

11 Habits of an Effective Teacher

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I really appreciate teachers who are truly passionate about teaching. The teacher who wants to be an inspiration to others. The teacher who is happy with his/her job at all times. The teacher who every child in the school would love to have. The teacher kids remember for the rest of their lives. Are you that teacher? Read on and learn 11 effective habits of an effective teacher.

1. Enjoys Teaching

Teaching is meant to be a very enjoyable and rewarding career field (although demanding and exhausting at times!). You should only become a teacher if you love children and intend on caring for them with your heart. You cannot expect the kids to have fun if you are not having fun with them! If you only read the instructions out of a textbook, it's ineffective. Instead, make your lessons come alive by making it as interactive and engaging as possible. Let your passion for teaching shine through each and everyday. Enjoy every teaching moment to the fullest.

2. Makes a Difference

There is a saying, "With great power, comes great responsibility". As a teacher, you need to be aware and remember the great responsibility that comes with your profession. One of your goals ought to be: Make a difference in their lives. How? Make them feel special, safe and secure when they are in your classroom. Be the positive influence in their lives. Why? You never know what your students went through before entering your classroom on a particular day or what conditions they are going home to after your class. So, just in case they are not getting enough support from home, at least you will make a difference and provide that to them.

3. Spreads Positivity

Bring positive energy into the classroom every single day. You have a beautiful smile so don't forget to flash it as much as possible throughout the day. I know that you face battles of your own in your personal life but once you enter that classroom, you should leave all of it behind before you step foot in the door. Your students deserve more than for you to take your frustration out on them. No matter how you are feeling, how much sleep you've gotten or how frustrated you are, never let that show. Even if you are having a bad day, learn to put on a mask in front of the students and let them think of you as a superhero (it will make your day too)! Be someone who is always positive, happy and smiling. Always remember that positive energy is contagious and it is up to you to spread it. Don't let other people's negativity bring you down with them.

4. Gets Personal

This is the fun part and absolutely important for being an effective teacher! Get to know your students and their interests so that you can find ways to connect with them. Don't forget to also tell them about yours! Also, it is important to get to know their learning styles so that you can cater to each of them as an individual. In addition, make an effort to get to know their parents as well. Speaking to the parents should not be looked at as an obligation but rather, an honour. In the beginning of the school year, make it known that they can come to you about anything at anytime of the year. In addition, try to get to know your colleagues on a personal level as well. You will be much happier if you can find a strong support network in and outside of school.

5. Gives 100%

Whether you are delivering a lesson, writing report cards or offering support to a colleague - give 100%. Do your job for the love of teaching and not because you feel obligated to do it. Do it for self-growth. Do it to inspire others. Do it so that your students will get the most out of what you are teaching them. Give 100% for yourself, students, parents, school and everyone who believes in you. Never give up and try your best - that's all that you can do. (That's what I tell the kids anyway!)

6. Stays Organized

Never fall behind on the marking or filing of students' work. Try your best to be on top of it and not let the pile grow past your head! It will save you a lot of time in the long run. It is also important to keep an organized planner and plan ahead! The likelihood of last minute lesson plans being effective are slim. Lastly, keep a journal handy and jot down your ideas as soon as an inspired idea forms in your mind. Then, make a plan to put those ideas in action.

7. Is Open-Minded

As a teacher, there are going to be times where you will be observed formally or informally (that's also why you should give 100% at all times). You are constantly being evaluated and criticized by your boss, teachers, parents and even children. Instead of feeling bitter when somebody has something to say about your teaching, be open-minded when receiving constructive criticism and form a plan of action. Prove that you are the effective teacher that you want to be. Nobody is perfect and there is always room for improvement. Sometimes, others see what you fail to see.

8. Has Standards

Create standards for your students and for yourself. From the beginning, make sure that they know what is acceptable versus what isn't. For example, remind the students how you would like work to be completed. Are you the teacher who wants your students to try their best and hand in their best and neatest work? Or are you the teacher who couldn't care less? Now remember, you can only expect a lot if you give a lot. As the saying goes, "Practice what you preach".

9. Finds Inspiration

An effective teacher is one who is creative but that doesn't mean that you have to create everything from scratch! Find inspiration from as many sources as you can. Whether it comes from books, education, Pinterest, YouTube, Facebook, blogs, TpT or what have you, keep finding it!

10. Embraces Change

In life, things don't always go according to plan. This is particularly true when it comes to teaching. Be flexible and go with the flow when change occurs. An effective teacher does not complain about changes when a new principal arrives. They do not feel the need to mention how good they had it at their last school or with their last group of students compared to their current circumstances. Instead of stressing about change, embrace it with both hands and show that you are capable of hitting every curve ball that comes your way!

11. Creates Reflection

An effective teacher reflects on their teaching to evolve as a teacher. Think about what went well and what you would do differently next time. You need to remember that we all have "failed" lessons from time to time. Instead of looking at it as a failure, think about it as a lesson and learn from it. As teachers, your education and learning is ongoing. There is always more to learn and know about in order to strengthen your teaching skills. Keep reflecting on your work and educating yourself on what you find are your "weaknesses" as we all have them! The most important part is recognizing them and being able to work on them to improve your teaching skills.

There are, indeed, several other habits that make an effective teacher but these are the ones that I find most important. Many other character traits can be tied into these ones as well.

Last word: There is always something positive to be found in every situation but it is up to you to find it. Keep your head up and teach happily for the love of education!

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