

Foundation for Perfection

Learning How to Eliminate Resistance, When Doing a Job

3 Causes of Resistance

- 1) **Self Preservation**
 - Due to lack of confidence
- 2) **Lack of Communication**
 - Horse needs more time, patience, and/or teaching (slow down!)
- 3) **Disobedience** (resentment to commands)
 - Due to unwilling submission

4 Factors to Eliminate Resistance

1) Willing Submission – After initial contact the horse performs the task on a loose rein and with no leg pressure; **it is the horse's idea.**

2) Good Communication – Learning to read, feel, and understand what the horse is saying in response to our request (Communication involves two individuals, what is the horse saying?). We communicate through the horse's driving and underlying factors along with **feel, timing, and balance.**

3 Primary Driving Factors: **Self-preservation, Comfort, and Companionship**

1 Variable Factor: Hormones

2 Underlying Factors: **Confidence, and Energy** (motivation and determination)

↑ Confidence (↑ Comfort, ↑ Companionship) = ↓ Self-preservation

↓ Energy = ↓ Self-preservation

↑ Confidence = ↓ Head height, ↓ Confidence = ↑ Head height

As the **Energy level** decreases ~ **Self-Preservation** decreases ~ which opens the door to increase **Comfort** and **Companionship** (when presented in the correct manner)

3) Balanced life to direction ratio – The ratio is determined by the speed at which we can willingly bring the life up and willingly direct it on set line (straight or curved), without losing “direction.”

Life – The ability to move the horse with any given speed at any given time.

1 = Inflict pain to get into a lope, **5** = Gallop at any given time.

Direction – When slack is taken out of the rein, the horse puts slack back in the rein with suppleness through the poll and loin. **1** = Direction standing, **5** = Direction loping. Life > Direction = Confidence ↓ in horse

a) **Vertical Direction** – (Atlas Vertebrae) – Up and down
- Break in the poll vertically: Nose should be perpendicular to the ground

b) **Horizontal Direction** – (Axis Vertebrae) – Left to Right

3 Signs – Poll

- Break in the poll horizontally (hairline curves between the ears)

- Nose should be directly underneath the eye (no head tilting)

- Should not see any white in the eye (looking back not forward)

3 Signs – Loin

- Front feet and hind feet travel on same path as the nose

- Poll and loin should make a perfect “C”

- Should be able to ride a perfect circle (“C” is half an “O”)

c) **False Direction** – Give nose putting slack in the rein, but do not break in the poll

- Poll and loin are “1” shaped instead of a “C” shape in turns

- Results in dropped shoulders and leaning out in turns, kicking hindquarters out in spins and rollbacks, and not holding a pivot foot

- Also results in rubber-necked horses, hard mouths, and stiff movements

Stiff poll and loin = Unwilling submission, self-preservation, low confidence

Supple poll and loin = Willing submission, comfort, companionship, confidence

Four Levels of Directed Life

1) Submit the life (Stage 1 Mechanical Foundation)

2) Fill them with life (with no signs of self-preservation)

3) Direct the life (1st straight lines, 2nd curved lines)

4) Led by the life (Stage 2 Mechanical Foundation)

(Life = Hindquarters & Driving Factors)

4) Solid Foundation of Maneuvers (2 parts)

Part 1 (Mechanical) – Ability to move the feet in any direction to accomplish any job

Four stages:

Stage 1 – Stopping the inside front foot and walking the other feet forward around it.

Stage 2 – Hindquarters pulling the horse in a reverse motion.

Stage 3 – Lateral movement of front feet and hind feet together.

Stage 4 – Stopping the inside hind foot and pulling the other feet forward around it.

Part 2 (Mental) – Horse and rider begin to receive insight into how they can move together in perfect unity to accomplish a job: Horse experiences willing submission, good communication, a balanced life to direction ratio, and Part 1 of the Solid Foundation of Maneuvers all at the same time.

It’s like you are riding in the dark and somebody switches on a light, all resistance leaves and it makes perfect sense to *you* and the *horse*. The horse becomes as light as a feather, moving in perfect unity with the person; no resistance in doing the job. These are the “ah-ha” moments when riding a horse. It is by multiplying these moments that we are able to *build* and *keep* a “foundation for perfection.” The goal is to multiply these moments from brief seconds, to minutes, to hours; until we are left with no more resistance and find ourselves riding in absolute perfection.

Three Stages:

Stage 1 – Brief seconds during the ride

Stage 2 – Minutes during the ride

Stage 3 – Consistency during the ride