

Sensei

to

School head

A guide to starting your Dojo

Dedicated to the AJJF Sensei who through the giving of themselves,
demonstrate their love of humanity and devotion to the morals and ideals
of the martial arts.

Original Issue By:
Professor Jane Carr
November 1, 1982

Revised By the A.J.J.F.
November 1, 2014

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Printed in the United States of America

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SENSEI

You can do this!

The time has come – you have reached the point in your training when you are now a Sensei! As a Sensei you will have many new responsibilities. Some of these responsibilities are ego building, some are ego shattering and teach humility, and most of these responsibilities are profoundly rewarding. Remember the duties and responsibilities of a Sensei are monumental because:

- Sensei directly affect people's lives
- Sensei must have and exhibit the highest moral values and attitudes
- Sensei must not exhibit or allow discrimination against any person or organization
- Sensei must exhibit and demonstrate fairness and understanding to everyone
- Sensei must be strong enough to effectively teach each student respect for one another, and to see that protocol is followed
- Sensei and each of their students have the responsibility to keep the AJJF the high quality organization that it is

You need to set goals, make a physical plan, and then set that plan into motion. Listed below are questions that you need to ask yourself. They are itemized to assist you in the planning process and to act as a preliminary checklist, though there are a number of other considerations that might occur to you as you go through the list. After going through the list and making any additions, you will have a record of your thoughts that will help you achieve your dojo goals.

1. What kind of students do you want?

- A) Adults
- B) Juniors
- C) Adults and juniors during the same class period
- D) Adults and juniors taught in separate classes
- E) Beginners and advanced students taught in the same class period
- F) Beginners and advanced students taught in separate classes

What you might expect from your choice.

Adults only: You will be able to focus on one group and their needs and may be able to have classes go into later hours. The downside is that this might make for fewer students and make it harder to pay the Dojo costs.

Juniors and Adults: With juniors in your class you will most likely double your participation. You will also double your responsibilities.

Adults and juniors in the same class: Combining the adults and juniors into one class will make for fewer classes that you will need to teach and thus will free up time for other things. This could be good if your student number is low; however, with a large class this could be problematic due to space and teaching time. Adults may also feel they are not getting to train at the level they would like with the juniors in the same class.

Beginning and advanced students: This is much like adults and juniors; you will not need as many classes. With low numbers this is good, and you may have time to teach all of them. With larger amounts of students this may become more difficult.

2. What kind of physical surroundings and safety protocols should be considered?

- A) Is the structure built to be strong enough to stand up to the constant pressure of falling and pounding bodies?
- B) Is there enough open space so that beams, poles, and other structural supports are not a safety hazard?
- C) Is the ceiling high enough to allow room for stick, sword, and other weapons and techniques?
- D) How much mat space will be required for an average class, including a 2-foot safety border?
- E) Is there adequate space for dressing rooms?
- F) Are there restrooms in the facility, and are they easily accessible?
- G) Is there adequate parking space available?
- H) Do you have current CPR and first-aid certification?
- I) Do you have a complete first-aid kit available for emergencies?
- J) Do you have a plan and space for injury management?
- K) Do you know the location of the nearest clinic or hospital?
- L) Do you have underage student contact information easily accessible?
- M) Do you have an AJJF injury log to support insurance information?

3. How much time do you have to invest?

- A) How long do you want each class to run?
- B) Will you have specific sections (warm-ups, rolls and falls, etc.)?
- C) How long is your travel time to and from class?
- D) How much time is needed to prepare class?
- E) Will you dedicate time to promotion of the dojo to the public?
- F) Will you have to consult with students and or their parents?
- G) Will you or a student have time to keep the dojo clean and sanitary?
- H) Will you have time to attend clinics and contests with your students?
- I) Will you still be able to attend black-belt classes for your own training needs?
- J) Will you have time to prepare and perform demonstrations?

