



INDOOR CYCLING ASSOCIATION

How to Create Profiles for your Indoor Cycling Classes



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How to Create Profiles is an excerpt from an upcoming eBook “The Handbook for Coaching Indoor Cycling”. It will be a general reference book for instructors from all programs, whether new to instruction or those with many years of experience. You can expect the book sometime in the fall of 2012.

How to create a profile

Learning to create your own profiles is a great skill to have as an indoor cycling instructor. It can be daunting to new instructors however, as few certification programs spend much time giving sufficient instruction on how to create them, or their instructions only leads to more confusion. To be perfectly honest, like anything worth doing, it takes practice, practice, practice. To understand the profile creation process from the inside out, and to be able to manipulate the training elements (you might call them puzzle pieces) that shape a solid profile that makes sense, it also takes making mistakes and learning from them.

Early on in your experience as an instructor, it might be wise to utilize profiles that have been created by other instructors for a few weeks just to get the hang of the teaching side of the equation. This will help you when it's time to create your own profiles. While you are teaching one of these profiles, evaluate it as you are teaching. How does it feel to put these elements together? Does it flow smoothly? Does the desired intensity make sense and is there sufficient recovery? Most importantly, can YOU the instructor do the profile as its written and without too much fatigue? In other words, is it even plausible? Some of the profiles that are available on free forums on the internet or through some of the indoor cycling programs, can be too hard or even impossible as written. I've seen numerous ones that ask for a series of movements and/or to maintain a certain intensity that in reality is not even humanly possible, except for perhaps the most fit of athletes (and even then, those athletes may avoid that kind of intensity). In others I've seen them ask for movements while asking to stay at a low intensity, and that might be impossible.

By experimenting with pre-written profiles, you'll see what works and what doesn't if you pay close attention to intensity and perceived exertion as you ride.

An excellent way to learn how good profiles are put together is to attend a lot of other instructors' classes. Evaluate not only the teaching techniques, but ask some of these questions about the profile and class:

- How was the ride put together
- How it was communicated.
- Was there an objective stated at the beginning of the ride?
- If so, was it followed?
- If not, can you see how the profile is less likely to have a common thread running through it?
- Did you like the class? Why or why not?
- Did the instructor communicate the profile in a manner that was easily understood?
- Or was the class confused at what to do next, for how long and at what intensity?
- Did you feel that one segment led smoothly into the next, or was it a hodgepodge of miscellaneous movements thrown together?

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Another excellent way to learn about quality profiles is to take Continuing Ed. and Master Classes from experienced indoor cycling educators. You can usually find these at conferences or at clubs that host certifications and workshops. Your own club can host a Master Class or two. However, one problem with some Master Classes and conference sessions is that they are often what I call “spectacle events”. Sure, these are usually amazing and exhilarating to attend, and you can learn some motivational cues to add to your repertoire - I myself love to present and to take these kinds of rides. But, they don’t often teach you a lot about assembling a profile that would be appropriate for your *average* every day indoor cycling class, a class that is not a “special event”. That is why I have put together a list of Master Classes with turn-key profiles to use in your own every-day classes (please see the appendix for information).

The point is, take a lot of classes, but do so with an eye to evaluate the good (and poor) elements of the profile itself, in order to learn. Then it’s time to create your own.

The key to good profiles

The key to building solid profiles is to have a good understanding of training principles. You don’t have to be an expert in physiology or exercise science, but an instructor who doesn’t have a good grasp of basic training principles runs the risk of creating profiles that offer insufficient recovery between intervals, or of not balancing the various elements of fitness throughout the class, the week, the month or the training period. Note that the latter is still very important even for students who are not athletes or cyclists – every human being benefits from variety and will plateau from doing the same thing all the time.

What type of profile does your class need or want right now?

Before creating a profile, it’s important to consider the current situation you find yourself in with your class. This might include the following:

- Is it a new class for you? If they don’t know you well, then focus on excitement and variety in your first few weeks of profiles. Make sure they know that you can teach a hard class, but don’t fall prey to making all your first few classes incredibly hard. Introduce technique improvements over time. Do not try to do a drill-based or endurance profile in the first 3-4 weeks. You need to build their trust that you know what you are doing first.
- What have you been doing the past few weeks in your class? Make sure to include variety in terrain, intensity, drills, mental versus entertainment-focused rides, and music.
- Where are you in the year? Early winter should include a higher percentage of moderate intensity, technique based classes. Spring/summer can include a higher percentage of higher intensity, provided you have been progressively building to that point.
- At times you might want to build a profile around a particular song or soundtrack you have just discovered.

