

# **ORGANIZATIONAL TEACHING SKILLS**

**INDEPENDENT STUDY  
A FIVE CREDIT CLASS**  
Course #ED429w/ED529w

## **INSTRUCTOR:**

Dr. Michael Sedler

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The Heritage Institute

**Please Do Not send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...). If you have signed up for multiple classes, please finish one before turning in work for the next one. And, there should be at least two weeks between course completions.**

**NOTE:** This is an online class and all work should be turned in through The Heritage Institute site. NO work should be sent directly to the instructor. When you registered, you should have received information as to how this process works. If you are still unsure how to do this, please contact [registrar@hol.edu](mailto:registrar@hol.edu) and they can help you with this issue.

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class!

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Masters Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am an adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you, once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler  
(509) 443-1605  
E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)  
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**\*\*** For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others. It is my main form of advertising

## MICHAEL SEDLER

(509) 443-1605 (w); (509) 939-6302 (c)

Email: mike@communicationplus.net or michael@michaelsedler.com

website: www.michaelsedler.com

### Education

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

### Work Experience

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration, behavior consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K-12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

### Other Experiences

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

### Author

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 400,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016, Revell Books, \$5.99).

Updated/edited version of "Stop The Runaway Conversation.") Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective. Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell is a division of Baker Publishing Group. Both books are available on CD as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)  
MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours available for partial course completion.

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students (SS401p/SS501p)**

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach (SS401q/SS501q)**

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning (SS401v/SS501v)**

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students (ED404d/ED504d)**

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES:** (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough (ED437q/ED537q)**

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators (ED409r/ED509r)**

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions (SS409f/SS509f)**

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**4. Mental Health Issues and Students (HE402n/HE502n)**

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**5. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools (ED434y/ED534y)**

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**6. Organizational Teaching Skills (ED429w/ED529w)**

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**7. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students (HE401m/HE501m)**

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**8. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline (ED419g/ED519g)**

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**9. Youth Suicide (SS404u/SS504u)**

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)**

**MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR**

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact Of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

## **6- CREDIT COST: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)**

**REGISTRATION**: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (360) 341-3020

*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS**: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address**: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)    **Website**: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.



Choose a different area than used for assignment # 5. 1-2 page paper.

**Assignment #8:**

Share with another teacher (or non-educator) regarding the methods and information from this class. Write a **one page summary** of your meeting.

***This completes the assignments required for Washington Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or CEUs. Continue to the next section for assignments required for University Credit.***

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED for 400 or 500 LEVEL UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

In this section you will have an opportunity to apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session, students from past years, or use one of your own children or a relative.

**Assignment #9: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Choose one child and develop an intervention plan for his/her organizational skills. Focus on one skill, teaching strategies, implementation aspect, and evaluation component. Write a **one (1) page summary**

**Assignment #10: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

Assignment #A:

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a **2 page commentary** on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.

**OR**

Assignment #B:

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a **2 page summary** concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.

**500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT**

**Assignment #11: (500 Level only)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments complete **one (1)** of the following options:

**Option A)** Mentor another individual in the concepts of this class. Have them share two or three key concepts that they would like to implement within their work or social setting. Develop a plan for the implementation of these ideas. **(1-2 pages).**

**OR**

**Option B)** Create a PowerPoint presentation for your staff based on this course and focused on perspectives or strategies you feel would be beneficial for your school. **Minimum of 15 slides.** Save this as a pdf.

**OR**

**Option C)** Another assignment of your own design, with instructor prior approval.

**400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT (To be completed by all participants taking this for credit)  
Integration Paper**

**Assignment #12: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)**

Write a **2 page** Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Mike Sedler, M.S.W., D. Min., brings over 40 year of educational experience as a special education director, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. Mike has worked with children of all ages, specifically with children exhibiting behavioral challenges, mental health concerns, and characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, he taught general education classes in the elementary school and middle school arenas. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration Paper portion which must be individually authored. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor.

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. ☺**

Will this course clean up your classroom, un-clutter your house, de-junk your life, organize all your students? I can confidently say "Yes" (maybe, sort of, a little bit) to all of the above ... if you are willing to apply some of the basic principles found in this manual. Realistically, there will be small changes made in all phases of your life. And over time, if you continue to evaluate the strategies shared in this manual, you will see significant changes.

This course is intended to help each individual as well as give principles that may be shared with others. We will address organization, time management, ordering the classroom, planning ahead, and other topics that relate to organization.

Thank you for taking this class and enjoy. Just remember to keep the manual in a safe area and don't misplace it. That would truly be worth a chuckle.

Mike Sedler

This initial "test" will help you begin to investigate your organizational habits and strategies. When completing, think of both your home and your workspace.

**JUNKEE ENTRANCE EXAM**

(remember, this is just for fun)

(Adapted from "Clutter's Last Stand" by Don Aslett)

Directions: Read the question, then rate yourself ... Circle your answer and transfer the number to the "score" column. Then add up your scores.

	More than I'll ever Admit	More than I'd like	Only a few things	None
1. If my closets and drawers were searched right now, how much junk would be found?	5	3	2	1
2.I have more-than-a- year-old magazines stored/lying around.	5	3	2	1
3.I own clothes that won't fit or are ugly or hopelessly out of style.	5	3	2	1
4.I have shoes I don't like or don't wear.	5	3	2	1
5.I have old games/puzzles, patterns with pieces missing.	5	3	2	1
6.I have keepsakes and I can't remember what sake they were kept for.	5	3	2	1
7.I keep toys (adult and juvenile) that are broken, outgrown, or not used.	5	3	2	1
8.I save old uniforms or maternity/baby clothes I don't need any more.	5	3	2	1
9.If I held a garage sale, how much stuff would my customers get to paw through?	5	3	2	1
10.I have items from hobbies, projects, or classes I started and "may someday" finish.	5	3	2	1
11.When someone visits my home, how many excuses does my junk seem to call for?	5	3	2	1
12.How many unused cookbooks/do-it yourself manuals do I have?	5	3	2	1
13.I have machinery and appliances that don't work or have parts missing.	5	3	2	1
14.I store old paint (half cans or less), stiff brushes, and matted rollers.	5	3	2	1
15. I have old wedding announcements or greeting and Christmas cards squirreled away from acquaintances.	5	3	2	1
16. I keep unread junk mail, lapsed driver's licenses, and expired policies.	5	3	2	1
17. My medicine chest holds bottles of ancient vitamins and antique prescriptions.	5	3	2	1
18. I have furniture or other items I am going to fix, sell, or refinish some day.	5	3	2	1
19. I have souvenirs or knickknacks that I dust, clean, store, and abhor.	5	3	2	1
20. I keep plain old ordinary empty boxes.	5	3	2	1

	More than I'll ever Admit	More than I'd like	Only a few things	None
21. I save leftover scraps of Christmas or gift wrap that I never use	5	3	2	1
22. I've kept books and paperbacks I couldn't force myself to finish.	5	3	2	1
23. I clip out coupons and special offers on products that I never buy.	5	3	2	1
24. I save colognes I can't stand the smell of or makeup/perfume I tried and didn't like.	5	3	2	1
25. I save notes, clippings, ideas, and plans that haven't been filed or acted on.	5	3	2	1
26. I have old curtains and blinds stashed away that I've dragged from past residences.	5	3	2	1
27. I keep old plans, patterns, and scraps of any kind that are probably destined never to be used.	5	3	2	1
28. I save every drawing my children ever made, and all school papers since year one.	5	3	2	1
29. I keep pens that skip or dried out felt tip markers.	5	3	2	1
30. I hoard odd socks or pantyhose with one ruined leg.	5	3	2	1
31. I own jewelry that I never wear.	5	3	2	1
32. I don't throw out tools and gadgets I know are worthless.	5	3	2	1
33. I have wristwatches or clocks that aren't working.	5	3	2	1
34. The trunk, floor, and glove compartment of my car are filled with old torn maps, inoperative flashlights, and fast food debris.	5	3	2	1

**SCORING (NO PEEKING UNTIL YOU FINISH THE EXAM)**

**136-170:** THE END IS NEAR ... You're in trouble. Complete this class, then re-read this manual again. Utilize as many strategies as you can. You might possibly survive your junk.

