Getting Students to Believe in Themselves and Act Effectively from that Belief

Instructional Leadership in the 21st Century
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**50 Ways to Get Students to Believe in Themselves and Take Ownership of their Learning**

- or -

**How to do Attribution Retraining**

I. **Verbal behaviors** and teacher choice of language in daily interaction:
   1. Calling on students
   2. Responses to student answers - Sticking with the student
   3. Giving help
   4. Changing attitudes towards errors - Persevere and Return
   5. Giving tasks and assignments
   6. Feedback according to criteria for success with encouragement and precise diagnostic guidance
   7. Positive framing of re-teaching
   8. Tenacity when students don’t meet expectations: pursuit and continued call for high level performance
   9. Pushback on fixed mindset language and student helplessness

II. Regular classroom **mechanisms for generating student agency**:
   10. Frequent quizzes and a flow of data to students
   11. Student Self-Corrections/Self-Scoring
   12. Student Error Analysis
   13. Regular Re-teaching,
   14. Required Retakes and Re-do’s w/ Highest Grade
   15. Community Building, Cooperative Learning structures and teaching of group skills
   16. Student feedback to teacher on pace or need for clarification
   17. Reward System for Effective Effort and Gains
   18. Structures for Extra help
   19. Student goal setting

III. **No Secrets** instructional strategies from “clarity”:
   20. Communicating objectives in student friendly language and unpacking them with students
   21. Clear and accessible criteria for success, developed with students
   22. Exemplars of products that meet criteria for success
   23. Checking for Understanding
   24. Making Students’ Thinking Visible
   25. Frequent Student Summarizing

IV. **Effective Effort**: explicitly teaching students:
   26. Effective Effort Behaviors
   27. Student Self-evaluation of Effective Effort
   28. Learning, Study and Other Strategies of Successful Students
   29. Attribution Theory & Brain Research

V. Opportunities for **choice and voice**
   30. Stop my teaching
   31. Student generated questions and Constructivist Teaching
   32. Negotiating the rules of the classroom game.
   33. Teaching students the “principles of learning”
   34. Learning Style
   35. Non-reports & Student Experts
   36. Culturally Relevant Teaching and Personal Relationship Building
   37. Student-led parent conferences
VI. School-wide policies and practices for:
38. Hiring teachers
39. Assignment of teachers
40. Personalizing knowledge of and contact with students
41. Scheduling
42. Grouping
43. Content-focused teams that examine student work in relation to their teaching
44. Reward system for academic effort and gains
45. Push, support, and extra help (Hierarchy of Intervention)

VII. Programs for engagement with families and community that enable students to value school:
46. Quality after-school programs and extra-curricular activities
47. Building identity and pride in belonging to the school
48. Creating a vision of a better life attainable through learning the things school teaches
49. Forming an image of successful people who look like them and value education
50. Building relations with parents through home visits and focus on how to help

We do not, however, take on any of these 50 places with commitment unless we conceive of our job description is a certain way.

The Bottom Line of “Effort Based Ability”

The ability to do something competently—anything—mathematics, racecar driving, dancing, public speaking—is primarily determined by effective effort and your belief that you can get proficient at it. “Smart is something you can get.” The bell curve of ability is wrong. Even what we call “intelligence” is malleable.

“My job is to give students belief, confidence, tools, and desire.”

1. Give students the belief that effort can grow the ability to do well at academics. (“Smart is something you can get.”)
2. Help them develop the confidence that they already have enough brain power to do rigorous work at high standards if the learn effective effort.
3. Teach them the tools for exerting effective effort.
4. Get them to care enough to want to.

Thus our work as educators, in fact a major part of it for some students, is:

1. to convince them they can grow their ability at academics
2. to show them how and
3. to motivate them to want to.
High Expectations Teaching is about getting underperforming, discouraged students to believe in themselves and act effectively from that belief. This is something we can accomplish, even for children in extremely difficult life circumstances.

10 Places Where *High Expectations Teaching* Shows Up and 50 Ways to Make it Happen

1. Verbal Behaviors
2. Mechanisms for Agency
3. No Secrets Teaching
4. Direct teaching of Effective Effort & Strategies
5. Choice and Voice*
6. Policies and Procedures
7. Engagement with Families and
8. Personal Relationship Building
9. Culturally Relevant Instruction
10. Teacher Efficacy

The seven places we act are surrounded by three needed ongoing commitments:

- **Personal Relationship Building**: to build relationships with students,
- **Culturally Relevant Instruction**: to design culturally relevant instruction and
- **Teacher Efficacy**: to believe in ourselves: we really *can do this!*