Basic profile creation rules

1. *Always have an objective for every class*

Your very first step in creating a profile is to start with your objective in mind. You might choose your class objective based on how you are feeling at that moment, what you did in your last class, something you haven't done in awhile. You may choose it for an emotional reason, or based on how a certain song affects you. Once you have an objective, you will find that not only are your profiles easier to create, but they will have a thread of commonality throughout them, helping them to be seamless and make more sense to you as well as your students. Your students might not be able to put a finger on it, but compared to other instructors who just wing it or who throw together a bunch of symbols like throwing dice without any greater overall objective, your classes will have that certain *je ne sais quoi* to them.

How about a sub-objective?

Usually I will have one overall objective and then a secondary or sub-objective or two to help define the ride even more. The secondary objective will provide the means of attaining what your overall objective is. Also it will help you to reject superfluous segments that detract from your main objective and help keep your profile from becoming a mish-mash of unrelated stuff. It also helps define the kind of music that you will choose, because often it is the sub-objective that sets the emotion and mood of your ride. You will see examples of this in the upcoming profile examples.

2. *Variety*

Variety is the spice of life. It is also the spice of IC classes!

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you always teach interval because you think it's what your students want?
- Do you give them what they need as well as what they want?
- Are you really heavy on hill climbing because *you* like to climb hills?
- Do you encourage intensities of all levels, from aerobic to threshold to above threshold?
- Do you include drills in some of your classes? Or do you believe that your students will get bored from drills?
- Do you make sure to include mental focus segments in many of your classes?

You help your students more easily reach their own fitness goals when you offer a variety of intensities and techniques every time you teach. You want to make sure you have a good mix of classes from week to week. They may include primarily flat rides with faster cadences, hilly climbs with multiple rolling hills or one or two big climbs, a hard interval class with a specific intensity in mind, or it might be a class focused on technique work in which the terrain or intensity becomes secondary.

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3. *Keep it simple!*

Sometimes the simplest profiles are the best ones. Don't try to fit in every kind of terrain or movement or objective into each ride. Pick one or two goals and limit it to that. Trying to do too much dilutes your purpose and takes away from your objective. Variety is important from class to class and from week to week, but it doesn't imply that you should be changing positions or terrain within your profile every minute or two! And this leads us to the next tip...

4. *Stay still already!*

Try to avoid constant changes in position. This type of class emanates from the group fitness mentality where there is constant change, moving from one thing to another. That is fine for a kickboxing or a Step class, but an indoor cycling class is different on many levels and should not be treated like the other group fitness classes. A constant change of position or intensity prevents your students from achieving any one fitness goal, and can lead to early fatigue or even injury because they aren't focusing on proper form. Often, they are more focused on trying to keep up with the instructor or the person next to them. It contributes to an ADD type of lifestyle and avoids commitment.

It also prevents them from learning proper technique. Technique can only be acquired through practice. And technique practice doesn't occur in 30 or 60-second increments.

Now I am not saying you need to sit in the saddle for a 15 minutes at a time, or even 10 minutes, but try to spend longer than a minute or two, perhaps even up to 5-6 minutes doing one thing without changing. If this is not what your students are used to however, don't try to throw it at them suddenly. Gradually build from 2 to 3 to 4 minutes or more without changes. You will be surprised at how they will begin to accept it.

To help them stay more engaged and willing to stay in one movement for longer periods, it's helpful to utilize *intrinsic* cues to keep them engaged (visualizations, focus on breath, etc), rather than constant *extrinsic* distracting cues ("Up", "Down", "Go!", "Faster!"). This would require more of a mind-body approach*. I guarantee that when you become skilled at teaching this way, it will enhance your profiles and your teaching style like almost no other technique!

(*For more tips on how to implement this style of teaching, read the eBook "Top Ten Ways to Stay Motivated as an Indoor Cycling Instructor". Tip #2 provides a long list of resources for this purpose.)

Ideas of Objectives and Sub-objectives for your profiles

The following are four examples of the first step of profile creation using both a primary and a secondary objective.

