

## NCPGA Best Practice: Teaching Diversifying Lessons and Packages



*Dan Schwabe, the 2009 Northern California PGA Teacher of the Year, is a PGA Teaching Professional at The Presidio Golf Course in San Francisco, CA.*

### **Dan Schwabe on the importance of diversifying the types of lessons and packages offered:**

I have been able to keep my lesson book full and increase my hourly revenue through these incredibly volatile economic times by offering creative and differentiated lesson options. I have created various levels of perceived value for lessons without discounting my basic hourly income. I offer one-hour (\$150) and half-hour (\$80) private lessons like most other teachers. I also offer one-hour semi-private lessons which is the hourly rate plus a \$40 surcharge per additional student up to six people. I have created one-hour (\$30) beginner clinics for both adults (up to 12 adults) and juniors (up to eight juniors). My favorite new lesson offered is a junior player-development group. This package is for advanced junior students looking to develop their swing and their ability to play the game. The lessons are four hours (8am - 12noon) on Sundays. I charge a one-hour fee, but I can book as many as 12 players for the morning (three foursomes). We meet on the range at 8:00AM to warm up for a few minutes. I then take the juniors on the course for nine holes on the back nine. We then return to the short game area and the driving range to work on issues and tendencies that needed improvement on the course. I also offer after school practice sessions for regular groups that pay slightly less per student, but because it's a group I still make more than the standard hourly rate. Relationships drive additional business. I've been at the Presidio Golf Course for 12 years and during those years I have cultivated relationships with numerous local schools and coaches who have become excellent referrals for new students.

### **Dan Schwabe on the business impact of diversifying the types of lessons and packages offered:**

Many resort to discounting fees and rates as a way to bring in business. While this may be necessary, I want to discount as a last resort - not as a first option. I want to increase my revenue and success without exceeding the average person's hourly price point so as not to lose business. I have found that creating value in group sessions drives greater revenue than selling private lessons. In order to be successful with group lessons, it may be necessary to raise your private lesson rates to generate more interest in the group lesson. If group lessons are set up and priced properly, you can make two to three times your regular hourly rate. That is important to remember when setting your rates and goals. In the past, I would look at my clinics as a way to build my lesson book. Now, I use my clinics to build my private lessons and then use my private lessons to build my player development groups. I want to make sure that the players who are participating in the groups have complementary mind sets to create the best learning dynamic. I feel blessed to be up in total lesson revenue dollars for the year during these challenging economic times. My lesson revenue has grown annually during my 14-year teaching career. During that time I have been fortunate to develop into one of the busiest teachers in the Northern California Section as well as the country. Leveraging these examples should help other instructors grow their business as well.