

Pool metaphor

Three people sign up for swim lessons at the Y

Jack – can swim, parents swim, wants to add swimming to his exercise routine

Jill – can swim, family members on some swim teams, she wants to enter tri-athelons

Joe – parents afraid of water, family avoids water, Joe wants to be a park ranger and swimming is a requirement.

They Sign up for “basic adult swim lessons”

Open lessons, not lifeguard training, not competition training – basics for recreation, health, and possible move to advanced skills.

Lessons require block registration and Y annual membership

\$200 for 8 lessons and \$360 for annual membership

Paid up front - \$560.00

Get a basic course description when you sign up

What to bring to class- suit, towel, swim cap for ladies, sandals

Course sequence description –

Safety, floating, strokes, diving, distance

Jack, Jill, and Joe show up for first night of class

Instructor hands out water safety sheet, collects liability waivers, tells everyone to jump into the shallow end and start bobbing.

Jack – jumps in starts bobbing, head under water

Jill – jumps in middle of pool, starts bobbing and swimming underwater

Joe – (looks up from safety sheet) is frozen by side of pool, spots the ladder and step by step gets into the water. He has no idea how deep the shallow end of the pool really is, because everyone else is going up and down and under the water, he touches bottom and holding on to the pool side he slides to the other corner. He kind of bobs up and down- not putting his head under – trying to blend into the class. Other students are bobbing, floating, and paddling around.

The instructor then says – let’s get sense of where everyone is... Joe stressed out in the scared water and scared of being singled out and cowers more in the corner. Let’s all try a back float – says the instructor.

Jack and Jill move to their backs and start floating around. This looks pretty easy to Joe and so he ventures on his back, immediately starts to sink, his head goes under and he screams like a girl. The instructor jumps into the water, grabs his arm, gets him to the side of the pool, assures him that it is okay, and moves on with class.

Joe spends the rest of the class, sitting on the side of the pool, until he sees his chance to sneak out. He never comes back – eh forfeits the lessons and membership, he is embarrassed and chooses another career path. He avoids swimming, the Y, etc.

Years later, the entire region where Joe lives is being converted into a National Park and there is call out for hundreds of Park Rangers. The Y has partnered with the National Park Service to provide the targeted training and is aggressively promoting the salary and career ladder for Park Rangers.

What can the Y do to connect Joe with training that will be successful?