Example #1:

Primary Objective: You want to do a lot of climbing in this class (often referred to as a Strength class). Once you establish this, the basic parameters for this class are already laid out. For example, the cadence will most often be somewhere between 60 and 80 rpm* and you will be using higher resistance. There should be more climbs than flats (not counting warm-up or cool-down). A 60-minute class with this as the primary objective should include about 30-45 minutes of time actually spent climbing.

*Note: it's OK to use slightly lower or slightly higher climbing cadences when you have *skilled* riders and a very *specific* secondary objective such as force development drills on the low end (as low as 55rpm) or higher cadence muscular endurance climbs on the high end (up to about 85rpm). But that is another subject....

Secondary Objective options:

- 1) Intensity-based: this would include hill repeats at threshold, an uphill time trial, climbing at an aerobic tempo pace, short steep anaerobic climbs (above threshold), etc.
- 2) Technique-based: focus on pedal stroke drills while climbing, and/or on smooth transitions in and out of the saddle, focusing on not letting cadence drop when sitting back down after standing climb (very common), etc.
- 3) Metabolic and muscular-based: muscular endurance high cadence climbs, or force development slower cadence climbs, etc.
- 4) Motivational focus: using emotion to make it to the tops of a series of climbs, one long grind and the mental fortitude required to get there, using your climb to represent other challenges in life, etc.
- 5) Mood or ambiance: climbing in the rain, through beautiful or rugged scenery and so on.
- 6) Real life simulation: a mountain bike loop ride in the hills, a scenic rolling hills road ride, a Tour de France stage in the Alpes, etc

Example #2

Primary objective: Interval workout

Secondary objective:

- 1) Lactate tolerance intervals of 1-2 minutes long with 2-3 minutes recovery in between each one. RPE would be *very hard*.
- 2) Threshold intervals of 4-8 minutes with 2-4 min recoveries. Mix of hills and fast flats. RPE would be *hard*.
- 3) VO2 Max intervals (VHIT) of 4-6 minutes with 3-5 minute recoveries. (Usually too intense for the average Spinning student because of the duration at "*very hard*".)

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- 4) Intervals “couched” as an “outdoor ride” such as a mountain bike ride with hard segments alternated with easier segments.

Example #3

Primary objective: Endurance ride (aerobic intensity)

Secondary objective: Just because it is an “endurance” based ride does not imply that it has to be all on flat roads or only in the saddle. It can be:

- 1) Tempo ride in Zone 3 over varying terrain
- 2) Cruise intervals in Zone 3 or low Zone 4.
- 2) Pedal stroke and/or cadence drills on a flat road from 80-110 rpm.
- 3) Narrow cadence range from 90-95 rpm the entire time (a *very* focused ride)
- 4) Mind-body focus to keep students mentally engaged.

Example #4

Primary Objective: A fun outdoor ride simulation

Secondary objective:

- 1) An out and back ride: ride out to one point then turn around, so you see the same roads from a different perspective. Hills are different on each side, and you may have a tail wind one way and a head wind the way back.
- 2) A loop ride that is repeated 3-5 times, each loop with a different focus. Determine how much time you have available for the main portion of the ride, then divide by the number of desired laps to determine the approximate length of each loop. For example, a 60-minute class with 8 minutes for warm-up and cool down leaves 44 minutes. That would be two 22-min loops, three 15-min loops or four 11-min loops.
- 3) A simulation of a local cycling event on roads your students should know (even if they only drive them in a car, and not ride them on a bike)
- 4) A rolling mountain bike ride with single track segments. By virtue of the fact that ascending steep single track is pretty intense, you will have to insert periods of recovery, so by extension, the secondary objective becomes a covert interval ride! When you know this, it will help guide you to place recoveries throughout your profile. You can disguise them as “plateaus” following short steep climbs.

Selecting Music for your profile

Does the profile come first, or the music? In general, you write your screenplay, and then you put your soundtrack to it. This will probably be the case with 90-99% of your profiles. But there are times in which a certain song or album can inspire you to create a profile around it. Similarly, after you've created your profile, and put your music playlist together, you might decide to alter what you had planned to do in your sketched out profile plan (whether to sit or stand a climb, for example) based on the energy and emotion of the song you chose, and not based on the fact that two minutes have passed.

For the bulk of your profiles, music will be the final step. Once you know your primary and secondary objectives, it is much easier to select your music to match the mood or energy that you are looking for. This is especially important if your objective is based on mood, emotion, or mind-body focus or if it is a high intensity ride that requires very energetic music.

