

14th Annual
Hawker Brownlow

Thinking & Learning Conference

TOM HIERCK

THURSDAY 18 MAY

**Seven Keys to a Positive Learning
Environment
Session 1**

MELBOURNE



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TOM HIERCK

Tom Hierck has been an educator since 1983, in a career that has spanned all year levels and included many roles in public education. His experiences as a teacher, school leader, department of education project leader and executive director have provided a unique context for his education philosophy.

Tom is a compelling presenter, infusing his message of hope with strategies culled from the real world. He understands that educators face unprecedented challenges and knows which strategies will best serve learning communities.



Tom has presented to schools across North America and internationally, imparting a message of celebration for educators seeking to make a difference in the lives of students. His dynamic presentations explore the importance of positive learning environments and the role of assessment in improving student learning. True to his belief that 'every student is a success story waiting to be told', Tom is passionate about working with teachers and school leaders to create positive school cultures and build effective relationships that facilitate learning for all students.

A message from Hawker Brownlow Education

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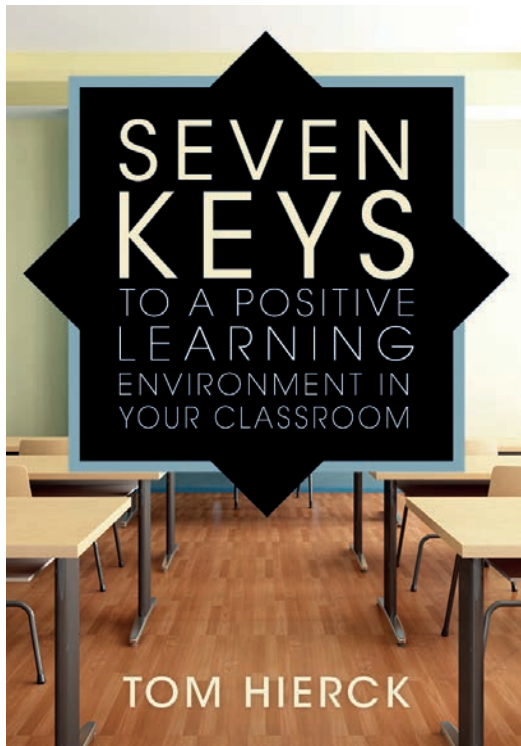
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Seven Keys to a Positive Learning Environment



1. Classroom expectations
2. Targeted instruction
3. Positive reinforcements
4. Data-driven decisions
5. Differentiation and enrichment
6. Collaborative teams
7. Connection to the school-wide system

A Must-Have Attitude

Creating a positive classroom learning environment is messy, uneven, complex, and necessary for all teachers to engage in.



From chapter 1...

A singular question should drive the process of developing a positive classroom culture: What is the end goal? If the end goal is that all students are able to make a successful transition to the next grade (or college or career), then subsequent conversations will all center on achieving that end goal. The focus will shift from punitive discussions to positive ones. This step in creating classroom culture is not about lowering the bar but rather clarifying what it will take to clear the bar.

Creating a positive classroom structure requires...

- All students are valued and expected to make significant gains in their learning.
- Factors that may inhibit successful gains are temporary obstacles and challenges.
- All staff members accept responsibility for all students: students in other classrooms, students in other grade levels, students with disabilities, and students who speak another language at home.

Creating a positive classroom structure requires...

- The status quo is never accepted; students' expectations are set appropriately and staff members recognize continuous improvement as the habit of great organizations.
- Change is an opportunity and all variables are considered.
- School leaders and educators view adult behaviors as having the most effective and significant influence on student learning and behaviors.

Cause	Possible Remedy
Schedule	Provide students with a visible, tangible schedule of the lesson or day's activities. Teachers must be organized and follow the schedule at a brisk pace, with minimal lost time for transitions.
Clutter	Remove any items students do not need for current tasks. Distractible students behave better when their work area is uncluttered.
Tasks	Save easier tasks for later in the lesson or the end of the day as this is typically when attention wanes. Avoid long stretches of instructional time in which students sit passively.
Focus	Capture students' attention through predictable structures, routines, and procedures. Wait until all students are present before giving directions. Use a strategy that works for you (for example, "One, two, eyes on you. One, two, three, eyes on me."). Privately approach targeted students to restate directions or have the students restate them.
Breaks	Contract with students to give them short breaks to engage in a preferred activity when they have finished a given amount of work



Pick a Strategy

Pick a strategy from table 3.1 that we could apply to Billy and his penchant for calling out at inappropriate times.



Key 3

Positive Reinforcement

What are the attributes of feedback?

Direct to Correct to Connect

In the *direct* approach, the teacher simply tells the student what to do and indicates (or administers) the consequence.

In the *correct* approach, the teacher moves away from the rush to exacerbate the problem and toward the learning opportunity.

In the *connect* approach, the teacher is not thinking about consequences but is totally immersed in the learning opportunity the calling-out challenge presents.



Key 4: Data-Driven Decisions

Why is Y - E - T the most important three letter word in education today?

SEL

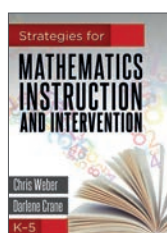
1. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's own emotions, interests, strengths, and limitations.
2. Self-management refers to the ability to regulate one's own emotions and manage daily stressors.
3. Social awareness refers to the capacity to take other's perspective and to appreciate similarities and differences.
4. Relationship skills are when individuals exhibit pro-social behavior and demonstrate positive social skills in order to develop meaningful relationships.
5. Responsible decision making refers to the capacity to make ethical decisions and develop appropriate solutions to identified problems.

Administering Consequences	Discovering Causes
Stops the behavior quickly; seeks immediate relief.	Slowly stops behavior; delays relief.
Teaches what not to do (direct).	Teaches what to do (connect).
Decreases self-concept or belief that "I am bad."	Increases the self-concept or belief that "my behavior is bad; I am not bad."
Decreases positive attitudes toward school and schoolwork.	Increases positive attitudes toward school and schoolwork.
Causes withdrawal (task completion, tardy, truancy, dropping out).	Promotes enhanced participation and closing of behavioral gaps.
Causes aggression (against property and others)	Decreases likelihood of aggression.
Teaches students to respond in a punitive and angry manner.	Teaches students to recognize the positive learning in each situation.
Actions can harm or destroy the student-teacher relationship.	Actions can enhance the student-teacher relationship.

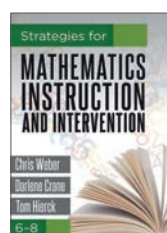
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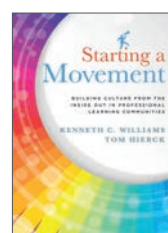
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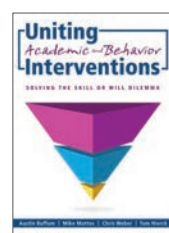
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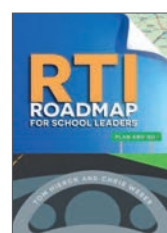
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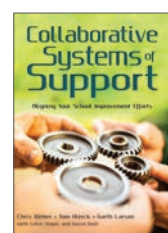
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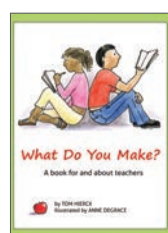
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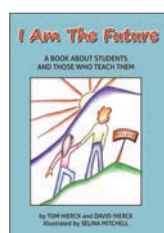
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