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Teacher Behaviors Checklist

Posted By *Kristen Rousch* On June 3, 2017 @ 5:59 am In Reflections on Teaching | [No Comments](#)

Master teacher. The idea is a bit of a misnomer. It sounds intimidating. It suggests a long, protracted process—maybe even an elite status. But that's not what it is at all.

There are no years of required experience. No official credentials. Rather, it is far more aspirational, as it refers to a set of behaviors that distinguish the great teachers from the rest.

Below is a list of 28 traits taken from a study conducted by Buskist & Keeley (2005). Both faculty (N=118) and students (N=917) had to agree for a trait to be listed. Students provided examples of corresponding behaviors (listed in parentheses). **Asterisks** indicate the top 10 traits rated by students. **Caret symbols** indicate the top-10 traits rated by faculty.

Master Teacher Traits

^ **Accessible** (Posts office hours, gives out phone number and e-mail information)

* ^ **Approachable/Personable** (Smiles, greets students, initiates conversations, invites questions, responds tolerantly to student comments)

Authoritative (Establishes clear course rules, maintains classroom order, speaks in a loud, strong voice)

Confident (Speaks clearly, makes eye contact, and answers questions assertively)

* ^ **Creative and Interesting** (Experiments with teaching methods; uses technological devices to support and enhance lectures; uses interesting, relevant, and personal examples; not a monotone presenter)

^ **Effective Communicator** (Speaks clearly /loudly, uses precise English; gives clear, compelling examples)

* **Encourages and Cares for Students** (Provides praise for good student work, helps students who need it, offers bonus points and extra credit, and knows student names)

* ^ **Enthusiastic about Teaching and about Topic** (Smiles during class, prepares interesting class activities, uses gestures and expressions of emotion to emphasize important points, and eager for class to begin)

Establishes Daily and Academic Term Goals (Prepares/follows a syllabus and has goals for each class)

* **Flexible/Open-Minded** (Changes calendar of course events when necessary, will meet at hours outside of office hours, pays attention to students when they state their opinions, accepts

criticism from others, and allows students to do make up work when appropriate)

Good Listener (Doesn't interrupt students while they are talking, maintains eye contact, and asks questions about points that students are making)

* **Happy/Positive Attitude/Humorous** (Tells jokes and funny stories, laughs with students)

Humble (Admits mistakes, never brags, and doesn't take credit for others' successes)

* ^ **Knowledgeable about Subject Matter** (Easily answers students' questions, does not read straight from the book or notes, and uses clear and understandable examples)

^ **Prepared** (Brings necessary materials to class, is never late for class, provides outlines of class discussion)

^ **Presents Current Information** (Relates topic to current, real life situations; uses recent videos, magazines, and newspapers to demonstrate points; talks about current topics; uses new or recent texts)

Professional (Dresses nicely, neat and clean shoes, slacks, blouses, dresses, shirts, ties, and no profanity)

Promotes Class Discussion (Asks controversial or challenging questions during class, gives points for class participation, involves students in group activities during class)

^ **Promotes Critical Thinking/Intellectually Stimulating** (Asks thoughtful questions during class, uses essay questions on tests and quizzes, assigns provocative homework, and holds group discussions/activities)

Provides Constructive Feedback (Writes comments on returned work, answers students' questions, and gives advice on test-taking and test preparation)

Punctuality/Manages Class Time (Arrives to class on time/early, dismisses class on time, presents relevant materials in class, leaves time for questions, keeps appointments, returns work in a timely way)

Rapport (Makes class laugh through jokes and funny stories, initiates and maintains class discussions, knows student names, interacts with students before and after class)

* ^ **Realistic Expectations of Students/Fair Testing and Grading** (Covers material to be tested during class, writes relevant test questions, does not overload students with reading, teaches at an appropriate level for the majority of students in the course, curves grades when appropriate)

* ^ **Respectful** (Does not humiliate or embarrass students in class, is polite to students, is gracious and does not interrupt students while they are talking, does not talk down to students)

Sensitive and Persistent (Makes sure students understand material before moving to new material, holds extra study sessions, repeats information when necessary, asks questions to

check student understanding)

Strives to Be a Better Teacher (Requests feedback on his/her teaching ability from students, continues learning, attends workshops etc. on teaching, and uses new teaching methods)

Technologically Competent (Knows now to use a computer, knows how to use e-mail with students, knows how to use overheads during class, has a Web page for classes)

* **Understanding** (Accepts legitimate excuses for missing class or course work, is available before/after class to answer questions, does not lose temper at students, and takes extra time to discuss difficult concepts)

Rate Yourself

First, please assess how much your favorite teacher manifested each trait using the following scale: 0 = Definitely is not a trait of this instructor, 1 = Is not a trait of this instructor, 2 = Maybe a trait of this instructor, 3 = Is a trait of this instructor, 4 = Definitely is a trait of this instructor. Then, please indicate how important each trait is for you, where 0 = Irrelevant, 1 = Somewhat Important, 2 = Important, 3 = Very Important. Finally, rate yourself.



Download a copy of the checklist. ^[1]

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Reference:

Buskist, W., & Keeley, J. (2005). The Teacher Behaviors Checklist (TBC): A psycho-metrically sound and practical teaching evaluation instrument. Paper presentation at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association.

Adapted from supplemental materials for the 20-Minute Mentor titled "How Do Master Teachers Create a Positive Classroom?"

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[1] Image: https://www.teachingprofessor.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/T_Teacher-characteristics-checklist-for-FFP-download.docx

[2] <http://www.movedandshaken.com/>: <http://www.movedandshaken.com/>

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