

What Makes a Successful Teacher?

If you hope to become a really good teacher, here are some things that you can work on. These are some common traits of the excellent teachers I have known.

Successful teachers hold high expectations:

Effective teachers expect great things from their students. Expectations can often be a self-fulfilling prophecy. When a teacher believes that all students can be successful, students recognize the teacher's confidence in them and work hard to make it happen.

Good teachers think creatively:

Whenever possible, good teachers try to make their students' experience in the classroom exciting and memorable. They use lots of real-world applications, fun presentations, zany activities and new ways to present information. Even at the Sr High level they aren't afraid to make learning fun.

Excellent teachers know the curriculum:

They know exactly what they are mandated to teach, and just about everything that happens in their classroom can be tied directly to curriculum objectives. They also know the curricula at levels below and above their level, which they use to decide on essential outcomes.

Excellent teachers are versatile and sensitive:

To be a good teacher you have to be ready to adapt to the needs of your students. You need to be aware of their home life, and you need to care about them as individual people. On any given day you will take on a multitude of roles besides 'teacher'; these can include counsellor, nurse, friend, coach, tutor and referee. And lots more.

Successful teachers are curious, confident, and always learning:

The teachers I most admire are always learning new things. They will learn from anyone who has knowledge to give them. They aren't threatened by new ways of doing things. They learn and use new technology. They have strong principles, and aren't afraid to share them, or expect the same of others. Often, they learn things from students.

Good teachers aren't perfect ... they're human:

Good teachers can laugh at themselves. They can show compassion for others who are struggling because they've been there themselves. They aren't afraid to admit mistakes. They know that they don't just deliver curriculum; rather, they help students learn and grow, and they are role models for their students. They treat all students with respect.

Good teachers get to know their students:

Good teachers develop relationships with students; they are good listeners, and they get to know them as people. They find out all the good things, and maybe a little of the bad too. This makes helping a student easier. They help because they care.

Excellent teachers will often say ...

They PAY me to do this??? I'd do it for free!