4. Do you wish to have a dependent (using someone else's facility) or independent (having your own facility) dojo location?

A) Dependent considerations

- 4.A.1) Your class time will probably be limited
- 4.A.2) You may only have to invest limited time, effort, or money into cleaning or upkeep. The institution in which you are teaching will often dictate your class schedule
- 4.A.3) The institution may or may not promote your classes
- 4.A.4) You may not be able to host clinics or tournaments
- 4.A.5) The institution may have larger rooms than other dojos for larger events
- 4.A.6) The institution may have shower facilities
- 4.A.7) The institution may or may not do the bookkeeping
- 4.A.8) The institution may supply or have insurance coverage available
- 4.A.9) Types of institutions include:

YMCA/YWCA

Church group/school

Public school/College facilities

Fire department

Police department

Senior citizen center

City recreation department

Health club/gym

B) Independent considerations

4.B.1) How much money will you require to begin?

- 4.B.1.1) First and last month's rent

- 4.B.1.2) Cleaning deposit – usually necessary when renting
- 4.B.1.3) Utility deposit
- 4.B.1.4) Phone deposit
- 4.B.1.5) Mats
- 4.B.1.6) Alterations to building (dressing rooms, partitions, etc.)

4.B.2) Monthly expenses

- 4.B.2.1) Utilities
- 4.B.2.2) Insurance
- 4.B.2.3) Phone
- 4.B.2.4) Advertising
- 4.B.2.5) Records
- 4.B.2.6) Bookkeeping
- 4.B.2.7) Cleaning supplies
- 4.B.2.8) First aid supplies
- 4.B.2.9) Rent
- 4.B.2.10) Upkeep of mats

4.B.3) Contact appropriate locations that can tolerate noise and activity.

4.B.4) Arrangement of class schedules are more flexible to your own hours and lifestyle.

- 4.B.4.1) Daytime, evening, and weekend classes
- 4.B.4.2) Ability to host clinics and tournaments
- 4.B.4.3) Possible overnight housing for visiting jujitsuka.
- 4.B.4.4) Possible time and space for eventual class expansion

4.B.5) Decide if you wish your club to be non-profit or for-profit

- 4.B.5.1) Apply for the appropriate license for your location (city, state)
- 4.B.5.2) Non-profit clubs still need to file with the IRS, and prior to that you need to apply first for a non-profit exemption

4.B.6) Decide on your fee schedule

- 4.B.6.1) Monthly, annual expenses
- 4.B.6.2) Travel expenses for AJJF functions
- 4.B.6.3) Equipment for dojo, cost of uniforms, etc

4.B.7) After you have found your facilities and have met the requirements to form a new school, now what?

- 4.B.7.1) Go to the AJJF website and contact the AJJF new schools chair person.
- 4.B.7.2) Send completed forms and all other required documents to the AJJF Central Office.
 - 4.B.7.2.a. Contact your Chamber of Commerce and give them some information on the AJJF, your school, and yourself.
 - 4.B.7.2.b. Contact the local law enforcement agencies and introduce yourself and offer to assist them in any way that they may need your services.
 - 4.B.7.2.c. Contact public organizations and offer to speak for their group and/or demonstrate for their enjoyment and further education on martial arts and Dan Zan Ryu Jujitsu.

You are now a full Sensei with all its responsibilities, challenges, and rewards. The time and energies that you invest are reaped many fold by the profound satisfactions, energies, and love received by both you and your students. Remember that as a Sensei your actions and attitudes are representative of you, your students, the AJJF, and martial arts in general. The public can be very judgmental and we want the public to know that the AJJF is a high quality organization, which is demonstrated through the manner in which you and your students conduct yourselves.

Please contact your Regional Manager, AJJF Operations Committee, Council of Senior Instructors, or one of the Professors, if we can be of any service to you. A question unasked cannot be answered. A question asked gains knowledge and growth.

Successful growing to you, Sensei.