I have my music categorized into a wide variety of folders. (See "Top Ten Ways to Stay Motivated as an Indoor Cycling Instructor". Tip #9 is to organize your music in advance and in meaningful categories in order to save you hours of time when creating your profiles).

When I have sketched out my general profile structure, I start looking around my iTunes folders, based on the objectives I've laid out as I've conceptualized my plan. If it's a high intensity interval profile, it will be more important to select songs that are full of energy than a mood enhancement song (unless that mood is to choose an "angry" song to empower them)! If it's a series of rolling hills that has a more fun objective, I might choose songs that they are more familiar with, perhaps rock or pop. If it's a long grind, or perhaps two long hills, in which I challenge them to focus inward, on their technique and breath, then I will most likely choose songs without words to distract them from the mental focus. This is where ambient/world/downtempo genres are especially inspirational.

Recently I did a profile that was a first for me, even after 15 years of teaching. I did this near the end of a 15-week periodized cycling clinic, so my students were the same during the four months, they all wore heart rate monitors, and all were cyclists (some were very new to cycling mind you, they are not all strong riders)! Because of this I was able to do this ride, I don't think it would have been possible in my regular classes. We had been focusing on some very high intensity riding, as well as some serious climbing the previous few weeks. I needed a flat road profile at moderate to moderately-high intensity. I decided to do Cruise Intervals ALL AT 90RPM! I did 3X15 minutes at an aerobic pace @90rpm. Recovery songs were 3-4 minutes (at 85rpm). Even the warm-up was at 90rpm. The class was amazing, and I got a lot of compliments, but it was very hard, even for me, to stay focused. I have to say, the sense of accomplishment was outstanding. My choice of music absolutely was the key factor in the success of the ride, because of the way the songs facilitated the mind-body connection. I do not think that the level of focus and

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commitment would have been possible with music with a lot of lyrics, especially popular ones they knew.

In putting the music for this ride together, I simply searched my iTunes for songs of 90rpm and put them together. The intervals ended up being 14, 15 and 16+ minutes each – the exact duration wasn't important for this particular profile. The recovery breaks were for mental and physical recovery – to stand and stretch the legs, get water, release the single-minded focus, and prepare for the next one. This is not to suggest that you should be doing a very cycling specific class such as this at your club, because I know it would not work at many facilities. I bring it up here to describe how I put together the music based on the specific objectives of this profile.

Song choices for short intervals

Suppose I have planned a long interval of around 3 minutes or more. In most cases I will use one song for that entire duration effort; when the song ends, we back off the effort and recovery. However, if the interval is short, as in less than 3-minutes, I will usually combine the work effort with the recovery effort into one song. For example, suppose I want four 1-minute high intensity intervals above threshold followed by 2 minutes of recovery. I will probably choose two 6-minute songs: 1 minute very hard push, 2-minutes easy, 1-minute very hard, 2-minutes easy, for two songs in a row. Or suppose I have short 2-minute hard efforts followed by 3 minutes of recovery. I will probably use one 5-minute song, combining the work with the recovery into one song. This is because I don't like cutting songs down to 1 or 2 minutes using Mixmeister.

On the other hand, when my intervals are longer, say 3-5 minutes or more, the intensity isn't usually as high, so my recovery might only need to be 2-3 minutes. I like to use shorter songs for these recovery segments. One tip that has helped me when finding music for my interval profiles has been to create a playlist in iTunes called "Short songs for recovery". In it I place every song I can find that is about 3-½ minutes or less. It's growing every day – right now I have about 400 songs in it. Then when I need that short recovery song in between those moderately-high to high-intensity efforts of 4 minutes or more, I search in here.

Sometimes it is fun to use the same group for all your recoveries, or the same genre. For example, all of your recovery songs might be 80's retro, 70's disco, classic rock, the Beatles, Elvis, etc. This adds an element of fun to your profile – you tell your students that when they hear the retro song, or when they hear the Police, they can breathe a sigh of relief that the hard part is over. (Of course, if you do this, make sure your interval songs are not the same group or genre as your recovery). The following are some suggested groups that have a good number of shorter songs of 2-3 minutes. These make excellent choices for when you want to use one group for all the recoveries:

The Beatles
Elvis Presley
The Cure
The English Beat

The Clash
The Police
Elvis Costello

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The Rolling Stones (especially their earlier songs tend to be shorter)
Tom Petty
Creedence Clearwater Revival
Neil Diamond
Bruce Springsteen

The Doors (when I do this, I call it “Stepping through the Doors”)
REM
Van Morrison
Stray Cats
Vampire Weekend
Spoon
Green Day

There are obviously many more. Have fun with your recoveries! They don’t have to be Enya or Tracey Chapman! ;-)

Using music to define your profile, or to define your road

As mentioned above, there may be times where you come across a song that energizes or moves you so much, that you create a profile around that particular song, or that you determine what you do during the profile because of the energy of a certain song.

