



## TRAFFIC SERIES:

On your way to where you want to go, there are many twists and turns that can lead you in the wrong direction. This series helps you to navigate in a proactive way so you end up at the top!

## PART 4: SET THE CRUISE CONTROL

Setting the Cruise Control doesn't mean that you aren't doing anything... On the contrary, it means that you are actively staring and checking the controls while your business hits the highway at 70 miles per hour!

One of the buzz words in the industry is SYSTEMS. To some they seem as mythical as a unicorn. To others, however, they are a way of life. So, let's unpack what exactly systems are and how you can harness powerful systems for maximum impact on your market. We will start with the simple fact that (get ready for it) you already have systems! OK that wasn't very helpful. Systems are basically "the way I do things". For example, if you make 5 calls every Tuesday to students to tell them how great they are doing in classes, then you have a system. If you workout at the gym every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, then you have a system. Now, it's time to have certain systems in place on purpose. Then the real work begins. No, not the work of doing the systems, but rather the work of being disciplined enough to MAKE yourself do the systems day after day and week after week. As most of us are our own boss, we are terrible at making ourselves do tasks that we really don't enjoy doing. People who fall into this camp always say things like, "If I could just teach without all of the business stuff, I would be totally happy." So, now that we know what systems are.... What systems should we be sure to have in place? Well, here are 3 of the systems that we use at ULMAhq:

1. New Student Systems
2. Retention Systems
3. Instructor/Staff Systems

### PART I: NEW STUDENT SYSTEMS

New student acquisition is nothing new. We are always looking for new ways to get 30 new white belts on the mat. We switch to the newest websites, we put our ad on the local sports calendar, we put clever ads on Facebook. Most studios, however, are completely missing the boat as it relates to getting new students on the mat. They are completely reactive as opposed to purposeful. You can tell the reactive behavior by what they do when they sense that they need new members. They will all of a sudden start attacking the market with ads, student referral drives, etc. A purposeful marketing plan means that you have certain things that you do every year around the same time, while sprinkling in new ideas from time to time. Here are 3 of the dozen or so new student systems used by my teams:

1. Belt in a Bag: This is a simple concept that has been out for years, but it is still effective in bringing 4-12 new members in each year. After your holiday sale, when you have all of those extra white belts sitting around, stuff them into white wine bottle bags (found online) with a 2 week gift certificate and a bow for the student to put on before giving it to their friend!

2. Former Student Marketing: Around the beginning of Summer and once school starts back in the Fall, we make a special effort to reach out to those we have lost over the years in our program. One of the keys here is that we balance out the fact that we would like them to restart in our program with a reminder that we are still thinking about them. The beginning of the Summer is a great time to send out a quick e-mail that just says that you miss having them in classes and if they would like to come back in for the Summer, you happen to have a special for them. 2 Weeks after school starts, send (in the actual mail) an invitation for them to come back on your annual Alumni Fall Special (you decide what that is exactly). Another nice touch is to send them either an e-mail on their birthday or an actual card. If you do this, you must be consistent with it.
3. Online Marketing: Online marketing seems like a big and scary place. In reality, it's relatively simple. Follow this guide to get you started:
  - 3.1. Go to [www.YEXT.com](http://www.YEXT.com) and make sure that all of the search engines have your correct contact info.
  - 3.2. Boost 1 post on your Studio's Facebook Page each week for \$5 or biweekly for \$10. This can be a pic of a great class or a special you are running. Make sure, when choosing your audience, that you choose people who are friends with people who like your page and are in a 5 mile radius of your school.
  - 3.3. On Google Adwords, set up 2 simple ads for \$2 per day each. Set both for Kids Martial Arts. Choose a different picture for each and different wording and maybe even a different special or landing page. Monitor the progress of each after one month. Then cancel the one that performed worst and raise the amount per day for the one that performed the best.

## PART 2: RETENTION SYSTEMS:

NOTE: Almost EVERYONE who reads this will not think that the next statement applies to them... If retention is an issue, the #1 change that must be made is your curriculum and your classes! I know, I know, you have the best curriculum and your classes are awesome. I talk to dozens of school owners every month and it's always the same. For arguments sake, do me a favor, sake a step back and really look at your curriculum... Is there a chance that it needs to be revamped? Or even trashed completely and start fresh? Now, do the same thing with your classes. Would you want to be in your program? Would you want your kids in your classes? I mean like for the long haul... Are they upbeat, relevant, fun, educational, inspiring? If not, then no matter how great your curriculum is, your retention will suffer! Now, let's assume that your curriculum and classes are not an issue. For info on Ultimate Leadership Martial Arts Curriculum and Teaching Systems, go to [www.ULMAA.com](http://www.ULMAA.com) and contact us for a free 30 minute consultation. In the meantime, here are 3 other retention systems that will keep them coming back for more:

