

# The Massage Educator

issue 1, 2012

# 1,429

The number of state-approved message and bodywork programs in the United States.

—according to ABMP's School Database, as of February 15, 2012.

Created by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals • philosophy for instructors



## TEACHING GEN Y

Today's massage schools are a melting pot of generations with their own unique characteristics and communication styles. Too often, administrators and instructors from the baby boomer generation (now ages 51–68) and Generation X (now ages 31–50) find themselves puzzling over the behaviors and communication choices of their Generation Y students (now ages 11–30). Much of this frustration can be alleviated by gaining a better understanding of the common history that shapes this group's behaviors. Once we understand why these behaviors are happening, we can develop strategies for working with these students successfully in the classroom.

### GEN Y LEGACIES

A generation's thoughts, attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors are shaped by the common experiences they share during their formative years. Let's take a look at the cultural, employment, family, and

educational legacies this group brings with them into your classroom.

#### CULTURAL & EMPLOYMENT LEGACY

Gen Y grew up in a time that included the 9/11 tragedy, several school shootings, and the collapse of the housing loan industry. Can we blame them for being cynical? They saw the unemployment rate of 18–29 year olds hit the highest percentage in three decades. Their belief in the importance of higher education started to crumble as they competed with adults with masters degrees for part-time jobs at their local coffee shop. As educators, we need to acknowledge this lack of faith in the significance of education and remind them how the information and skills they receive in your program will benefit them afterward; the key with this group is to make it personal.

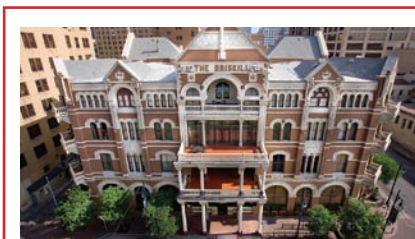
#### FAMILY LEGACY

This group grew up in a time of unprecedented family advocacy and parental "hovering." Because their parents intervened on their behalf, these students did not learn to make their own choices or speak for themselves. They often received reward without effort, like getting allowance without doing chores, and they bring this learned expectation into the classroom and expect reward and praise without putting the appropriate effort into studying and assignments. Educators need to reverse this thought process by clearly explaining the

## Think Alouds



Developed as a cognitive psychology research tool, Think Alouds allow massage instructors to evaluate and correct any gaps in students' thought patterns and critical thinking skills as they're happening. Ask students to verbalize everything they're thinking as they perform a technique, including their approach, their plan for which areas to cover and in what order, their depth, stroke length, etc. They should explain the "why" of what they're doing, not just the "what." For a fun twist, ask them to identify all of the muscles that are under their hands as they're working.



INSTRUCTOR-FOCUSED COURSES AT THE 2012 SCHOOL ISSUES FORUM

## Resources

- For an expanded look at this topic, view the “Gen What? Teaching the Generations” webinar in the Instructors on the Front Lines section at ABMP.com
- Contact your ABMP School Liaison at [education@abmp.com](mailto:education@abmp.com) for information on our Student Success Program and Teaching Curriculum.

Massage educators need to fill in the gaps by teaching these skill sets up front in orientation or the first few weeks of your program. Both you and your students will benefit from taking the extra time for this training. The good news is that ABMP has created the curriculum for you to teach these skills (available at [ABMP.com](http://ABMP.com)).

Now that we’re starting to understand why their behaviors formed, let’s look at some strategies to effectively communicate with and motivate these students.

## COMMUNICATE

Gen Y prefers to communicate digitally rather than face-to-face. They like feedback delivered in a specific way, and they respond to detailed explanations in clearly outlined steps.

### DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Here are some ways to reach out to students through the digital world:

1. Create a student-based resource website for the school.
2. Develop a website for each instructor and each course with the course syllabus, due dates, links to resource materials, etc.
3. Communicate with students via email and text messaging.

### FEEDBACK

It’s important to teach students how to give and receive feedback and constructive criticism. When working with your students:

1. Keep feedback specific with examples of how they can change.
2. Give behavior-based feedback, not just skills-based feedback.
3. Use “do” language instead of “don’t” language.

### EXPLAIN IT

Gen Y students respond to detailed explanations. Here are some things to remember when working with them:

1. Provide the “why” when you ask students to do something.
2. Give detailed step-by-step instructions of what’s expected.
3. Use forms and checklists to clarify and organize information.

## MOTIVATE STUDENTS

The key to motivating Gen Y students is to personalize your content. Students want to know, “What’s in it for me?” Answer this question often by describing how the information they’re learning in your class today will help them in their massage career. Tell personal stories from your own experience to make the material relatable and memorable.

Shifting your teaching style slightly to meet the needs of Gen Y students will decrease your frustration level, increase their success in your program, and allow you to recognize all of the positive attributes they bring to your classroom. 🍏

programs’ expectations and the need for effort and study for the type of material they’re learning.

### EDUCATIONAL LEGACY

Whether your Gen Y students came from a progressive K–12 experience or an overcrowded, underfunded public school, more than likely they have gaps in their essential capacity skills like note-taking, study skills, and memorization.