**100-135:** YOU'RE ON THE BRINK ..If you start to organize and dejunk today, you can make it. Make a commitment to utilize strategies from this class.

**50-99:** THERE IS HOPE ... If you clean up those few problem areas, clutter won't have a chance to spread.

**34-49:** YOU ARE AWESOME ... Finish this class to perfect yourself and then pass on the information to a junkee friend, relative, or student.

FOR  
THE  
CLASSROOM

## **ORGANIZATION--THE BEGINNING**

The most difficult part of organization is getting started. Knowing where to begin, how to attack the problem and sustaining the energy can be challenging. The following ideas will be helpful to your students and to you personally.

1) **MAKE A LIST.** This will help you to know how many tasks you need to complete. We often have an unrealistic idea as to how long something will take. This can bring about discouragement and a desire to quit.

2) **PRIORITIZE THE LIST.** What is the first goal? During the next 30 minutes, what do you want to accomplish? Stay within your time frames. If you don't complete everything, decide whether you want to continue or take a break.

3) **WHAT MATERIALS DO YOU NEED?** This is critical, especially for students. Don't get started without all the materials needed for success (paper, pencil, book). It is helpful to keep these materials in an easy to find and accessible place.

4) **AVOID DISTRACTIONS.** Unplug the phone, turn off the cell phone, ask people to leave you alone for a period of time, find a quieter place, etc. Focus on the task at hand.

5) **REFUSE TO "JUMP" TASKS.** It is too easy to start one project and then to stop after five minutes and begin another project. This jumping around leaves lots of unfinished issues and lots of frustration.

6) **BE ACCOUNTABLE.** Let a person know what your plan is and check in with them later. I will often tell my wife what my list is and then she will check with me regarding how I did on the list. If I don't complete it, I can carry it over until the next time, if necessary.

7) **ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS.** Not everything will go according to plan. Some projects have loose deadlines and can be put off until the next time. Others, must be done now. If things are not flowing well, take a short break and then re-attack the problem.

8) **ENJOY AND RELAX.** Avoid the trap of always working or multi-tasking. It is okay to enjoy television, reading a book, or listening to music. We don't always need to be "doing." We must enjoy "being" as well.

## **BEFORE THE FIRST DAY...**

There are many areas that educators need to have planned out prior to students entering the building. Below is a list of some ideas that may help you prepare for coming year. On a scale of one to five (with five being "on top of it" and one being "help"), write a number next to each category based on how you feel prior to each coming year.

1. Book (materials) distribution
2. Turning in work, format of work
3. Handing back assignments
4. Homework
5. Grading-recording, extra credit, portfolios
6. Housekeeping procedures-clean up, supplies, storage areas
7. Rewards, incentives, consequences
8. Communicating with parents
9. Signals for students' attention
10. Daily routines-beginning the day, transition times, independent and group work

Choose one area where you scored a "1" or "2" and develop at least two strategies to increase your preparedness.

## **THE FIRST DAY ☺**

### **1. Get off to a good start!**

Start off firm. Classroom expectations will be set on day one. Fun activities are good.

### **2. Learning School Policies**

What school policies should be mentioned? Know the school expectations and how they will coordinate with your rules.

### **3. Establish your rules**

Set your guidelines for the classroom, the counseling sessions, therapy sessions, etc. Don't make assumptions on what they should know ... they probably don't (or won't demonstrate the skills).

### **4. Over plan your days for the first week or so**

Show organization skills and give the sense that there will be plenty to do in class. Avoid "free-time" activities the first week or two.

### **5. Learning names**

Choose several students a day to remember (in each class for secondary). Say their names over and over. Call on them and make a point of saying hello to them.

### **6. Teach Procedures.**

Outline your procedure, explain the rationale, question student understanding, then practice, practice, practice.

### **6. Be Firm, consistent and yes, flexible**

It is easier to become more lenient as the year progresses than to become firmer.

## **FIRST IMPRESSIONS** (connected to Assignment #3)

Write out a one to two sentence answer for each main question below.

1. How do you welcome students to school?

Are they met with acceptance, excitement, guidance, direction?

2. How do you welcome them to class? (to your group, therapy session, etc).

Do you lecture, assign books, go over class expectations?

3. What are the students first impression of you?

Do you appear fun, excited, anxious to teach?

4. Are the students participants or spectators?

Are they silent or connecting?

5. What do you do that invites them back for tomorrow?

Why should they come back tomorrow?

6. Did you share your passion for education, for school, for them?

Did your students get to know you as a person?

**Write a 1-2 page summary on your responses and your perspective on this topic.**



# *Components of a Well-Managed Classroom*

## *1. TEACHING INTERACTIONS*

- Praise (specific and honest).
- Identify inappropriate behaviors (with explanation of appropriate behaviors).
- Focus on appropriate behaviors.
- Rationale for behavior (what is the purpose or goal of the behavior).
- Acknowledgment (recognize students for just being a part of the class/school, not dependent upon behavior).

## *2. GUIDELINES AND BOUNDARIES*

- Teach and clarify rules (what they look like).
  - Practice rules (role play).
  - What is the educator's role in the classroom?
  - What is the student's role in the classroom?
- (These last two can be excellent discussions in the class)

## *3. MOTIVATION/REWARD SYSTEM*

- Extrinsic vs. intrinsic (external rewards such as stickers, stars, snacks vs. how the child feels about him/herself. We focus too much on extrinsic. Ask the children how they feel they did on a test, paper, project).
- Reinforcement list (have the students make a list of rewards and reinforcements they can earn in class).

## *4. SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING*

- Task analyze different skills and teach them to the students (listening, lining up, speaking kindly).
- Teach each skill on a step-by-step basis.
- Practice the skills (regardless of the age, children need to practice skills).

## *5. ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTION*

- Clarify your role with your administrator
- Communicate what your rules are in the classroom.

### **QUICK 1,2,3, APPROACH TO ORGANIZATION**

Teaching organizational skills plays an important role in a student's success. Many times students understand the material covered in class and are intelligent, but missing or incomplete assignments hurt their averages. Showing students how one assignment changes a grade can make an impact on their outlook, but using and practicing daily organizational tools makes a difference in their future. Students with good organizational skills find it easier to study and complete assignments.

