

## Chapter 10

### Theme:

Be the filter that sets the mood.

### Single Best Quote:

"We are very fortunate to work in education. Sometimes we just forget how blessed we are...we decide the tone of our classrooms and of our school."

### Points:

1. If we approach things in a positive manner, then this is likely what the students will reflect.
2. Do not complain and talk about problems unnecessarily.
  - a. Keep issues private.
  - b. Deal with issues without involving others who will add their pathetic sympathy and own negative energy.
  - c. Isolate the problem by not sharing information.
3. Students will match the tone we set.
4. Faculty meetings:
  - a. I liked his approach when he said, "I wanted the teachers to be more excited about teaching tomorrow than they were today."
  - b. I have always enjoyed the motivational teacher meeting. If I need something from a teachers' meeting it is a message that hits my heart and causes me to realize the importance and joy we experience as teachers. I like the motivational, heart-of-a-teacher meeting more than the:
    - i. New "worthless" learning to make me a better teacher.
    - ii. Pointless "team building" activity in an environment where everything is already a teambuilding activity. If I need a team I have already found, assembled and am currently using my team. For example: not all sports are team sports. How frustrating to turn an individual activity into a team activity. Not everything requires a "team." Some personalities are repulsed by the idea of working as a team or being forced to socially interact with people who are not interesting and not useful on a professional (not to mention, personal) level.
    - iii. Mandatory weekly meeting with an empty agenda that was filled up by first responders (biggest mouths) on staff as soon as the meeting began. These meetings always cause damage and leave the staff in a state of chaos. When the scheduled time arrives for the meeting to end, a state of frustration lingers.
    - iv. The unnecessary "live and in-person" principal meeting where the basic contents of an email are read out loud. Could you have just sent an email?

### Self-evaluation and application as a:

- Shop teacher –
- Bible teacher –
- Parent –
- Person –

### Questions/Criticisms/Evaluations/Comments of Whitaker's presentation or perspective:

1. Teachers are NOT overworked and they are NOT underpaid. They are under contract for nine months which leaves them three months free plus 1-2 weeks at Christmas, 1 week at spring break and a very decent Thanksgiving break, along with comp days. IF a teacher is

“poor” or “overworked” it is because they are not taking advantage of their situation (start a business, create part time work, etc.) or they need to get organized and stream line their work load instead of playing the victim of overwork. Set your priorities by first reading your contract! Teaching is a great job. Teaching is a rewarding job. Teaching is work and it takes commitment and organization. But, a teacher still has 4 out of 12 months (1/3 of the year) free and if they leave at 3:45 they can be home before rush hour when all the normal people are rushing home from their 8-5 jobs. Stop bitching and think! You can be a GREAT teacher and still have a HUGE life outside of school,...if you want it. If you don't want it, don't complain. You made a choice.

2. “Worst Group of Kids” – there are two sides to this coin. Indeed, every group of kids can become the “worst” if we create that. So, avoid unleashing the “worst” in your kids and help them find and release the “best”, or at least the acceptable! But, for a principal to say there is no such thing as a real “worst class of students” is a fantasy view of education. Can a principal remember the “worst staff” they have ever had to work with? Can I remember being on a staff of some very poor teachers? Yes. It was not a fantasy. I know crappy teachers I worked with, especially in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's in some small schools. The lowest of the low. My point. There can be a “worst staff”, so, there can be a “worst class.” Just because Whitaker says it is not true does not change reality. Now, that being said, no class (or, staff) will be used by the GREAT teacher as an excuse to be a poor, incompetent teacher. It is just the reality the GREAT teacher recognizes they are in. The great teacher adjust, keeps moving and meets their objectives. To think philosophically any other way is setting yourself up for failure. Truth matters.