

Chapter 14

Theme:

Base Every Decision on the Best People's performance and response

Single Best Quote:

"Nurture the superstar students you have, and work to cultivate others."

Points:

1. No longer should we teach to the middle, but GREAT teachers aim high by considering what will the best students think and how will the best students respond.
2. Whitaker says that if we teach to the middle, we sell our best students short.
 - a. We need the energy and motivation of the top students in the classroom.
 - b. If the best students are coasting along in neutral the entire class suffers the loss of momentum.
3. I liked his point to always treat the student as if their parent were in the room.
4. Based on several examples given by Whitaker and the many restatements made of the theme of this chapter we can assume that Whitaker is anti-gun control.

Self-evaluation and application as a:

- **Shop teacher** – As I reflect on this lesson as a shop teacher I realize that if my most productive students (my "best" performers, but not always the schools "best" kids) are not challenged and busy EVERYDAY my classroom is heading towards chaos. The motivation and energy that Whitaker mentions is a real factor in my class since so much of my class time is students working and producing.
- **Bible teacher** – I always teach above the average Christian's heads and present a much more comprehensive understanding of Scripture than most pastors grasp themselves. The Western church's failure to understand Whitaker's concept is driving Christianity further and further to the lowest common denominator. In fact, many churches purposely target the "low level", "non-believer", "disinterested" person in their church service and their church growth program. They call themselves "seeker" churches, but after years of attending the church is a lower level of performance. This is why the serious Christian abandons the institutional church or they stay and perish with the disinterested "seeker".
- **Parent** –
- **Person** –

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

Good chapter. I agree with Whitaker...but, I'm sure someone will write an essay in 10-15 years and lead us back into the practice of targeting the middle or the low end of the spectrum. Of course, we will embrace the "new" concept because change is good...this will especially be true as marketing becomes more and more influential in education.