1. Set up binders. Help students organize a binder to use in the classroom and as an organizational tool. Establish a section for homework, class work and things to take home. Separate each class with a different color so students can quickly navigate in the binder. Emphasize the importance of the binder and its daily use during the first few weeks. Provide students with a few minutes each week to maintain their binders. Invite students who are struggling with organization to have lunch with you once a month and help them maintain their binders.
2. Establish the use of planners. Model for students how to maintain a planner. Start by having students write important dates on their planner like picture day, exam week and early-dismissal days. Provide students with a few minutes at the end of each class period to write down homework assignments and any other responsibilities. Check student planners for a few weeks or assign a buddy to check planners each day. Perform random planner checks, rewarding those keeping their planners up to date.
3. Provide test and project dates for students in advance. Teach students the importance of studying in advance for a test and not just cramming the night before. Inform students a week before a test, asking them to write it in their planner in a different color such as purple or green. Colors help words stand out. Help students create a checklist of items to complete for a project and a proposed completion date for each item. This helps students work on projects in chunks and avoid last-minute chaos.
4. Find a place to complete assignments. Working at a desk or a table is often required in a classroom. Completing homework assignments can be a completely different environment. Encourage students to find a quiet place free from distractions like the television, radio or siblings. Stock the area with supplies such as pens, pencils and paper. Go to this spot every day to complete assignments. Consider having students write a short paragraph at the beginning of the year to learn about their homework habits so you can help them re-organize where necessary.
5. Model your organization for students. Provide students with examples such as your lesson planner or the school calendar. Share with them tips that you found helpful. Tell them how as a teacher you must complete your lesson plans in advance of the lesson so you'll know what is needed and can prepare. Compare preparing a lesson to studying for a test, and compare the lesson to the test. Modeling good organizational skills should occur throughout the year.

## **RESILIENT CLASSROOM COMPONENTS**

1. *ACADEMIC EFFICACY- What are the mindsets of your students regarding learning? Different subjects bring different mindsets. Where do your students struggle? Have each one analyze their strengths/areas of growth in the classroom. Make an action plan for change.*

2. *BEHAVIORAL SELF-CONTROL- Self-monitoring is a key to this component. Do your students respond only to you or do they respond to the situations? How do you promote self-monitoring? Charts, rating scales, personal feedback, peer feedback, and reward systems are all helpful.*

3. *ACADEMIC SELF-DETERMINATION- Personal goals need to be established for students. What are the barriers to their learning? Are they able to implement change? Goal setting, futuring, decision making, choices, problem solving, etc. all help in this area.*

4. *EFFECTIVE STUDENT- TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS- Clear boundaries, limits, expectations, positive feedback, and the ability for students to ask questions are important. Classroom discussions, class meetings, peer input and guidance.*

5. *EFFECTIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS- Peer relationships within the school are usually the first long term independent relationships available to the child. How are you promoting peer relationships? Peer tutoring, cross age tutoring, peer mediation, student council approaches, and student led discussions all improve relationships.*

6. *EFFECTIVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS- What strategies do you use to minimize miscommunication between the parent and the school?*

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT CLASSROOMS**

1. TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS. When students feel valued, it promotes engagement and confidence in the classroom.

Relationships are one of the greatest reinforcements for learning.

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Relationships:
  - a. Be aware of classroom environment- are students upset, frustrated, overwhelmed?
  - b. Caring comments- how many positive comments occur?
  - c. Sensitive responses- are we too busy to take time?
  - d. Weekly discussions or meetings-classroom meetings.

2. PEER RELATIONSHIPS. Student relationships within the classroom are highly predictive of their academic and social success. Effective peer relationships encourage learning, interest, involvement, and social competence. Resilient classrooms use multiple strategies to enhance classroom relationships .

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Relationships
  - a. Use of group work- individual vs. group connections.
  - b. Daily routines that involve relationship building- evaluate your routines. Do you promote group relationships?
  - c. Interventions that promote social learning-peer tutoring, cooperative learning, cross-age tutoring.
  - d. Teach pro-social skills- relationship skills, conflict resolution, coping skills.

3. HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS. Patterns and attitudes at home will carry over into the classroom. When schools and homes are jointly in support of the educational endeavors of the student, there is a greater chance of student success.

- Classroom Routines That Reinforce Home-School Relationships
  - a. Inform parents of home-based support practices- send home articles, share at open house, conferences.
  - b. Home communication strategies- phone calls, emails, letters.
  - c. Convenient ways to include parents- brainstorm ideas.

## DEVELOPING CLASSROOM RULES, CONSEQUENCES, AND RESOURCES

**What is important to you?** Each educator must decide what areas are important. This should be decided before the first day and re-evaluated as the year continues.

**Make a list of rewards.** Allow the students to list rewards they might earn in class. "What type of rewards might be given if you follow the rules of this class?"

**Make a list of consequences.** Allow the students to list consequences they might earn in class. "What type of consequences might occur if you violate a classroom rule?"

**Provide alternative resources (aside from you) for students who struggle.** Each student should have a network of support within a building. For problematic students, discuss with them who they would feel comfortable talking to when they are struggling,

**Be prepared to contract with students.** Are you willing to negotiate with students? Everyone needs to feel like they have options and a say in their education and life.

**Explain the importance of individuality and modifying curriculum.** All students are different. Some may need slight modification on a particular assignment. Let all your students know that this is a part of your educational approach and they won't be uncomfortable when a student only does 15 spelling words instead of 20.

**Are there ways to connect with the family to provide rewards (avoid using family for consequences).** Send notes home, emails, do home visits, have students write letters or other creative options.

**Teach and re-teach your rules.** Go over and over the rules with the students. This should be done at least every couple of months (more if you have a transient population in the classroom).

## PLANNING AHEAD

1. Name two student behaviors that you typically see the first week of school.

- *What is your plan to minimize those behaviors in the future?*

2. Name an area of personal frustration that can arise the first week of school.

- *What is your plan to prevent that in the future?*

3. Think of one colleague, parent, or administrator that creates frustration for you.

- *Think of one or two strategies to "enter their world" and change the negative interactions to positive.*

Write out a 1-2 page summary of these ideas and what would prevent you from utilizing them in your setting.

FOR  
THE  
EDUCATOR

## **FLAME ON OR FLAME OUT**

Poor organization leads to frustration and feeling overwhelmed. This may lead to a sense of uselessness and inadequacy. Unfortunately, many professionals call this "burned out." In reality, if the person was more organized, time efficient, and able to successfully plan their day, the job would be enjoyable.

### **PROBLEMATIC SYMPTOMS**

- a) **Bored with teaching-** a person feels like there is nothing more to learn.
- b) **Feelings of never doing enough-** it can't be done without me, but no one appreciates all the work I do.
- c) **Withdrawing from peers-** more comfortable with paperwork than people.
- d) **Can't remember why you went into education-** vacations are too far apart. And, I don't even like children anymore.
- e) **Teaching isn't fun-** lots of complaining, ready to retire (at age 35), and people ask if you want a little "cheese with your whine."
- f) **Don't take good care of yourself-** poor eating and sleeping patterns. Lack of exercise in life. Bad attitude.

### **GETTING OUT OF THE RUT!**

1. Try something new- new strategies, new ideas, take a risk.
2. Collaborate with a colleague- work together, use of team approach.
3. Change grade levels, schools or departments- change creates stimulation and challenge. Do something different.
4. Give yourself permission to be "human"- count successes, not failures.
5. You are not "your job"- we are people, not educators.
6. Superman/woman is only a comic book character- take time to relax.
7. Learn to care for yourself- encourage one another (write a positive note, make an encouraging phone call).
8. Examine your career and life goals- what is your vision for life?

