

# WHAT TO DO BETWEEN LESSONS



By Andy Hilts, *Director*

The latest newsletter from Pia Nilsson and Lynn Marriott of Vision54 had a thought-provoking article titled, “What About In-Between?” It was written as advice to the golfer about the flow of their round and how best to use the intervals between when one shot is over

and the next one is yet to happen.

Given my longtime role as a trainer of instructors, I instinctively took Lynn and Pia’s idea and translated it to what we do as coaches. I’ve always felt that the time period between lessons is extremely valuable and tends to be under-utilized, even wasted in many cases.

For coaches who are back-to-back-to-back-to-back with lessons all day this problem can’t arise, but in a situation where there’s down time, you’ve got to commit to managing it wisely, if you wish to become an effective and financially successful coach. Poor use of in-between time is something I’ve seen most particularly with the instructor who is building up a book of business and starting to become quite busy.

As for those full-book coaches mentioned above, they actually need to create schedule breaks. Blocking a half hour of time on your schedule in the morning and a half hour during the afternoon (as well as a lunch break) allows you to recharge. Even coaches who appear to have endless energy run into challenges if they try and grind through the day without breaks. If nothing else, they’ll tend to fall into a pattern of always running late—a prime source of customer complaints. And while they seem to have unlimited energy you really have to wonder whether the last student of the day got their best effort. Making time in your book to regroup leads to consistent performance. Your customers will appreciate it.

Of course, that extra time has to be used effectively. To make sure you can finish the day and truly leave things at work instead of going home to take care of all your business needs you will need to accomplish as many business tasks as possible during scheduled breaks. It’s easy for the entire half hour to be wasted on meaningless conversations. After you’ve reviewed key takeaways with your students, delivered their homework and booked their next lessons, you need to get away by finding a quiet place on property where you won’t get sucked into conversations that aren’t productive.

Don’t waste this time by simply going long in your lessons and eating up your 30-minute break. The longer lessons go, the more likely we are to give students too much information. As we all know, a confused student does not make for a successful student. Don’t try to wrap up your lessons by “ending on a good one,” as you may be there all day. While there certainly are times when you need to give someone an extra few minutes it can’t be standard procedure. Students appreciate starting on-time and ending on-time. Again, a coach who is constantly behind schedule creates frustrated students.

In-between time should first be used for outbound calls and emails to students who currently aren’t scheduled. Call them and see how things are going, with your goal being to book their next session. Using this valuable time to call people who have left you a message to book another lesson is a misuse of time. Nothing addresses this issue like a good online booking service—set one up, if you haven’t already. Check out ThrivSports.

As Pia and Lynn said in their article, we won’t know what’s really going on “in between” if we don’t look closely at what’s going on and evaluate our behaviors. So, study your habits. Seek the opportunities for productivity and organization that you may have been missing. Do this well enough and you may find time to actually practice your game a bit between lessons. **PG**

## PROONENT GROUP CALENDAR

### Time is Running Out!

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November 4-6 at Cowboys Golf Club, Grapevine, TX