1. Good job postcards: Today, we do not get that excited over a new e-mail. I would even say that there are times that I am stressed out over how many e-mails that I have to read and return. I do, however, love getting real old fashioned snail mail. A thank you card or a note from someone I know goes a long way. Your students feel the same way. Sending them a good job

E-mail just won't hold the same excitement as a good job postcard in the mail. We send them to every student every 10 weeks. That's right, every testing cycle, each and every student who trains with us gets a good job post card with a personalized message from me or my staff. We have anywhere from 35-40 go out EVERY WEEK!

2. Monday Retention Report: What you do (or don't do) on Monday can and will dictate what the rest of your week will look like. The problem with most studios out there (and really small businesses in all industries), is that they don't know where their school is as it pertains to their numbers. They don't keep track of who is or isn't training, what ranks are quitting most often, a projected testing number, who needs extra help, who would make a good instructor team member, etc. Every school is different, but knowing your key numbers can mean the difference in the school you have and the school you want.
3. Black Belt Systems: How many actively training black belts do you have? How long does it take to get a Black Belt in your school? How many years have you been open? The answer to these questions should be a snapshot into the value of getting and being a Black Belt in your studio. If you answered something like:  
Actively Training Black Belts: 10 #Years to earn a Black Belt: 4 # of years open: 8  
Then there is a problem. Your program, reward structure, retail systems, and curriculum should direct people to and beyond their Black Belt. Retention for every school is an issue (mine included), but having smart, functional and exciting systems in your school to help people place more value on BEING a Black Belt vs GETTING a Black Belt. So ask yourself, how am I doing making my student Black Belts for life?

### PART 3: INSTRUCTOR/STAFF SYSTEMS:

There are typically 2 main types of school owners when it comes to Instructor and Staff Development. The 1st, is the "do-it-your-self" School Owner who doesn't "need" anyone's help. He has always done it by himself and he knows that someone else wouldn't do things exactly like he would. The 2nd is the "I need staff to do the things that I don't really wanna do" School Owner who will hire whoever offers to take out the trash or teach classes on Saturday so they don't have to. Now there is a rare breed of school owner who challenges themselves in this area. They lock on and hire great people and train them to do the things that they themselves love to do, as well as the other 90% of tasks that most would call busy work. They pay them well and they have great 2 way communication with these staff members. They place a high value on weekly training and are consistently challenging themselves and their key staff members to read and educate themselves further. As for their instructor team, this 3rd type of owner is always looking for and inspiring others to be on the team. There is a structured way for new members to come on board and also to work their way up the Instructor Ranks! Here are 3 Instructor team and Staff systems that all schools need in order to make it for the long haul!

1. Building Your Instructor Team: A number of years ago, we stopped allowing just anyone to be an instructor. We also stopped limiting the people who could based on rank. We decided to create a new system that would enable our team to grow as well as continue to challenge those team members to grow in their instructor skills. We now have a fully laid out system of inviting

new team members on 2-3x per year and spending 3 hours training and motivating them as to what it means to be a Martial Arts Instructor. From there, we also have 2x per year where instructors can level up in their skills, responsibilities and rewards!

2. 1 Class Employees: When we started building our staff (now 11 staff members strong), we began with paying 1-2 teen instructors for just 1 class above their required assist class which they would get paid minimum wage for. They were ecstatic! And it enables us to continue growing our school and slowly bring more employees on board as well as give those staff members real hours and real pay!
3. Yearly Motivation Training: The real benefits to being an instructor or staff member is not \$\$\$ it is simply time and fun. They want to have fun and learn from you. For us, that means 1-2x per year we do a fun instructor outing (i.e. laser tag & pizza) where we just have fun and talk about whatever. The kids and adult love ganging up on the senior instructors and we have a blast. We take a bunch of pictures and post them as that reminder. For our staff, we do an annual staff retreat. At this, we camp out, talk about life, talk about the future of the school, go hiking, and even canoeing down a river.

We want people to get more than just good Martial Arts training at our schools, they want to feel like they belong here and that we are more interested in their future than we are our bottom line.

Zig Ziglar used to say, "You will get everything in life that you want, if you just help enough other people get what they want." and that is how we run our companies!

If you would like info on the ULMA Systems, you are welcome to touch base with us using the info below!



**We would love to help your school get to the next level.**

**Ultimate Leadership Martial Arts Association**

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