## *SANITY SA VERS*

### **1. IDENTIFY TIME ROBBERS**

- Inability to say NO ... too many commitments, concerns about hurting people's feelings, self-esteem issues and needing to please others.
- Procrastination .. .last minute decisions, poor time management.
- Disorganization ... not able to find things, overwhelmed with clutter, poor filing system.
- Attitude ... avoiding unpleasant areas even if they need to be addressed.
- Setting priorities ... what's important?

### **2. LEARN TO SAY NO**

Let go of the guilt. It is okay to say No! In fact, it is healthy to say no. It frees up your time for more important and enjoyable things in life.

### **3. ALLOW OTHERS TO HELP WITH TASKS**

You must learn to allow others to work with you. "Delegate" is not a dirty word. Teamwork builds relationships and self-esteem.

### **4. SCHEDULE BREAKS INTO YOUR PLANNER**

Take time for yourself. Connect with people, get a cup of coffee, read the paper, and learn to laugh at life.

### **5. TURN ELEPHANTS INTO HORS D'OEURVES**

Nibble away at task. You don't have to finish it all at once ... a little bit at a time.

### **6. ESTABLISH A PRIORITY LIST**

What is most important? What can you let go of at this time?

### **7. DON'T FEEL GUILTY**

Don't set yourself up to fail. Be willing to admit that not everything will get done perfectly.

## **OFFICE CLUTTER**

Ideas and thoughts from Michael Sedler

The words "shop," "classroom," and "office" offer a great (but invalid) sanctuary for junk. Somehow, we feel we can get by with piles of garbage if it is hidden away "at work." But don't kid yourself: offices, for example, offer some prime dejunking inventory. Hidden away in desks and credenzas, gathering dust in file cabinets and coat and janitor closets, are massive amounts of clutter.

Schools offer catacombs of clutter. Old forms are kept "just in case" even though they are dated from the 1990' s (or worse). Colored paper that is so faded because it once resembled the 1970' s colors of avocado and burnt orange are on the shelves because "we can use it as scratch paper." And, the number of old pens (that don't work) would make BIC very happy to know you cared so much.

There are old calculators that don't work, letterhead from the previous principals, books that are no longer in print (but they are still in good shape). Unfortunately, the books still say there are only 48 states in the United States. If this surprises you (that there are more than 48 States) then go to the end of the line. And for all teachers, check how many broken pencils, crayons, and dried out markers you have in your drawer.

Now, let's get to the good stuff. How about our bookshelves? But wait, you might say, no book is junk. True, all books have treasured memories and a lot of sweat equity by the writer. However, will a 1929 typewriter book really have meaning? The yellow, brittle state of the paper may impress you, but the student wonders what happened to it.

Then, of course, there is the 1962 book on Modern Taxation that has many excellent ideas. And what about the 1973 parenting book that helps each parent to communicate effectively with their children. Yes the principles are solid and may be useful, but the picture on the front with the parents wearing bell bottom pants, flared collars on the shirt, lamb chop sideburns, and hot pants may reduce the effectiveness of the principles. You get the point.

Let's go to your desk ..if we can find it ☺. Each drawer contains unique and clearly marked items, right? A pen is in the proper place as is the masking tape, paper clips, extra paper, calculator, grade book, book marks, your lunch, a few snacks, the contraband toys from the students, extra mittens for a cold day, and several open boxes of crackers. Yes, the desk is a place of treasure-much of it buried.

Finally, let's open up the closet. This of course is a place to hang coats, store books, and place extra paper or school supplies. Then again, it might be a place to store whatever I don't have room for in the other areas of my room. It is dangerous to open and it might be where I misplaced Julie Thornberg in 2008 when she was in need of a time out. Who knows what happened to poor old Julie? Just kidding, sort of.

We have not even discussed or approached the teacher's lounge where a copy of the 1986 magazine NEA can be found. This intelligently written educational magazine helps each of the modern day teacher know how to identify the "new" concepts of learning styles and following the procedures of the profound process of "ITIP." Coming next month, how to make a volcano using baking soda and vinegar. I can't wait.

BEWARE! Don't check the refrigerator where you will certainly find Julie Thornberg's lunch that was placed in there when she disappeared. Of course, the yogurt that you brought to school last year may be shoved in the back a little too far. But, the good news is that it can be used for a science experiment.

What can be done about clutter and junk in our schools? Let's examine a few thoughts and ideas.

### **SCHOOL CLUTTER**

1. Go through the staff workroom and be sure that the only pens in the tin cups are working pens.
2. Have someone sharpen the pencils that are lying around (already broken and daring someone to use their finger nails to sharpen them).
3. Is the supply cabinet clearly marked? I know, I know, what supply cabinet?
4. Is there someone who is given the responsibility (or volunteers) to clean the refrigerator out each week?
5. Who places flyers, notices, classes (like mine 19) up on the bulletin board or copies them for each teacher interested?

### **CLASSROOM CLUTTER**

1. Go through each drawer of your desk and be sure each one is designated for certain items.
2. Throw out half chewed pens and pencils, broken erasers, rulers that are chipped and marked, tape rolls with six inches of tape left.
3. Check your bookshelves for out dated books or ones that are no longer read or used. I know it looks great to have a full shelf, but the space can be used for other items.
4. Buy clear plastic bins to store items in such as games with lots of pieces, puzzles, rulers, scissors, calculators, crayons, etc. This will keep these items from being lost.
5. Use plastic tubs for books, portfolios, notebooks or other larger items.
6. Designate areas for turned in assignments and returned assignments. An "IN" and "OUT" basket is great, but don't place it on your desk. This will lead to more clutter and discourage you when you regularly see the "IN" larger than the "OUT."

There are many other ideas that you each use. Go and talk to fellow educators and see what they are doing to reduce clutter. Examine other classrooms and make a list of your ideas. Just be sure to not place your list in your desk drawer next to the half-eaten bag of pretzels you left there over the summer ... gotcha!

# **OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS**

## **ADULT PROBLEMS THAT INTERFERE WITH SUCCESS**

1. Impatience-remember, progress takes time. It took the child many years to learn the behaviors and may take time to overcome the habits. We must be prepared for a process in case there is not a miracle. Establish realistic goals and timelines.
2. Too Much Reassurance-we may saturate the child with too much support in an effort to reduce the anxiety. At time, our reassurance feels like we are not listening or are minimizing the real feelings. Every fear is real to the child. While a difficult tightrope, we must find the balance between encouraging the child and allowing them to struggle.
3. Making Excuses-overprotecting the child from hurt and pain. Here comes the rescuer, the one who hates to see people struggle or in pain. Remember, the opportunity for the child to grow and mature may come out of this experience. Be careful not to cheat the child of their learning.
4. Being Too Directive-attempting to solve the problem for them and telling them what to do may short circuit their learning.

Adults need to stay calm, strong, and boundary oriented. At the same time, be careful not to dictate demands, goals, or plans to the child.

5. Becoming Frustrated and Angry-it is easy to become exasperated at the child when demonstrating a lack of progress. We are all human and may fall prey to our own frustrations. Take a time out, relax, gain a fresh perspective, talk to others.
  
6. Not Knowing When More Is Needed-we lose perspective and try to shove a square peg in a round hole. Be aware of when a new strategy or approach is needed. Be willing to attempt plan B, or plan C, or plan ...

FOR  
THE  
STUDENT

## **ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS**

This may be used in your classrooms to help students increase their motivational strategies. In addition, I have found kids feeling more confident about achieving when they are organized. However, this is for you also. As educators, we need help in organization.

