

Teacher Tip of the Week

Counseling Student Attitudes

Student attitudes are important to you. In teaching a roomful of students, the attitudes of students may prove to be as significant as their abilities and behaviors. You will find that many teachers will punish a student for a “bad attitude” as quickly as they punish for “bad behavior.” and many teachers are prone to forgive and forget a bad behavior more readily than they forgive and forget a bad attitude. Certainly, if a bad behavior is accompanied by a good attitude toward the teacher, this is almost always true.



There is no doubt we have our own definition of good and bad attitudes. And there’s no doubt regarding the importance of a good attitude in school as well as the world of work. Good attitudes can open doors. They can even compensate for a lack of

ability—and for good reason.

A worker can have all the talent in the world, but a poor attitude can negate every one of his or her abilities. Therefore, sheer ability is not everything. In fact, studies reveal that only 15% of people who lose or leave jobs do so because of a lack of ability. Eighty-five percent of all terminations in the world of work are related to attitude. They are the result of negative attitudes towards others as well as an inability to get along with other people—colleagues, customers, managers, or others. Your task in the classroom is to manage and develop positive and productive student attitudes. Here are some do’s and don’ts relative to the task.

1. **DON’T SEND STUDENTS WITH POOR ATTITUDES TO SEE SOMEONE ELSE UNLESS YOU ARE COUNSELING THEM TOO.** Such a stance indicates teacher inability to cope with the problem and implies rejection of the student—not just the attitude.
2. **DON’T EXPECT THESE STUDENTS TO CHANGE AN ATTITUDE OVERNIGHT. THEY WON’T.**
3. **RECOGNIZE THAT YOU MUST BE WILLING TO GIVE THESE STUDENTS YOUR TIME OUTSIDE CLASS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.**
4. **RESOLVE TO ASK AND QUESTION, BUT NOT TELL.** Remember, you can’t impose your truths upon these students and be effective. However, you can share your beliefs—and there is a big difference between these two teacher positions. Telling is sharing, not demanding.
5. **KNOWING WHEN AND HOW TO TALK TO STUDENTS IS VITAL TO SUCCESS.** The best time to counsel students about behavior is when the behavior is being revealed. However, this is not true relative to counseling attitudes. Attitude problems are not necessarily behavior problems. Remember, if you are getting the behavior you requested, never counsel at the time you note a poor attitude. Always wait and talk about attitude later—when the bad attitude is not showing.
6. **WHEN YOU BEGIN TO COUNSEL ATTITUDES, PLANT SEEDS RATHER THAN TREES.** Don’t try to have any lengthy conversa-

Volume 3, Issue 5, 2007



Points to Ponder
privately...or with
colleagues

IN CONTROL

- What does being in control in the classroom mean to you?
- How much control and order are necessary to allow learning to occur in the classroom?
- Do you see indications in your own school that educators are getting tough again? How do you feel about that?

Advice & Support from the Veterans

Glenda H. Davis
Wilson Central
Librarian



The best advice I could give to any teacher would be to always be prepared. Students know when you don’t have a plan, and as Harry Wong says, “If you don’t have a plan, you’re planning to fail.” Also be ready for the unexpected. Something will inevitably happen to change your plans. As teachers we must learn to be flexible.

Teaching Tidbit...

**KEEP CLASS WEB PAGES
UP TO DATE**

6. **WHEN YOU BEGIN TO COUNSEL ATTITUDES, PLANT SEEDS RATHER THAN TREES.** Don't try to have any lengthy conversation until you think a student is ready to listen.
7. **WHEN YOU DO HAVE A LONG TALK, USE THE COMPARISON TECHNIQUE.** It is very effective. Say, "You do the same work as others and never get as much credit. Do you know why? It is this think called attitude."
8. **WHEN COUNSELING, DON'T TALK ABOUT RIGHT AND WRONG.** Students have heard this approach before. Rather, talk about dumb and smart—and the law of averages. Say, "It's dumb to act the way you do and get in trouble. It's not smart."

We can't solve every problem for students. We can only help them solve their problems. The student with a bad attitude is a living testament to this reality. Your responsibility is to share and guide, not demand or impose. Helping students discover what works for and against them has the best chance of success.—*The Master Teacher*

KEEP CLASS WEB PAGES UP TO DATE

Update your Web site regularly with current information. Your class website is a good place to post updates to the class schedule and assignments. Of course, you should give students important notices in person, but posting them on the website is your bulletin board in cyberspace where students can access the information at any time.