As an example, the song *Baba O’Riley (Teenage Wasteland)* by The Who begins at 60bpm, then right around 3.5 minutes, the bpm picks up gradually to 86bpm. You can have fun with this song – begin by simulating a steep climb that gets a little less steep, so you begin pedaling faster and faster as the hill gradually rolls to the top. Led Zeppelin’s *Black Dog* has rhythm surges from slow to fast (up to 85bpm) throughout the whole song, allowing you to simulate very short steep bursts of speed and intensity. This is great for a mountain bike profile with short steep fast uphill of about 45 seconds.

An excellent example of a song in which the energy breaks in the song describes variations in the road is the song *Salva Mea* by Faithless. It is 10:47 and has numerous rhythm and energy breaks. Note that the bpm of the song stays constant, but the energy does not (when you listen to the song you will see what I mean. It is available on most music download sites). Use the subdued energy for a seated climb, and as the energy picks up, stand up. On several occasions it builds and builds to a peak – use the sudden breaks in energy (when it takes off) to sit down and pedal fast downhill. Then it slows back down, and you go back uphill.

You can decide to alter your position using the chorus and verse of songs. You might sit during the chorus, then stand up for each of the verses. Though this is not any kind of set rule, a lot of pop songs will repeat the verse three times. The third time is often longer than the previous two. Some examples of using the chorus and verse to change what you do are *The Cave* by Mumford and Sons, *How Far We’ve Come* by Matchbox Twenty, and *Leave the Memories Alone*, by Fuel.

Profile creation example from start to finish: Threshold intervals

There are many ways to put together fun and exciting profiles. The following is one profile from conceptualization to completion from my perspective. You can see the thought processes that I went through as I decided what to do in the ride, and the changes I made after initially sketching out the plan. I describe the situation I find myself in (time of year, level of students, recent class history, etc), the various things I consider as I decide on my objective and terrain, assembling the elements of terrain, resistance and cadence, and finally, how I decide to put the music to the ride.

My situation:

I have been doing a periodized program for my classes and we are 5 weeks into the 12-week program. We did a threshold field test the first week to establish training zones. Now it is time to introduce some higher intensity work. (Note: you can do this using RPE as well, if your students don't wear HRMs)

Things I have to consider:

We have spent most of the past 5 weeks in moderate zones (Zone 2 and 3) with a couple of short forays to Zone 4 (sub-threshold). It's important not to bring on too much intensity too fast, so I want this ride to progressively introduce threshold intensity in short to moderate-length intervals, with a recovery that is at least half the length of the interval or more.

I decide I want to do a ladder series of intervals of 4, 5, 6, 5, and 4 minutes, each at threshold intensity (RPE of 7/10, or "Hard" on the subjective scale). Recoveries will be 2 minutes for the 4-min efforts 3 min for the 5-min efforts, and 4 min for the 6-minute effort. That makes a total of 24 minutes of work and 16 minutes for the recoveries following them (no need for a recovery after the final 4-minute effort because it is followed by the cool-down). This makes a total of 40 minutes. I have a 60 minute class, and will have a warm-up and cool-down of 6-8 minutes each. That leaves some extra time, so I elect to add a 4-minute effort before the main set of intervals, to high Zone 3, with 3 minutes of easy afterwards. This serves as an extension of the warm-up and prepares the body for the harder intervals to come. Also, this makes it better for the students, because few people are ready for threshold efforts after only 6-8 minutes of warming up. This allows them to more easily attain the desired intensity for that first interval in the main set.

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I begin by sketching out a framework for this class in a notebook. When I do this, there are often a lot of scratching out as I make alterations. My class starts to look like this:

Warm-up

8 min to Zone 2

4-min to mid to high Zone 3 (“moderately-hard”), followed by 3 min easy

Main Set:

- 4 min hard/2 min easy
- 5 min hard/3 min easy
- 6 min hard/4 min easy
- 5 min hard/3 min easy
- 4 min hard

Cool down and stretch

10 minutes

At this point I haven’t yet considered what I’m going to do in each interval. For this particular profile, the most important thing was to establish the intensity and the duration first, since that was the *primary objective*.