### 1. MAKE YOURSELF GET STARTED

*This is often the most difficult part of organization. Once we get started, things begin to flow. Set a time to begin.*

### 2. KEEP A RUNNING LOG OF TASKS AND AMOUNT OF TIME NEEDED

*We often have an unrealistic sense of the time it takes to do a task (i.e. 30 minutes to mow lawn when really closer to 45 minutes). The more realistic our time frames are, the less we will procrastinate.*

### 3. WORK WITHIN YOUR GIVEN TIME FRAMES

*Do a little bit of work at a time. If a project takes three hours, you may not find a three hour block, but you may find six blocks of 30 minutes each. Chip away at projects. Even five minutes is good for a phone call or a note to someone.*

### 4. MAKE TIME

*If you want to exercise, get up earlier. If you want to read before you go to bed, set an earlier time to end the evening.*

### 5. START IN THE MIDDLE IF NECESSARY

*Don't always feel you must start at the beginning. Some people like to get the hardest parts out of the way or begin with an area of interest*

### 6. DO THINGS AS THEY COME TO YOU

*The more you accomplish when you initially think of it, the less you will have to do later.*

### 7. SEARCH FOR WAYS TO SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

*When you feel busy or overwhelmed, find ways to simplify. Instead of changing the oil yourself, take it to an oil station. Instead of scratch cakes, buy a mix. (I like vanilla cakes with cherry icing).*

### 8. ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

Clear away distractions and things that get you sidetracked (phone, t.v., people, newspapers).

(continued on the next page)

9. MAKE IT EASY TO WORK

*Place items in accessible places. If you like to write, be sure the paper, computer, pencils, etc. are easy to access.*

10. EXPECT SETBACKS

*Anticipate problems and distractions. Don't wait to the last minute to finish a project*

11. DELEGATE

*Is there anyone else who can help you? Can someone else do a task which will free you to do other activities? (One thing I began doing in the classroom was having students grade one another's papers, when appropriate. This saves an incredible amount of time over the week).*

12. USE LEISURE TIME FOR LEISURE

*Don't do work during play time. It is imperative for you to relax and enjoy. If you can leave your pager behind when golfing, do it. (The person who is putting when it goes off will appreciate it 😊.)*

13. BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

*If you keep procrastinating something, maybe you really don't want to do it. Ask why? If it is something that must be done, motivate yourself or get help.*

# **ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS**

## **Taking Notes**

### *Reasons for taking notes:*

- a. It helps you remember information. We retain less than 50% of what we hear, but if we also write it, we remember much more.
- b. Notes fill in the gaps from the readings.
- c. Many teachers will go over what is on the next test during the lectures.

### *Organizing Your Notes:*

- a. Use a notebook with dividers for each class.
- b. Keep your notes in order from day to day.
- c. Date your notes and use a separate piece of paper each day.
- d. Write on the top of the notes the class that they are taken from. This will help in case they are in the wrong section.

### *Taking Notes:*

- a. Don't try to write everything.
- b. Be sure to write items written on the board.
- c. Listen for main points.
- d. You don't need to write in complete sentences. This is for you.
- e. Leave blanks if you can't keep up. Get what you can then talk to another student or the teacher to fill in the blanks.
- f. Write any examples given in class. Remember, examples are given to clarify a point.
- g. Review your notes each day or at the end of the week. This will help to refresh your memory.

### **KEY PHRASES:**

1. "This will be on the test." (what do you think? Important?)
2. "There are several examples when this occurs ... " (a list will probably follow-1, 2, 3 ... )
3. "As stated before ... " (this is review and probably important).
4. "Another point of view is ... " (indicates there are different ways of looking at this issue).
5. "In conclusion ... ", "To summarize ... ", "In closing ... ", "Finally ... ". (this section is finishing up. Be sure to stay focused.)

## ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENTS ••• The Homework Factor

- 1) USE OF HOMEWORK LOGS. This little strategy makes all the difference in the world. Previously, many students saw this as "childish," but with the popularity of electronic organizers, it is viewed differently. Help each student to write out assignments or use some type of method to chart the homework.
- 2) SET ASIDE SPECIFIC TIMES FOR SCHOOLWORK. The old "I'll get it done later" approach doesn't work for most students. Have them choose a time to do their homework. Right after school may be best for Dad or Mom, but not for the child. After all, this is a time to unwind, eat a snack, and play with friends. A popular time is right before or after dinner or a designated time in the early evening. The danger of waiting too late is that they might run over into their bedtime (or your bedtime) 😊.
- 3) CHOOSE A DESIGNATED STUDY AREA (WITH MATERIALS). Whether the child wants to do their work at the kitchen table, on the floor of their bedroom, or in front of the television set is not the issue. The first step is to get them to have their homework. Once they choose an area, parents can monitor the effectiveness of the chosen space. For example, if the child is doing math, they may be able to lie on the bed, listen to music, and work. If they are reading a book, it may be difficult to watch television at the same time (although they will swear they can do it). To avoid power struggles, allow them to read in this manner, then check their comprehension.
- 4) ALLOW BREAKS. The child needs to understand that taking a break is helpful. If we stay on a task too long, mistakes will invariably occur. The student can set their own schedule...after I read this chapter, I will get a drink. These short term goals (and motivational challenges) help the student to work through the homework quickly and with less stress.
- 5) CONNECT WITH OTHER STUDENTS. It is helpful to share answers and check work with one another. As long as each student is doing work, comparing approaches and answers is a part of learning. Too often, students see this as cheating instead of learning. Encourage them to work together, help one another, and ask questions when they are stuck on problems or situations.
- 6) DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR NIGHT. Waiting until the last minute to complete a major project will increase the chances of failure. Do a little bit at a time. Set short term goals each night to finish. Use of a checklist will help to see what has been completed and what needs to still be finished.

## **THE ONE-MINUTE APPROACH**

(adapted from "The One Minute Teacher" by Spencer Johnson, William Morrow Company, 1986.)

Each day is made up of minutes. How we spend each minute will impact each hour and in turn each day. Organization and time management is a minute by minute evaluation of our day. This outline may help you get started on the right path, each minute of the day.

### One Minute Beginning of Day:

- Getting a focus for the day:  
New day  
New perspective  
New ideas  
(Same students ... sorry) ☺

### One Minute Goal Setting-

- Goal for the day:  
What are my goals for today?  
Do I have weekly goals?  
Where do I want my students to be in a month, two months ... ?

### One Minute Praising-

- Praise self immediately:  
Self talk. Positive comments to self  
Look for the positive in your day

### One Minute Recovery-

- Remind myself of what my goal was to start the day  
Is there a discrepancy between my earlier goal and the present reality?
- Redirect my behavior and speak positive affirmations to myself  
Examine positive approaches. What have I done right?

### One Minute Team Approach-

- Focus on working together:  
How can I work together with my students? How can I co-opt them toward my goals for the class?

### One Minute End Of Day Evaluation-

- Ending the day and preparing for tomorrow:  
Evaluate the day. On a scale of 1 to 5, did I meet my goals?  
Did I encourage my students?  
Did I model areas of life that I desire to place in their lives?

## **QUICK GUIDE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

You overslept. The history paper that's due today has gone missing. On the way out of your room, you trip over the pile of dirty laundry between your bed and the door. You get to class, only to find out that you've completely forgotten about the test you're taking today.

