

Muscle Memory & Skill Acquisition

When we **learn a skill**, it **requires repeated and continuous practice** before it becomes **automatic**.

An **automatic skill** is a movement we can do without thought.

Walking is the obvious example.

From our early years, repeated practice day in, day out, result in our arms and legs eventually co-ordinating into an efficient walking action.

Think about the almost countless arm movement variations you can perform while walking.

Simply: Your muscles develop a (correct) “*muscle memory of walking*” ... your mind and body is free to focus on other tasks, and, develop a muscle memory of those tasks.

Like walking, running – sprinting (running faster) – swimming faster are acquired skills that can become automatic when our body develops *a muscle memory of running – swimming*.

This takes time, and is strongly dependent on **regular, ever-improving practice**.

We are what we repeatedly do ... excellence can be(come) a habit

Learning New Skill is/can be FUN !!

Young people want to be able to do things others cannot do, and/or things others recognise and respect; e.g. running faster, swimming faster, spelling accurately, swimming efficiently (smoothly),

These, and many other things are recognised and appreciated by their peer group and others they seek to impress (e.g. parents, siblings, friends, student colleagues).

The coach/teacher is the link to this enhanced level of accomplishment and self-esteem.

The coach sees / the athlete feels .. coaching challenges you to draw these two aspects of performance together.

In rising to the challenge: **DO NOT COMPROMISE YOUR STANDARDS**
(Compromise can be another way of going backwards)

Athletes / Students will rise to the level of expectations

(Check out the film: Stand & Deliver, and you'll see what I mean .. it's only as far away as your video store, or, I can loan it to you).

**You can't all be winners
but
You can ALL be CHAMPIONS**

The image is a movie poster for the film 'Stand and Deliver'. At the top, it lists the lead actors 'EDWARD JAMES OLMO'S • LOU DIAMOND PHILLIPS'. The title 'Stand and Deliver' is written vertically on the left side and horizontally in the center. The central image shows a man (Edward James Olmos) sitting at a desk, looking thoughtful. To the right of the main image are several smaller portraits of other cast members. At the bottom left, there is a '1985' logo and a 'PG' rating box. At the bottom right, there is a 'PG' rating box and a parental guidance recommendation: 'PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED FOR PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS'. The overall design is simple and focuses on the main character and the film's title.