



American Heart Association

ACLS Instructor-Led Training: Conducting Learning Stations

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Conducting Learning Stations

When conducting the learning stations, introduce yourself (if necessary) as students enter the room. Describe the objectives of the learning stations. Remember that time for hands-on practice by students is essential in the learning stations.

Your responsibility is to coach the students, not lecture them about specific skills. Facilitate skills practice in the stations and demonstrate only when indicated on the Lesson Plans for the station.

Instructors should spend more time in the beginning of the course instructing, facilitating, and guiding students in the case-based learning stations and gradually spend less time as students acclimatize to the roles and responsibilities during each case. It is important for learning purposes that students lead and actually perform skills required in that station in real time with real equipment. The learning stations are also designed to encourage teamwork. When the students adapt to their roles and responsibilities, and all of these aspects come together, the team functions so much better than its individual parts. As an instructor, emphasize the importance and advantage of teamwork to the students, which ultimately leads to more lives being saved.

Conducting a structured and supported debriefing after each case is essential for students to understand why they did what they did. Then, have all students apply what they learned in the debriefing to the next case. Through repetition (practice), long-term learning will take place.

If the station includes a case-based scenario, give the Team Leader and other team members information about the case. The Team Leader must demonstrate management of the case. (See Figure 1 for suggested locations for the Team Leader and team members during the case scenario.)

Be prepared to provide key information about the case as it unfolds. If the group strays from the learning station objectives, guide them back to the objectives. You can give hints or advice, but let the students work through the algorithms and basic life support, Primary, and Secondary Assessments under the direction of the student playing the role of Team Leader.

If you are a new instructor or are teaching for the first time, you may want to watch and work with an experienced ACLS Instructor before conducting a learning station on your own.

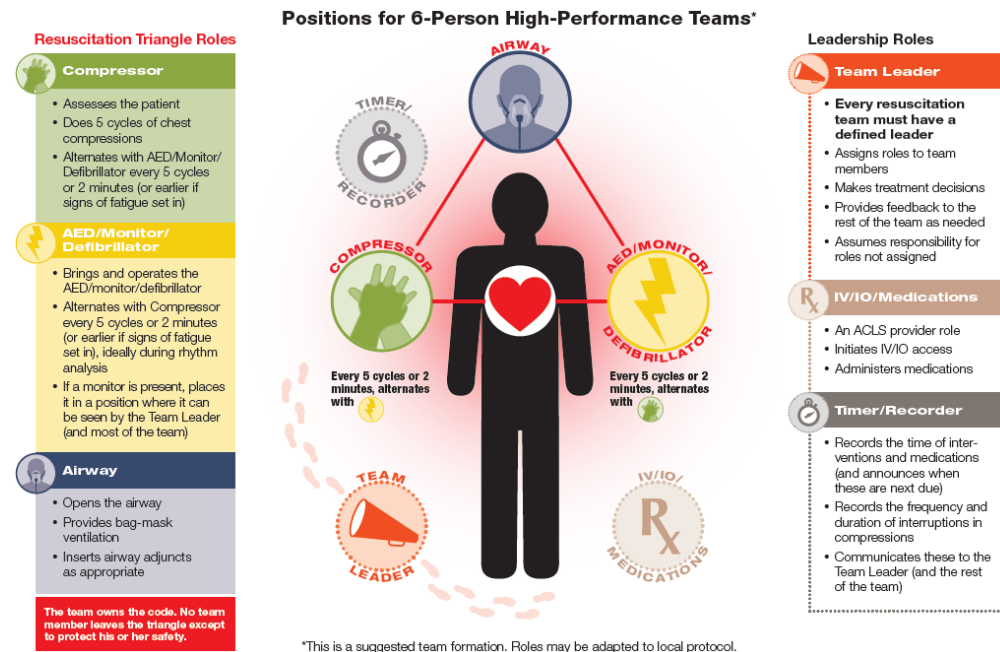


Figure 1. Suggested locations for the Team Leader and team members during case simulations.