Teacher Tips...Whining

Whining is a heavy-duty irritation. It can be grating. It cannot be ignored. And, unfortunately, it often works because students learn to say the same thing over and over again until they wear adults down. Remember, you cannot give in. If you do, you reinforce the behavior. You prove to young people they have a super technique to get what they want. Never forget, it is not enough to tell whiners what not to do. You have to tell them what to do.

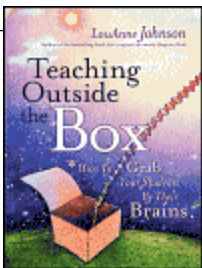


Helpful Websites for Teachers

www.cafeteacher.com

Cafeteacher.com is dedicated to providing teachers with an online community that incorporates the latest tools for communication and collaboration. We know that the education environment is changing and evolving at an incredibly fast rate. We have a number of features to help teachers stay connected and informed (message boards, blogs, social networking).

Suggested Reading for Teachers



Teaching Outside the Box: How to Grab Your Students By Their Brains By LouAnne Johnson

The realities of classroom life are daunting for most teachers. Why won't these kids behave? How can my lessons work for both low and high-achievers? Will I ever be able to know all these kids as individuals? How can I keep them motivated for the day, let alone a year? And, why didn't they prepare me for this in my teacher training courses?

Teaching Outside the Box offers practical tips and strategies for dealing with the daily challenges of classroom teaching -- from discipline and motivation to lesson plans and grading. Written by LouAnne Johnson (author of *The Queen of Education* and *Dangerous Minds*) who has used these techniques in some of the toughest classrooms in America, this book will help make teaching enjoyable for both teachers and students. Practical, but personable, this book will be an indispensable resource for new and veteran teachers alike.

Need a laugh?

Truths Children Have Learned



- ♦ No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.
- ♦ When your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- ♦ You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- ♦ You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- ♦ Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic-Tac.

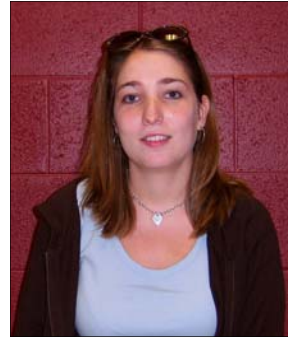
New Teacher Support Group Participants



RANDY PAYNE
TUCKERS CROSSROADS
THIRD GRADE

**WHY DID YOU BE-
COME A TEACHER:**

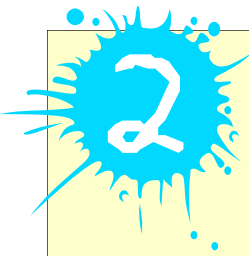
“My passion for teaching grew out of my marriage to my wife, Tammy, who has taught for twenty years. I wanted the same effect she had on her students.”—Randy Payne



JACKIE VESTER
MT. JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
ECON & GOVERNMENT

**WHY DID YOU BE-
COME A TEACHER:**

“I enjoy the content that I teach. I enjoy continued learning. I wanted to pass my enthusiasm for the subject to students and encourage them to continue learning outside the classroom. I also wanted to help others be successful. I hope I can send my seniors out of the classroom prepared for the ‘real world’.”—Jackie Vester



Marzano's Nine Essential Instructional Strategies

Number Two: Summarizing and Note-taking

These skills promote greater comprehension by asking students to analyze a subject to expose what's essential and then put it in their own words. According to research, this requires substituting, deleting, and keeping some things and having an awareness of the basic structure of the information presented.

Applications:

- * Provide a set of rules for creating a summary.
- * When summarizing, ask students to question what is unclear, clarify those questions, and then predict what will happen next in the text.

Research shows that taking more notes is better than fewer notes, though verbatim note taking is ineffective because it does not allow time to process the information. Teachers should encourage and give time for review and revision of notes; notes can be the best study guides for tests.

Applications:

- * Use teacher-prepared notes.
- * Stick to a consistent format for notes, although students can refine the notes as necessary.

Next week: #3 Reinforcing Effort & Providing Recognition

It is the policy of the Wilson County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.