All of these nightmares can be prevented by improving your organizational habits. Planning, devoting time to it every day, and being willing to stay with it will prove successful for almost every student: by the end of your high-school or college years, you should be one of the most organized students around - and your decreased stress levels, not to mention the improved grades, will be your rewards.

These tips and suggestions will make it easier for you to find everything, remember what's going on, and - hopefully - improve your high school or college experience.

Organize your room/study area. It might take a few hours, but you can divide it into small tasks. You might take thirty minutes every evening to clean, reorganize, and rearrange your possessions, or set out to finish one task every day (such as finding a place for all your books, or cleaning out your closet). Once this is finished, you can look around and see a big difference: all of your things will be easy to find, including those all-important assignments coming due soon!

Find a convenient and easy way of recording assignments. Many students use a day-by-day calendar or day planner to track due dates, assignment specifics, and other vital information. You can use your computer's spreadsheet program, a dry-erase board, or plain notebook paper - the idea is to find something you're comfortable with. Whatever method you choose should have plenty of room for you to keep track of dates assigned, due dates, assignment requirements, and notes. This is faster and easier than flipping through all of your notebooks, trying to decipher your hurried scribbles to figure out what needs to be done first.

Don't wait until the day before the due date to begin any assignment. Sit down every weekday and look at your organizer: work a little on whatever is due first, then move on to the second due assignment, then the third, etc. If you finish ahead of schedule, reward yourself: twenty minutes with your favorite computer game, a phone call to a friend, or a trip out for ice cream. Also: remember to take study breaks for at least ten minutes every hour, even if you're desperately behind schedule. Slouching over your desk for too long will only make things worse, and the stress in your body won't make the job any easier to complete.

Make sure that all of your work for each class is in the same place. You don't want one history paper in Folder A and another in Folder B. Instead, use one folder or notebook for each subject (and keep all related materials there) or invest in one larger binder and use dividers to separate each subject. Either way, keeping everything together will make it easier for you to find it, remember it, and turn it in.

Clean out your car. If there are several changes of clothes, twelve thousand CDs, and other assorted things in the back and front seat that you aren't using, clear them out: driving to school amid clutter and chaos puts you in that frame of mind, which does nothing to maximize your

learning potential during your first class of the day. It's also harder to find books and other important items if they're buried under everything else.

Make a nightly habit of packing your book bag, being sure that your alarm clock is set for the correct time, and deciding what you'll wear the next morning. Get as many things done that night as you can to help avoid the morning rush out the door: the most important thing you'll have to worry about at seven a.m. is deciding what to have for breakfast!

Set certain times of the day for studying, homework, and other school-related activities. Once you've established this habit, stick with it: some days will be harder than others, but it will get better as time passes. When this time comes around, turn off the TV or music, ignore your phone, and get rid of any other distractions (including the incredibly tempting computer game - close out that application so you can concentrate on your work).

Also: set certain times and days for other tasks, like laundry and shopping. This makes it harder for you to be distracted from your studies, and easier to plan out each day.

Take some time off every now and then. Every day should include at least half an hour of relaxation, whether it be soaking in a hot bath or playing a video game. This is time for you to enjoy doing nothing at all: let your body and mind recharge so you can tackle the next task.

Get plenty of rest every night, including weekends. If you're running on too little rest, your brain - the world's most complex organizer/computer - will lag like crazy. It's nearly impossible to keep track of ANYTHING, even with organizers and other tools, if you can't think clearly.

You'll begin to see improvement in the first few weeks. You'll spend less time searching for things. Study times will be more effective. Your grades might even be a little better, depending on how thorough you are with this organization thing. It's a great feeling, but remember that life isn't perfect. Random things will come up, making it impossible for you to study the entire hour, do laundry on the day you've set aside, or finish your homework without cramming a little right before the due date. When these situations come up, keep working with them until the end. Not every day will be easy, but it gets better as you move forward.

Education Magazine  
Charles Backes, Ph.D.  
Iris Ellis  
Valdosta University

It all seems so simple. The instructor plans a great lesson. Everyone comes to class. The instructor presents the material. The students learn it. Everyone goes home happy! So, why doesn't it always work this way?

We know what a functional, well-managed classroom looks like. Above all, the instructor is in control. The instructor is in charge, but learning is student driven and student centered. This ideal classroom isn't necessarily quiet-in fact it probably isn't, but the noise emanating from this classroom is clearly related to on-task behavior. Students discuss the lesson among themselves and with the instructor. The sounds of "practical application" can be heard from bell to bell, subject to subject and period to period. It is what every instructor longs for but doesn't always get. So why do so many classrooms consist of students talking back to teachers, fighting with each other and sitting around doing much of nothing? The problem is clear, even if the solution isn't.

Classroom management and organization is a task that every educator must face and master. It is a complex task consisting of lesson plans, providing a safe learning environment, teaching students and the daunting task of responding to student behaviors. While there are no quick fixes, the following areas must be addressed and implemented to some degree if the classroom is to be focused and productive.

#### HAVE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR STUDENTS

Students often misbehave because they are unsure of what is expected of them. Rules, policies, and procedures should be clearly stated and taught to the students during the first or second day of class. This lesson on rules should include major, as well as minor, safety rules and should include overall rules of personal conduct. At the elementary level, these rules should be taught every few months (to take into account new students). At the secondary level, every quarter (or at least at the semester) the rules should be repeated. Annoying behaviors that are personally offensive to the instructor or other member of the class should be especially discussed. Any "pet peeves" of the instructor should be addressed, such as leaning back in the chair, chewing gum, put downs toward other students, etc. It is suggested to have only three to five rules in your classroom. Vague statements such as "Be nice to others" or "Obey the teacher" need to be clarified. The students need specific and identifiable behaviors to attain. Organize your classroom with at least one poster with the rules. Periodically, ask your class throughout the year what the rules are in the classroom.

#### TREAT ALL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT

A key element in assuming leadership of a classroom is to convey to students that they are important and that the teacher is confident that they can master the content. Teachers should commit themselves to learning each student's name during the first two or three days (first week in secondary). Calling students by their names makes them feel part of

the classroom. Smiling and showing enthusiasm is obviously important. Modeling patience, compassion, excitement and relationship may sound basic to the teacher, but many students have not had those traits modeled to them in life. Carrying a grudge against a student or bringing up past failures will only alienate one from the students.

#### PREP ARE THE CLASSROOM PHYSICALLY

Examine your classroom from a fresh perspective. Stand at the door and survey the surroundings. Ask a fellow teacher to come in and give you feedback as to the "milieu" and feel of the classroom. What is sensed when first entering your classroom? Is it too "busy," "sterile," "active," "confusing"? Are students able to walk around the classroom without having to weave in and out of desks? Is there an open approach to the pencil sharpener, garbage can, and bookshelves? Will your class set-up add to behavioral problems or reduce them?

#### FILL EACH PERIOD AN ACTIVITY, NOT JUST LECTURE

When do most students get into trouble? Chances are it is when they don't have much to do. Most problems occur at the beginning of class or at the end of class when students are not on task. This can also be a problem in a classroom where students are allowed to remain off task during instructional time. Fill each class period with meaningful activities and avoid prolonged periods of "free time." The following are ideas to help you organize your classroom period.

- \* \* Routinely start with an entry task

- \*\* Plan instruction that will take up to 50% of the period.

- \*\* Allow for 25% or so of individual seatwork or work time.