Now it’s time to decide the *mode* – how I am going to bring their intensity to threshold. I look at it and decide that I want some variety for each interval. I have another profile with a primary objective of “hill repeats at threshold”, and in that one, I do each effort on a hill. But since the objective of this particular ride is simply “threshold intensity” and not necessarily climbing, I decide I will do both flats and climbs with varying cadences.

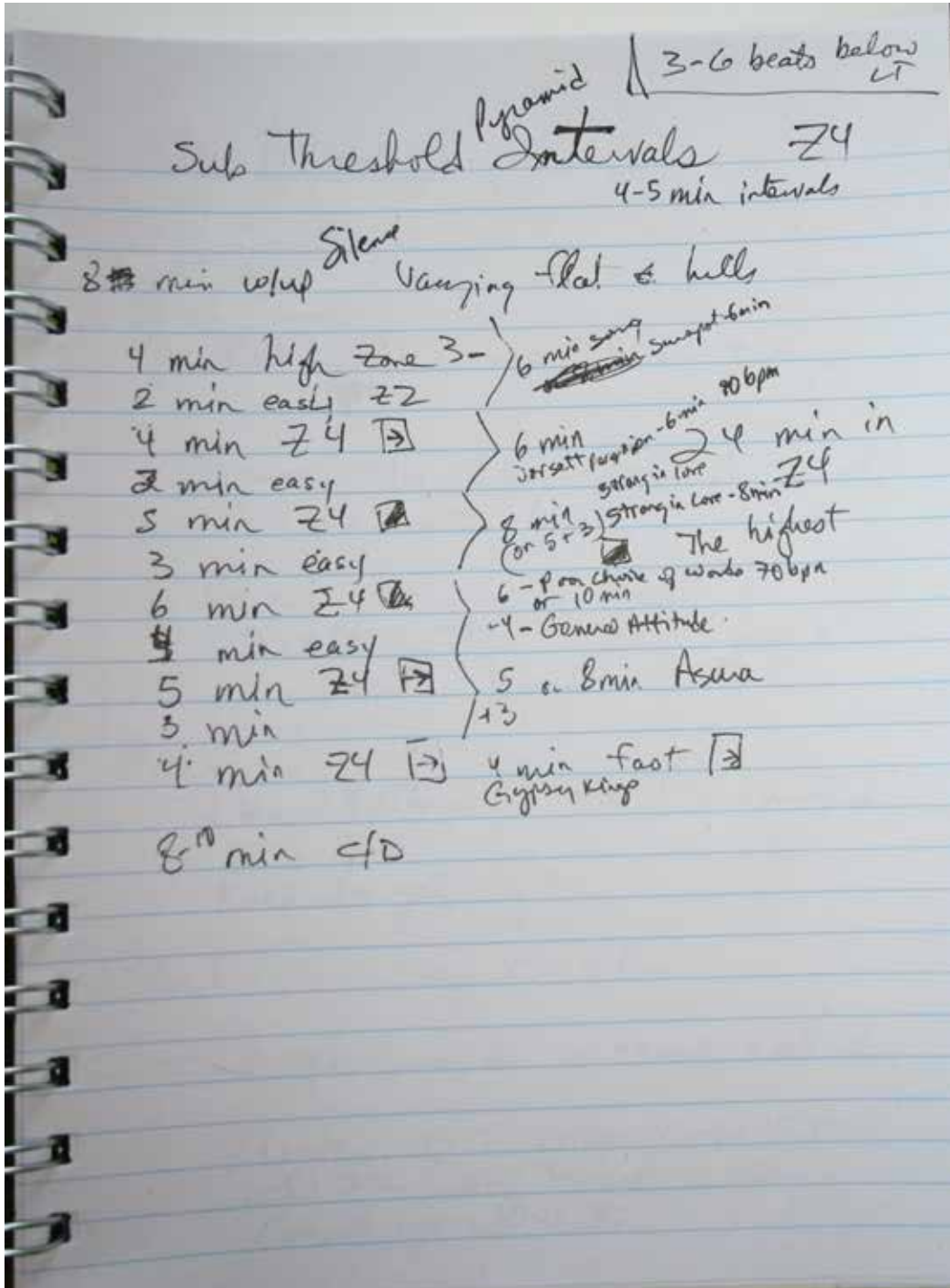
I decide to do 3 of the shorter intervals as fast flats and the other 2 as climbs. The faster cadence work is actually harder for most people, so I decide to introduce the intervals with one fast flat because it’s shorter and because faster cadences affect the cardiovascular system more than the muscular system; this puts off the muscular fatigue until the middle two intervals. I also decide to end with two fast flats because of the challenge it represents. The longest one is a climb because I know they prefer those (yes, sometimes I am nice to my students)!

