

Contents

About the Author.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	v
Introduction.....	xi
Introduction to the Second Edition.....	xiii
1 Why Look at Great?.....	1
Studying Effective Teachers.....	2
2 It's People, Not Programs.....	7
Programs Come and Go.....	7
How Open Classrooms Got Started.....	8
Assertive Discipline: The Problem or the Solution?.....	9
It's Not What You Do, It's How You Do It.....	11
The Poor Lecturer's Classroom.....	12
3 The Power of Expectations.....	13
Expectations.....	13
Rules.....	14
Stop the Thumping!.....	14
Consequences.....	15
Set Expectations at the Start of the Year.....	16
We Are Still Undeclared.....	16
4 If You Say Something, Mean It.....	19
The Football Coach.....	19
This Time, I Really Mean It.....	21
Smile When You Say That.....	21
When You Are Ready.....	21
From Four to Three.....	23
Class Rules the Day.....	24
5 Prevention versus Revenge.....	25
When a Student Misbehaves.....	25
Sending Students to the Office.....	26

“Nuthin’ Happened”	26
A Teacher’s Bag of Tricks.....	27
Respect Your Students, Their Parents—and Yourself.....	29
Twenty-Four Students on the Side of the Teacher	30
Restoring Trust.....	30
6 High Expectations—for Whom?	33
Are High Expectations Important?	34
7 Who Is the Variable?.....	37
Who Is the Variable in the Classroom?.....	37
What If the Students Do Poorly?.....	38
How Do We Deal With the Demands of Others?.....	39
8 Focus on Students First	43
Change for Students’ Sake?.....	43
How Broad Is Your Vision?	44
Three Ways to React	45
Focus on Colleagues Second.....	45
The Hotel California.....	46
Remember What Matters	47
How Do You View Your Siam?	47
9 Ten Days Out of Ten	49
We Never Forget That One Time.....	49
You Do Not Have to Like the Students	50
The Power of Praise.....	50
Five Strategies That Help Praise Work.....	51
Too Much Nice	55
10 Be the Filter.....	57
How Is Your Day Going?.....	57
The Angry Parent.....	58
When the Teacher Sneezes	58
One Goal, Every Day	59
Where the Elite Meet?	60
The World Outside School	60
“This Is the Worst Group of Kids We’ve Ever Had”	61
Perception Can Become Reality.....	61

11 Don't Need to Repair—Always Do Repair.....	65
Some <i>Never</i> Need to Repair—But <i>Always</i> Do	66
Some <i>Always</i> Need to Repair—But <i>Never</i> Do	66
I Am Sorry That Happened.....	67
The Highway Patrol	69
12 The Ability to Ignore	73
Hey, Pretzel Face!.....	73
Ignore Minor Errors	74
Understand the High Achievers.....	76
13 Random or Plandom?.....	79
Why Does Jimmy Always Pick Billy?	79
The All-school Assembly	80
The Faculty Meeting.....	80
14 Base Every Decision on the Best People	83
Shoplifters Will Be Prosecuted!.....	84
This Means You!.....	85
What Will the Best Students Think?	86
The Best Students Will Be “Fine” No Matter What	87
The Teacher’s Pet.....	88
15 In Every Situation, Ask Who Is Most Comfortable and Who Is Least Comfortable	89
Treat Everyone as If They Were Good	90
Uncomfortable Feelings Make People Change— One Way or Another.....	93
Pay for Performance.....	94
16 Put Yourself in Their Position	97
Teacher Pleasers	98
Model the Behavior You Expect	98
How Others See Us	99
What Do You Choose to Be?	100
17 What About These Darn Standardized Tests?.....	103
Without Success, Tests Become the School	103
Raise Those Test Scores!.....	107

Keep Testing in Perspective	107
So, You Want to Improve Your Reading Scores?	108
18 Make It Cool to Care	111
Having a “Cool” Classroom.....	111
The Great Teacher	113
Merry Christmas, Everyone!.....	113
Who Are the Legends?.....	115
Touch the Heart, Then Teach the Child.....	116
19 Clarify Your Core.....	119
Seventeen Things That Matter Most	123
References	125

© Hawker Brownlow Education

Introduction

Any teacher can fill a bookshelf with books about education. Any teacher can study lists of guidelines, standards, principles, and theories. The best teachers and the worst teachers alike can ace exams in their undergraduate and graduate classes. The difference between more effective teachers and their less effective colleagues is not what they know. It is what they do.

This book is about what great teachers do that sets them apart. Clarifying what the best educators do, and then practicing it ourselves, can move us into their ranks.

