

Technique 43

Positive Framing

“ . . . making interventions to correct student behavior in a positive and constructive way.”

Rule #1: Live in the Now

- Talk about what should happen next – avoid harping on what students can no longer fix.
- “Show me line basics.” – not “You aren’t doing line basics.”
- “Jenna, I need your eyes forward.” – not “Jenna, stop looking back at David.”

Rule #2: Assume the Best

- Until you know an action was intentional, any discussion about it should be positive.
- “Some of us must not have heard the directions. Please clear off your desks.”
Instead of – “I asked you to clear off your desks and some of you decided not to follow directions.”

Rule #3 – Allow Plausible Anonymity

- Begin by correcting the students without using their names.
- “Check yourself for body basics.” or “Some of us did not follow directions, so let’s try that again.”
- *With no good-faith effort from the students, you may have to name names – it just shouldn’t be your first move.*

Rule #4: Build Momentum, and Narrate the Positive

- “I need three people. Make sure you fix it if that’s you! Now I need two. We’re almost there. Ah, thank you. Let’s get started.”
- Not – “I need three people. And one more doesn’t understand the directions so now I need four. Some of you aren’t listening. If I have to take some of your recess, I will.”

Rule #5: Challenge!

- Students can be challenged as individuals or groups
- “Let’s see if we can get these papers out in twelve seconds.”
- “We’re going to do a friendly wager: the pod where everyone gets the problems correct the fastest can skip the first two problems on their homework!”
- Personal Best tracking

Rule #6: Talk Expectations & Aspirations

- Avoid rhetorical questions: “Thank you for joining us on the rug, David.” instead of “Would you like to join us, David?”
- Avoid contingencies: “I need you with us” is much more productive, positive, and strong than “I’ll wait.” which gives your students the power.

Reference

Lemov, D. (2010). *Teach like a champion: 49 techniques that put students on the path to college*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.