong. A quick hello or asking an adult about work or family could extend the life of their membership within your school way beyond what it would have been.

-After Class: When the class is over, make sure to get to the kids that came in late and let them know that you are glad they came to class. Tell them how far they will go in their training if they keep working that hard. Again, we



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want them to know that we notice them and that we are glad they are in class that day!

-Instructors: On occasion, an instructor will just drop in and help with a class without training in their own. Make sure to greet each instructor just as you do the students. That way they can model your behavior to the other students!

-Chat with Parents: A quick chat in the lobby between classes can make a huge impact on parents. Let's just say you see a parent who you don't know well holding their iPad. It is very easy just to bring up a conversation about how much you love your iPad and ask them how they like theirs. Before you leave the conversation, just throw in "by the way, Jonny is doing an awesome job in classes". Now you have established a connection and reinforced it!

-Siblings: For many of us, we see the same siblings watching classes day in, day out. Showing them attention and getting to know their name will make them eventually want to join classes themselves. If they feel like they are part of the group, they will want to be all the way in the group!

## **2. Reach out:**

Remember that the arms of your studio have to reach out to keep your school at the top of mind in your community. A few times a month, print up a free month (or 2 or 3 or whatever) membership certificates/cards and take them to local businesses. You can make this easier by handing this job to other staff who are people friendly or even adult instructors who aren't on staff. A second concept is reaching out to local girls and boy scout groups and offering free 1 hour safety and training lessons for the troops. This goes a long way towards good will in your community. Lastly, get out into the schools and talk to students about focus, bullying, and the power of a good attitude. We go into schools and lead the Ultimate Warrior Leadership Course. We usually visit every 3rd grade class within 10 miles of our studio. What an awesome thing, to be positively affecting hundreds of kids over a year and thousands over our careers!

## **3. Multiply:**

The more, the merrier when it comes to your instructor team. I believe that a studio should have 15% of its members on the instructor team. That means that a school with 200 students should have 30 instructors (eight to ten kids 9-11 years old, ten from 12-15 years old, and ten to twelve 16 years old and older). For a school to continue to grow, you must keep adding instructors. We average

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25 new instructors per year with our systems. So make it a priority of yours to grow your instructor team, and then mature it by graduating them to higher levels within your instructor program.

## **4. Spotlight:**

Everyone wants to be famous right? Well when we spotlight someone, they feel that rush of fame and then are pumped to be a part of your studio. Here are 5 ways to Spotlight someone:

1. Your students: In class, when you see a kid doing an extra cool move or or board break, stop class and let him/her show it off... Then take it to the next level by taking a picture of video to post it and make the reach far more impactful.
2. Your parents: In your e-mails and facebook posts, every once and a while include a thank you or a shout out to a supportive parent. This will make them feel awesome and it will set the tone for how you expect your martial arts moms and dads to behave in your studio.
3. Your instructors: We all know how good it feels to be told that you are a great instructor. We should do this publicly at awards ceremonies, e-mails and facebook, but also, it makes an impact to do it casually to let your instructors know 1 on 1 that they are a great asset to your program.
4. Other martial arts school owners: This always makes us look more professional. Share videos and pictures of other like minded school owners. This keeps us humble and it also pumps up other instructors and allows you to build rapport with them.
5. Local business leaders: Watch what happens when you start sharing local business' posts/pictures/events on facebook or other social media. Many small businesses especially will do the same for you and even though they may never step foot on your training floor, you will make them a raving fan of your company in your community!



**We would love to help your school get to the next level.**  
**Ultimate Leadership Martial Arts Association [info@ulmaonline.com](mailto:info@ulmaonline.com)**  
**[www.ULMAONLINE.com](http://www.ULMAONLINE.com) 800-515-7950**