- \*\* Have end of the class activities for students who finish early (color sheets, crossword puzzles, reading books, etc).

In short, keep students busy to avoid them getting in trouble. While "free time" sounds great and will be desired by the students, it will increase acting out and create an unorganized sense in your classroom

#### MONITOR YOUR STUDENTS

When possible, know where all your students are at all times. This is especially true for those who create chronic disturbances. Avoid having more than one student out of your class at a time (to the office, bathroom, locker). If certain students create a problem in class, do you have them in specific areas of the classroom? Are they allowed to be anywhere they want during recess time or are they asked to stay within a confined area (the basketball courts, soccer field, etc)? Regardless of where a student sits in your classroom, make each of them feel like they are front row students.

#### DEAL WITH PROBLEMS AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL

It is imperative for teachers to develop a discipline plan that will allow them to handle as many problems as possible. Sending a student to the office may create a sense of immediate relief, but rarely does it prevent further problems from the student. How will you re-enter the student? Have you organized a plan with the principal on how to handle students you send to him/her? Will they be allowed back in to class without a conference? Will a parent contact be required? These are important questions to answer.

Be careful about giving up your authority and influence on a student unless you know how to get it back.

#### PICK YOUR BATTLES

Some battles aren't worth fighting. Some behaviors are worse than others. Teachers should carefully consider whether a behavior is worth the trouble of correction. If most areas of correction or guidance are met with resistance from a student, count the cost before entering into a disagreement. For example, should a student be sitting on their desk before the bell rings? Is it okay to read a book sitting on the floor? Can they talk quietly while doing seatwork? When the bell rings at the end of class, may they leave or should they wait for the teacher? Have you clarified these areas with them? This is all part of organizing your classroom and maintaining a clutter free environment.

#### THINK LIKE A CHILD, BUT ACT LIKE AN ADULT

Educators should take the time to understand what it is like to be a youth in the community. Are you aware of the type of music they listen to (beyond saying it is too loud)? Whether you like their clothing or not, it may be worth your time to browse in a clothing store to see what are the "hot" items. You may use this knowledge to design activities and discussions that are relevant to them. It is not necessary to "talk" like your students or "dress" like your students ... only be aware of how they like to talk and dress.

#### CARE ABOUT THE STUDENTS

Some people have an innate ability to nurture students. Other people have to make a conscious effort to display concern. Evaluate your style. Either way, educators should communicate to students that they want them to be successful in and out of the classroom. A student shouldn't feel like you are upset because they aren't doing the homework rather that you are worried that they will miss out on important information that will impact them in life.

Stay in touch with the students. If they are absent more than a couple of days, a quick phone call may help connect you to them as well as find out what is happening in their life. Greet the students in the hallway ... even those who you don't have in class.

Interestingly, relationships with students not in your class may be easier to develop.

There is no one secret to success or organizing a successful classroom. However, if educators stay committed to trying creative and new ways of management, the classroom will stay fresh and your students will feel encouraged.

Remember to assume the leadership role in the classroom and convey your confidence in each student.

The following pages address the area of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. While this is not a class on ADHD, it would be negligent not to mention it due to the impact upon a person's organizational and time management skills.

I have provided some basic interventions and strategies to help with students exhibiting ADHD characteristics.

For more information in this area, the following books are recommended:

"How to Reach and Teach Children and Teens with ADD/ADHD" by Sandra Rief.  
Wiley and Sons Publication.

"Teaching Teens with ADD and ADHD" by Chris Zeigler Dendy.  
Woodbine House Publishing.

# **TEACHER TECHNIQUES FOR ADD CHILDREN**

## **MEMORY AND ATTENTION**

- Seat child close to the teacher.
- Secure attention before giving directions.
- Keep oral instructions brief.
- Check to ensure understanding.
- Walk the child through assignments.
- Break up tasks and homework into small steps.
- Make assignments interesting and stimulating
- Teach active reading, active listening, and reading for detail.
- Provide remedial help in short sessions.

## **IMPULSE CONTROL**

- Remind the child to slow down.
- Teach the child to monitor the quality of his/her work.

## **STRUCTURE**

- Provide a structured classroom where expectations are clear.
- Impose moderate but consistent discipline.
- Rely on positive reinforcement for good behavior.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS**

- Establish a daily checklist of tasks.
- List homework assignments in a special notebook.

## **PRODUCTIVITY**

- Divide work sheets into sections.
- Reduce the amount of homework and written work assigned.
- Cut down on the number of problems.

## **WRITTEN EXPRESSION**

- Give the student extra time to complete tests and assignments.
- Allow the child to dictate reports, take tests orally.
- Reduce the quantity of written work.

## **SELF-ESTEEM**

- Reward progress.
- Encourage performance in areas of strength
- Avoid humiliation

## **SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

- Provide feedback about behavior in situations
- Help other students see progress.

## **QUICK TIP: TOP 10 RULES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF CHILDREN WITH ADHD**

1. Rules should be clear, specific, direct, and applied consistently. Rules should be written down. Make instructions brief. Focus on one thing at a time.
2. Give consequences promptly whenever possible, to establish a strong connection between the behavior and the consequences.
3. Give feedback often. Provide child with frequent, objective information that answers the question of "how am I doing?"
4. Expect variability of performance.
5. Help children plan ahead and know what to expect. Use a checklist as necessary.
6. Use rewards and positive reinforcement before resorting to consequences.
7. Maintain a biological perspective.
8. Adopt a policy of less talk, more action.
9. Seek out a knowledgeable health care professional when treatment is necessary. Be an informed consumer; educate yourself about ADHD.
10. Maintain a sense of humor and a lot of patience. Stay focused on the goals for your child, yourself, and your family.

## **QUICK TIP: COGNITIVE TREATMENT STRATEGIES FOR ADHD**

- Ask teacher (or boss) to repeat instructions, rather than guess.
- Break large assignments into small, simple tasks. Set a deadline for each task and provide a reward when task is completed.
- Make a list of what you need to do on a daily basis. Plan the best order for doing each task. Make a schedule for doing them. Use a calendar or daily planner to keep on track.
- Work in a quiet area. Do one thing at a time. Take short breaks.
- Write things down in a notebook divided into sections (i.e. assignments, appointments, phone numbers). Keep the book with you at all times.
- Post notes to yourself to remind you of things you need to do. Put notes wherever you're likely to need the reminder.
- Store similar things together.
- Create a routine.
- Exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get enough sleep.

## **INTERVENTIONS FOR ATTENTION NEEDS AND DISTRACTIBILITY**

### ATTENTION NEEDS:

- May be due to insecurity- *find a way to encourage student and build a sense of confidence.*
- Use nonverbal cues- *smile, proximity control, give the child attention.*
- Set aside time for student- *meet with them during class, have a quick conference with them, talk to them before school or class. Stay connected and build security in their life.*
- Ask student to "rate" the need- *ask the child how important listening is, doing the work, staying on task. Obtain the child's perspective.*
- Give controlled attention- *find times to give the student attention when he/she is being successful and appropriate. It is too easy to find the negative with this child.*
- Hit and Run- *give them attention, then focus on general class. Continue to overwhelm them with intermittent attention reinforcement.*

### DISTRACTIBILITY

- Use of "focus cue"- *what do you use to get the students' attention?*
- Change the environmental structure- *change seating, change teacher focus, basically, change what you can change in the class.*
- Proxemics, nonverbals, and re-direction- *use body language, use re-focusing the student, walk around and be near the student.*
- Reward programs- *use of positive rewards (praise, encouragement, tangibles) to increase the likelihood of success in student.*
- Keep child involved- *have the student pass out papers, be involved in learning groups, help out in class, feel like he/she is a part of class.*
- Group work- *working with other students toward a common goal.*
- Stay flexible and relaxed- *enjoy what you do-help change the future.*

## **Organizing Your ADHD Students**

Use dividers and folders in his desk so he can easily find things.