Putting music to this profile

When selecting music, I usually work on the body of the profile first and choose the warm-up and cool-down songs afterward. I could conceivably do a different song for each of the work and recovery efforts, but I also can combine the work effort and the short recovery with one longer song.

I decide that for this profile I am going to use the beat of a song to help define the cadence of each interval. The cadence won’t be as important for the recoveries, since I’ll be encouraging them to do whatever they need to do to bring their heart rates down, so for those I’ll choose a song with a middle of the road bpm – they can choose to pedal to it or not.

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Here is the actual page from my notebook where I sketched out this profile. You can see I scribbled some things out as I changed my mind. Those are song suggestions on the right. I still use a few of the Spinning® symbols, usually just to depict a climb (it's not defined as seated or flat yet). I use a symbol of an arrow pointing to the right to indicate when I want faster cadence on flats. This helps guide me to select a song with a faster bpm.

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As I progress through these thought processes, I write a note for myself next to each work/recovery interval on my hand-written profile.

- I need a 6-min song for the first 4-min Zone 3 effort plus the 2-min recovery.
- For the first threshold interval I want a 6-minute song with a fairly fast beat (90-ish bpm) for a flat (4 minutes of work, 2 minutes recovery).
- the next one will be a climbing interval, and I will need either a 5 min climb song plus a 3 min recovery song, or one 8 min song good for climbing (we'll ride an easy flat during the recovery, even if the beat is slower).
- The next one needs a 6 min climbing song and a 4-min recovery song
- The next one will be a 5 min fast flat, requiring either a 5 min fast song and 3 min recovery, or one 8 min faster song.
- The last one will be a 4 minute fast flat
- Finish with a cool-down and stretch of about 8 minutes.

I have my hand-written profile next to me as I look in my iTunes folders for the type of song I want with the correct beat/rhythm. I create a new playlist in iTunes with the title of my new profile and as I select a song I'll drag it to the playlist. I also write down the song and bpm (if applicable) on my profile.

For intervals of this duration, I'm not picky that the song has to be *exactly* the length of the desired interval - it can be in that range (such as 4-ish minutes). If you prefer, you can use Mixmeister or another mixing software to make your songs exactly the length you desire. I only do that when the length is crucial to the profile, because I don't like when songs are chopped or shortened too much with Mixmeister. If I want a 2 minute song, I'll look for a song that's about 2-minutes; I don't like to cut a 6-minute song down to 2 minutes – too much of the heart of the song is lost. I will also use Mixmeister for special events when I have more time to devote to a very smooth transitioning playlist.

After I choose my songs from my iTunes library and playlists, I add the warm-up and cool-down, and then listen to a little of each song to make sure it will work. If not, I'll keep searching for a song that will. (Tip: when doing this, make sure to listen to a short segment of the beginning, middle and end of the song).

On the following page is what I ended up with for this profile.

Pyramid Threshold Intervals

Warm-up

Silence (Sanctuary Mix), Delerium feat Sarah McLaughlin, 8:06

4-minute Zone 3 effort plus 2-minute easy: *Sunspot (feat Airwave), Armin Van Buuren, 6:01*

Stand up for 30-40 seconds to raise intensity to tempo pace, then sit for the remainder of the effort. Stay at least 10 beats below threshold, or to a PE of moderately hard. This serves as an extension of the warm-up. Bpm doesn't really matter here, it's just to get the legs ready. There are 3 more minutes of the song to bring the intensity back down just prior to the main set of intervals.

Main Set

1. First interval effort: 4 min hard + 2-min easy, one 6-ish minute song

Dorset Perception (Deep Dive Corp Remix), Shpongle, 6:24

The song is 90 bpm. Start standing for 20-30 seconds to raise intensity, then sit down and grab on to the beat. 90rpm is a great place to pedal! The effort should feel hard. If it's not, then add another half-gear underneath your pedals, but hold on to that cadence.

