How to Teach

Before you start:

* Have 2-3 clear objectives in mind (eg: the student will be able to classify different kinds of feed as to roughage or concentrate)
* Keep in mind the standards for the level you are teaching. It doesn’t hurt to give more background, but don’t give too many details for younger PC’ers
* Prepare handouts or examples and things to demonstrate with.
* Practice before you actually teach. Know what you want to say.
* Be enthusiastic, but still professional.

Introduction:  brief: no more than 2-3 minutes

* Explain what you plan to teach.
* You may need to define basic terms, but try to keep this short.
* Let them look over the materials.
* Let them ask questions about the topic beforehand...what do they want/need to learn?

Lesson:

* Have concrete things for them to handle, manipulate, etc
* If it’s a skill you are teaching – (eg: cleaning tack) let the student perform the actual tasks.
* Guide them as they practice the skills.
* Teach by asking questions. If they have no idea, try asking simpler questions. Don’t just answer for them.
* Pay attention to the students. Do they seem like they’re getting it? Be ready to alter your plan to teach less or more, depending on the students’ needs.
* Leave time for discussion and questions as they go through the process.
* Complicated subjects might need a hand out that they can refer to either then or later. Handouts with blanks that the students need to fill in can help reinforce terms that just need to be memorized.
* Remember to say lots of positive things!

Conclusion: 1-2 minutes

* Review the main objective for the class.
* Did they learn what they needed to learn or wanted to learn?

- Pat Kunz