

## Chapter 16

**Theme:** The focus point is based on the concept that students are different from each other and different from the teacher. So, the great teacher will need to put themselves in the student's shoes and see things through the student's eyes. By doing this the teacher can begin to perceive how to effectively communicate instruction to the child. TITLE: "Put Yourself In Their Position"

### Single Best Quote:

"The difference lies in the teachers' ability to put themselves in someone else's shoes."

**Points:** This chapter is made up of a collection of great advice for those of us who want to be great teachers. The unifying theme of all the things presented in this chapter is that each bit of advice is a way that we can put ourselves in the student's position and see things from their perspective:

1. Teachers were likely teacher pleasers when they were in school. But, not all their students are. It is likely today's teacher's enjoyed school and were yesteryear's good students. The result is teachers tend to match a very narrow personality model. The good people and good educators that did not flourish as students in the school system are likely not going to return to teach in the same classroom they hated. This means certain personality types and people with certain learning styles are naturally missing from (or, avoiding returning to) the classroom as teachers.
2. A child may never have seen social skills or people skills modeled, so the great teacher will be responsible to teach and model this along with all the other things the great teacher has to do.
3. Making a video tape of the teacher giving instruction and interacting with students in the classroom can be very revealing of weaknesses (and, strengths). It is like looking at your face in a mirror. Without the mirror you will never have the perspective of what you look like to the world. Likewise, the video tape can give you a perspective of what you look like and sound like to the student. Video tape of you in the classroom is a great way to put yourself in the student's position.
4. The problem is the person, not the practice. Again, Whitaker uses lecturing as an example. There is nothing wrong with lecturing, but there may be something wrong with the lecturer's skill set. The teacher needs to improve at lecturing; but, lecturing does not need to be abandoned.
5. Humor is a good way to test to see if the students are still listening. Also, the frequent use of funny, edgy, off-the-cuff, entertaining statements will help keep the students listening if they know that at any time the teacher is going to say something humorous. They don't want to be the one not laughing because they missed the punch line.
6. Whitaker points out the importance of eating right, staying hydrated and exercising so the teacher can not only start the year strong, but maintain strength and patience throughout the school year.
7. Learn a new skill or subject. In other words, the best way to put yourself in the student's position is to become a student yourself. Instead of always being the one instructing a concept you completely understand, engage in the experience of learning something new. Try being the one who steps up to bowl for the first time while everyone is watching you. Try learning how to read music and play the piano. Experience how confusing a new language can be for no other reason than to experience what the students experience every day in your classroom.

### Self-evaluation and application as a:

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

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