## Are You Embracing Technology?

Do you run from, turn a blind eye to, cautiously explore, or embrace technology? Wherever you fall on the spectrum, it’s time to open yourself up to the options that are available to educators today. The good news is that bringing technology into the classroom doesn’t just benefit our students. It makes our presentations more dynamic and can even be (yes, we’re saying it) fun for instructors.

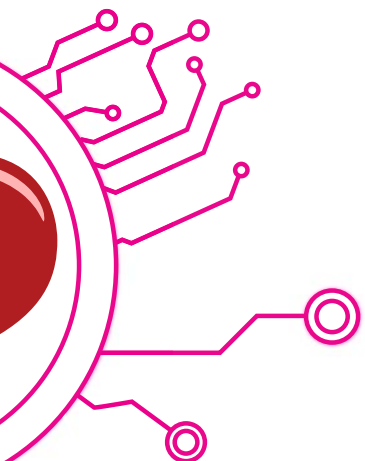
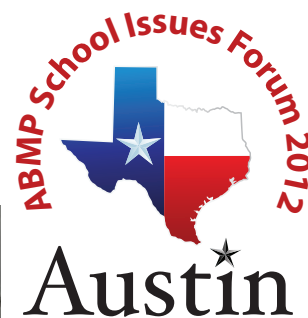
The word technology encompasses a pretty wide range of options and it doesn’t always mean using the most advanced equipment available to show images on a theater-sized screen. There are options available to bring technology into the classroom, no matter what level of technical capability you have at your campus. As with anything, start small. Your first foray into using technology with your students doesn’t have to be expensive or overly advanced. Here are some simple ideas to try right away:

- Tap into your textbook ancillaries. Most textbooks have a wealth of additional information available to you on the publisher’s website. Check out what they have to offer.
- Bring concepts to life in the classroom by searching for images and videos on the Internet. Type your subject into the search field and you’ll be amazed at the resources that appear.
- Videotape students working at the table at various points in the program so they can see their own body mechanics and correct any bad habits.

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# INSTRUCTOR-FOCUSED COURSES AT THE ABMP 2012 SCHOOL ISSUES FORUM



- Use digital photos to evaluate posture using a plumb line, or take before and after photos to demonstrate the effects of massage treatment or technique.

Use a website for your course so students have 24/7 access to the syllabus, due dates, links to reference materials, and more. Use social media outlets like Facebook or Twitter. For example, you can create a Facebook page for your school or your own course to share information, answer questions, and start discussions. Use technology to make learning more visual and stimulating to aid memorization and recall of information for all types of learners. Encourage your students to take advantage of these resources:

- Download apps for their smart phones and tablets
- Use electronic editions of their textbooks (when available)
- Use digital flashcards
- Attend seminars on topics that will enhance their general knowledge of the field
- Improve specific skill sets
- Most importantly, get creative and use technology to breathe new life into your teaching and classroom, even if it's just one small step at a time. 🍏

ABMP's Annual School Issues Forum is April 19–21, 2012, in Austin, Texas. In addition to the sessions for school owners and administrators, we're offering a special day of training dedicated to you: the hardworking and inspiring massage educators who are face-to-face with students in the classroom every day.



This year, renowned educator Jan Schwartz and ABMP Director of Education Anne Williams will lead participants through a comprehensive day of education focused on empowering instructors with the skills they need to excel in the classroom. Instructors will explore how to create learning environments that improve student outcomes, and will walk away with several tools to use immediately.

For more information, contact Kathy Laskye at 800-458-2267, ext. 649, email her at [kathy@abmp.com](mailto:kathy@abmp.com), or visit [ABMP.com](http://ABMP.com). We look forward to seeing you! 🍏



VISIT ABMP'S ONLINE  
EDUCATION CENTER AT  
[ABMP.COM](http://ABMP.COM) FOR LISTINGS  
OF INSTRUCTOR, SCHOOL,  
AND PROFESSIONAL  
WEBINARS!

Conversation! Share your ideas and insights of other educators in the "How technology in the classroom?" forum in the Message Educators [messageprofessionals.com](http://messageprofessionals.com).

# Instructor 101 Webinar Series Free for Educators

ABMP is thrilled to introduce a new resource for massage therapy educators: our **ABMP Instructor 101 Webinar Series!** Created in response to instructor requests, this series of webinars covers all of the key skills needed to master the art of successful teaching and classroom management.

All educators are invited to watch these free, live webinars. Replays of the webinars are also free for on-demand viewing by ABMP professional and school members in ABMP's Online Education Center at [ABMP.com](http://ABMP.com) (for \$12, ABMP members can take the optional quiz for one CE credit). Nonmembers can watch replays, and take the quiz for one CE credit, for \$35 per webinar. 🍏

## Instructor 101 Webinar Schedule



"Understanding Learning Objectives for Effective Instructional Design"



"Key Education Theory in Action—Part 1"



"Key Education Theory in Action—Part 2"



"Essentials of Lesson Planning"



"Great Lectures"



"Great Demonstrations"



"Great Classroom Activities"



"Great Classroom Discussions"



"Advanced Lesson Planning"

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