Teach him how to organize himself better.

Help the child with Attention Deficit Disorder to organize his written work or numbers.

Allow the ADD ADHD child to move a pencil or his finger across the page while reading. If he's writing, allow him to use one or two fingers for spacing between words.

During math, graph paper may be very helpful to organize his numbers and columns.

Your attention deficit student will function better when able to anticipate times requiring increased concentration. A visual representation of the day's schedule will provide another opportunity to internalize classroom routine.

Break longer assignments into a series of smaller "sprints" for the ADD ADHD student to complete one after another. Your Attention Deficit student will feel less "overwhelmed" and he will complete the total project in far less time.

### **ADHD Student Organization Tips**

Consider having the ADD ADHD student complete every second or third problem, instead of answering each one. Require him to show mastery of concepts.

Emphasize practice and assignment completion on the word processor to lower the frustration many ADD ADHD students feel with written work.

Model an organized classroom and model the strategies you use to cope with disorganization.

Establish a daily classroom routine and schedule.

Show that you value organization by following 5 minutes each day for the children to organize their desks, folders, etc.

Reinforce organization by having a "desk fairy" that gives a daily award for the most organized row of desks.

Use individual assignment charts or pads that can go home with the child to be signed daily by parents if necessary.

Develop a clear system for keeping track of completed and uncompleted work such as having individual hanging files in which each child can place completed work and a

special folder for uncompleted work.

Develop a color coding method for your room in which each subject is associated with a certain color that is that subjects textbook cover and on the folder or workbook for that subject.

Develop a reward system for in-school work and homework completion. One example of a system that reinforces both work quality and quantity involves translating points earned into "dollars" to be used for silent auction at the end of grading period. For ADD children needing more immediate reinforcement, each completed assignment could earn the child a "raffle ticket" with her/his name on it . Prizes or special privileges could be awarded on the basis of random drawing held daily or weekly.

Write schedule and timelines on the board each day.

Provide due dates for assignments each day.

Divide longer assignments into sections and provide due dates or times for the completion of each section.

Tape a checklist to the ADD ADHD child's desk or put one in each subject folder/notebook that outlines the steps in following directions or checking to be sure an assignment is complete.

Provide study guides or outlines of the content you want the child to learn, or let the child build her/his own study guide with worksheets that have been positively corrected.

Be clear about when student movement is permitted and when it is discouraged, such as during independent work times.

Your ADD ADHD student should be encouraged to utilize assignment sheets, broken down by day and subject. He or his teachers can record assignments at the completion of each task.

An organizing time at the end of each day can be helpful to gather the necessary materials for the assignments and develop a plan of action for completion. This will greatly aid the development of the "executive processes".

One of the simplest interventions for ADD ADHD students is to have an extra set of textbooks at home to minimize the problem of not having the necessary homework materials.

Your ADD ADHD student should have a regularly scheduled time for cleaning up his desk at least once a week. However he may need some help from teachers, volunteers, or his parents.

SAMPLE  
WORKSHEETS  
AND  
CASE STUDY

# **BEHAVIOR CHANGE SHEET**

## *Use for Assignment #5*

Our attitudes and behaviors will impact the way we see our jobs, relationships, and even ourselves. This will reduce our effectiveness in the area of organization and time management. Examine your life and choose one "negative" behavior that you have in life. This might be lack of patience, poor communication skills, blaming others, etc. Write out what this area is in your life. Then, write out how you can turn this into a positive area of your life. Make a specific plan with several key steps for change.

### **NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR**

### **TURN THIS INTO A POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**

### **INITIAL STEPS TOWARD CHANGE**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING SHEET**  
**PERSONAL GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET**

(To be used with assignment #7)

What are your strengths in school? (for example: good in a particular subject, good communicator, get along with people, good listener)

What organizational areas do you want to improve?

Choose one area to focus on for change. Write it out.

What makes this area hard to change?

Who can help you with this change?

Develop a plan for this change.

**Write a 2 page summary of your plan integrating your answers on this worksheet into the paper.**

## **CASE STUDY (connected to Assignment #3)**

Lulu's desk was a mess again. It seemed that she would clean it up and within moments, it was dirty again. Shades of Pig-pen in the Charlie Brown comic strip. Her book bag was full of papers, pencils, leftover crackers, and who knows what else. At times, it seemed to have a life of its' own. She was certainly a bright enough young girl with a gentle personality. However, it was extremely frustrating when she lost her work, forgot her books, or couldn't find something she needed to have in class.

According to her mother, Lulu was as disorganized at home. Her room was a mess and she misplaced items all the time. Her mother recently found the permission slip for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade field trip in the back of her closet. Unfortunately, Lulu is now in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Her clothes are all over the house, she can't find pencils or paper for schoolwork, and she is frustrated because she can never find what she wants.

It was during a recent conference that Lulu's parents expressed frustration. They know she needs to be more organized, but they are uncertain what can be done. With Middle School just around the corner, they are afraid she will be unable to keep track of the multiple assignments from her many teachers. They have asked for your guidance and help in preparing her for the future.

1. What would be the first strategy you would employ to help Lulu keep track of her assignments?

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2. What ideas would you give the parents for helping Lulu become more organized at home?

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3. How would you re-order (or organize) her day at school to improve her management skills?

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**Write a 1-2 page summary of how you have implemented ideas to help this type of student.**

## **Organizational Teaching Skills Bibliography**

**Barkley, Russel.** *Managing ADHD in School.* PESI, 2016. <https://publishing.pesi.com>. *The what and the why of effective school practices for ADHD (grades P-12).*

**Bush, Zack and Friedman, Laurie.** *The Little Book of Organization.* Publishing Power, 2023. Strategies to teach organization to younger students. (ages 3-10). [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Cline, Foster and Fay, Jim.** *Parenting With Love And Logic.* Love and Logic Institute. 2020. New approaches to working with children (grades K – 12). [www.loveandlogic.com](http://www.loveandlogic.com) 800-455-7557.

**Durlak, Joseph and Domitrovich, Celene, et al.** *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning.* Guilford Press, 2016. Intervention and prevention programs designed to build students' skills for managing emotions, and forming positive relationships (grades P-12). [www.guilford.com](http://www.guilford.com)

**Gannon, Marilyn.** *The Bulletproof Planner: Executive Function and ADHD Academic Planner.* Independently Published, 2018. (P-12) [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

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**Tamder Dess Press.** *ADHD Planner.* Independently published, 2022. An organized planner for students. (grades 4-12). [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Tolbert, Gail and Huitt, Marty.** *Cultivating Behavioral Change in K-12 Students.* Routledge Press, 2024. Interventions for struggling students. (P-12). [www.routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com)

**Wong, Harry K and Wong, Rosemary T.** *The First Days of School.* Harry Wong Publishers. 2018. [www.harrywong.com](http://www.harrywong.com) Book to help teachers set a successful tone for the year (grades K 12.)

**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores. Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up.* Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 **(over 400,000 copies sold).**