This book is not meant to prescribe a narrow set of instructions. Instead, it frames the landscape of school from the perspective of great teachers. What do they see when they view their classrooms and the students in them? Where do they focus their attention? How do they spend their time and energy? What guides their decisions? How can we gain the same advantages?

There is no one answer; if there were, surely we'd all have it by now. Education is extremely complex, and so is classroom teaching. But we can work toward understanding what the best teachers do. We can gain insight into how effective we are as educators. Most of all, we can continue to refine our skills. All of us have this in common with the best teachers: No matter how good we are, we still want to be better.

The book flows from three different perspectives. I have participated in many research studies on the effectiveness of school principals. Each study was grounded in visits to more effective schools and to less effective schools. In every school, no matter what the environment, I found a wide range of teach-

ers—some more effective, some less so. Better schools may have a higher percentage of better teachers, but I found great teachers in every setting, and I grew curious about what made them great. Second, every year I work with more than fifty schools as a consultant. Through years of observing and visiting with teachers, principals, students, and staff, I have gained insight into the attitudes and behaviors that lead to success. The third perspective is very personal: I write from my own experience as a teacher and principal. I have worked with many outstanding colleagues. What made them great? What kept others from reaching that level?

Over the years, I have presented some of my answers to these questions in sessions with teachers and other educators. And, I compiled my thoughts in a short book titled, *What Great Principals Do Differently*. Before long, it became evident that great principals and great teachers share many of the same qualities. It makes sense: Part of being a great principal is to be a great teacher; part of being a great teacher is to be a great leader. Educators began inviting me to their schools and districts to work with their teachers, and teachers began asking me to write a companion volume that accounts for the differences between a principal's role and a teacher's role. With my compliments to all of the great teachers in our schools, here is that book.

Not all aspects of great teaching have a place in these pages. Those who seek guidance on curriculum development, instructional approaches, assessment rubrics, and other such tools of the trade will find that information elsewhere. These chapters focus on the beliefs and behaviors, attitudes and interactions that form the fabric of life in our classrooms and in our schools. Learning can happen in isolation; teaching happens between people. Effective teaching calls for "people skills," and the best teachers practice those skills every day.

This book's format is straightforward. An introductory chapter provides context on the importance of learning from the most effective teachers. A concluding chapter asks us to center on our own core beliefs. And in between are chapters dedicated to each of the individual things that great teachers do differently. Each of us can do everything described in this book—everything the best teachers do.

Introduction to the Second Edition

I'm very pleased to offer a second edition of *What Great Teachers Do Differently*. After writing *What Great Principals Do Differently*, I received many requests to write a companion book for teachers. Though a little hesitant, I plowed ahead, and the response was overwhelming. Arriving at a school to work with teachers, I would see hallways decorated with reminders of the "Fourteen Things That Matter Most." Bookmarks were made, magnets designed, posters created—someone even gave teachers candy bars with special wrappers highlighting each concept. It was very gratifying. I began to hear about book studies, teacher skits at meetings, and peer teaching—outcomes I had never anticipated. Though apparently hundreds of thousands of educators had read the book, what I found most rewarding was that so many teachers took it to heart.

Education is a very difficult job. The days are long, and the challenges can be intense. I feel proud when truly outstanding teachers tell me how much it means to be reminded that their work matters. When I describe how great teachers establish high expectations, treat every person with respect, and make it cool to care, some teachers may feel uncomfortable. But it warms my heart to hear the best teachers say, "I knew that was right! I knew that was right!"

People sometimes comment that some characteristics of great teachers resemble those of great principals. My response is always the same: "I hope so!" Outstanding teachers have the potential to become outstanding building leaders as well. We should hope that many of them make that transition at some point in their career.

Working with thousands of teachers at hundreds of schools gave me the opportunity to further explore what the best teachers do that others do not. The differences are even more dramatic than I initially thought, and this edition addresses three additional areas.

Great teachers continually focus on students first. Though many people pay lip service to this concept when it is convenient, the best people practice it when it is not. We know that

schools should be first for the students, then for the adults—and the best teachers model this every day.

In addition, outstanding teachers can see things from their students' point of view. They have a rare ability to put themselves into the position of each student they interact with, and they know how they come across to others.

I discovered the third area almost by accident. It is so simple to say, yet so difficult to do: When great teachers say something, they mean it. They choose when and how to address a situation to achieve the effect they want.

Throughout the book, I highlight the contrast between great teachers and poor teachers. In reality, most teachers rank somewhere in between, and most are working to improve. In presenting this second edition of *What Great Teachers Do Differently*, I salute the teachers who aspire to greatness.