Do not spend all the time in case practice; be sure to provide adequate time for a debriefing after each case. It is not necessary to resolve each case clinically during the case practice; rather, end the case in a timely way to provide sufficient opportunity for discussion.

Gloves can be worn during learning station simulations just as they would be used in a real emergency. Donning gloves should not delay the initiation of chest compressions.

Note: You will need 1 DVD for each learning station. For the video learning stations (eg, The Science of Resuscitation and Systematic Approach), introduce the video, play the video, and lead instructor-to-student interaction by asking questions listed in the Lesson Plans and answering additional student questions.

Learning Stations

Acute Coronary Syndromes and Acute Ischemic Stroke

For the Acute Coronary Syndromes (ACS) and Acute Ischemic Stroke video-mediated Learning Stations, introduce the video, show the first section of the videos, and pause for instructor-to-student interaction by using the questions on the Lesson Plans as well as by answering any other questions students may have during this section. There are 3 pauses with questions (see Lesson Plans) for both the ACS and Acute Ischemic Stroke videos.

Cardiac Arrest

During the Cardiac Arrest Learning Station, show the Cardiac Arrest Algorithm video and conduct instructor-to-student interaction by fielding questions from students and asking specific questions on the topic (see Lesson Plans). Review the monitor/defibrillator technology if needed. Conduct learning station case scenarios (1 per student), assigning roles for each case. Perform a structured and supported debriefing after each case.

Bradycardia and Tachycardia

During the Bradycardia and Tachycardia Learning Stations, show the Bradycardia Algorithm and Tachycardia Algorithm videos and conduct instructor-to-student interaction by fielding questions from students and asking specific questions on the topic (see Lesson Plans). Review the monitor/defibrillator technology, if needed, and review bradycardia and tachycardia rhythms using a rhythm generator or static ECGs. Once these are complete, conduct learning station case scenarios (3 per each station), assigning roles for each case. Perform a structured and supported debriefing after each case.

Immediate Post–Cardiac Arrest Care

The Immediate Post–Cardiac Arrest Care Learning Station follows a similar pattern as the Bradycardia and Tachycardia Learning Stations. Show the Immediate Post–Cardiac Arrest Care Algorithm video and conduct instructor-to-student interaction by fielding questions from students and asking specific questions on the topic (see Lesson Plans). Conduct learning station case scenarios (3 for this station), assigning roles for each case. Perform a structured and supported debriefing after each case.

Megacode Practice

The Megacode Practice Learning Station incorporates multiple algorithms in a large case-based scenario. Conduct learning station

case scenarios (1 per student), assigning roles for each case.
Perform a structured and supported debriefing after each case.

**Leading
Discussion
on Protocols**

The American Heart Association (AHA) does not endorse any particular resuscitation protocol or strategy. This discussion is a chance for students to articulate their protocols and to practice AHA skills within the context of their protocols.

Across the country, each institution or system develops treatment protocols based on local need, preference of administration, and medical direction. In many cases, these differ from established national standards. The course you are teaching may direct providers to act in ways that are not consistent with local treatment protocols. The AHA wishes to improve the chances of survival for every victim of cardiac arrest but does not wish to conflict with established local protocols.

Before teaching the course, make sure you are familiar with your local protocols or procedures. Reference the AHA examples below to help lead the local protocol discussions.

Discussion Questions

- How does the AHA Chain of Survival apply to you and your team?
- How is your current communication between systems of care?
- How can you improve communication within your entire systems of care?
- Does your system currently use a high-performance team approach to resuscitation?
- How can you incorporate high-performance teamwork into your department's protocols?
- What are some potential challenges to incorporating high-performance teamwork into your protocols?
- What are some potential challenges to high-performance teamwork in terms of location, patients, or equipment?
- Compare and contrast the local protocol with the AHA algorithms.