After 4 minutes, ease up and slow the legs down (even though the song continues, I don't make them hold the 90rpm anymore unless they want to). Bring the HR down. After about a minute they can stand and "jog" easy if they need more out of the saddle time, but keep it short. The recovery is a little longer than 2 minutes.

2. Second interval effort: 5 min hard, 3 min easy. I choose one 8-ish min song

Strong in Love, Chicane 8:04 68 bpm

Start standing climb for 1 minute, bring HR to desired intensity, then sit for a minute; alternate stand/sit every 30-seconds. Keep the cadence of 68rpm.

After 5 minutes of hard effort, it's time to recover. Back off the resistance and let the legs spin, even though the 68bpm continues. At this point they can break from the beat, and imagine they are on a flat road, pedaling easily. Drink and prepare for the next one.

3. Third interval effort (climbing): 6 min hard, 4 min easy – two songs.

Poor Choice of Words, Hans Zimmer, The Dark Knight Remixes, 6:13

This song is 70bpm. Stand up for 45-60 seconds to bring up intensity, then sit for 4 minutes, then stand until the song ends (about a minute). Hold cadence.

General Attitude, Collective Soul 4:00

Recover and ride easy, prepare for the next one. The beat doesn't matter on this song (IMO). I chose this song because they will know it, it's entertaining, and it's 4 minutes.

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4. Fourth Interval Effort: 5 min hard, 3 min easy.

One song *Altered States (Kumharas 6 Full Version), Asura 7:47 100bpm*

(This song is a little shorter than 8 minutes. I wanted a faster beat song, and it's still a recovery of over half the work effort).

Stand for 45 seconds to raise the intensity, then sit. The beat of the song doesn't get going until about a minute and a half, so have them gradually start increasing their cadence, latching on to the 100rpm. This is a tough cadence for a lot of riders IF they understand the realistic resistance needed. If they bounce, it's ok to slow down the legs and add a little more resistance, but have them find the highest cadence they can hold with good form.

After 5 minutes, release the fast cadence, slow the legs and recover until the end of the song. Once HR falls, if they need a saddle break, stand and jog easily for 30-40 seconds.

5. Fifth Interval Effort: 4 minutes hard – fast flat

Escucha Me, Gipsy Kings, 4:03

Like the previous song, sit and work this faster cadence in the saddle. Stay committed. It's more difficult to hold a true 100rpm at threshold than to climb at threshold.

Cool Down

Holding the Vision, Steve Gordon 6:56

Everything Epilogue, Safri Duo 2:38

How to Create Profiles For Your Indoor Cycling Classes

Practice, Practice, Practice!

You will surely make some mistakes along the way on your journey as an indoor cycling instructor, and creating profiles is one of the areas of teaching in which you must be willing to take that leap of faith. But don't be hard on yourself. Mistakes always represent an opportunity to grow. When something doesn't work in a profile you've created, make sure you write down *why* it didn't work. Perhaps your students were unable to do what you were asking at the intensity you required. Or maybe you realized that you had too little recovery, or even too much. It could be that a song just didn't fit what you wanted to do, or didn't reflect the mood you wanted to convey.

If a certain profile sort of worked, but you discovered parts of it you want to change, make those changes right away, so you won't use the same profile and playlist again. If the entire thing didn't work, well, toss it and start from scratch!

At ICA, you will receive many complete profiles that include objectives and sub-objectives, and all the coaching and cueing to use in that profile. I will give you one, sometimes even two, playlists for every profile. But my hope is that the profiles available on ICA will inspire you to create your own profiles.

Always remember too, that you can repurpose a profile simply by changing the objective, altering the cadence, shortening or lengthening segments, and/or putting a new playlist to it, while retaining the original structure. It is unlikely your students will be able to tell the difference. Before you know it, you will have dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of profiles to choose from. Make sure to read Tip #8, "Have Lots of Profiles" in *Top Ten Ways to Stay Motivated as an Indoor Cycling Instructor* (eBook available on ICA). It also gives suggestions on how to organize your profiles.

Remember that members of ICA can Ask the Expert any question related to teaching indoor cycling, including on how to write profiles or about putting your music together. Also, we will occasionally be doing profile reviews, where you can send your profile in for a complete evaluation. This is perhaps one of the best ways to grow – to be willing to put yourself out there to be evaluated.

I look forward to hearing from you at ICA!

Jennifer Sage