



Tips for effective classroom management.

1. Get to know your learners

The first step to effective classroom management is to know who sits in front of you. Their names or socio-economic background are important but consider the following as well:

The generation of learners you are going to teach is global, social, visual and technological. They are the most connected, educated and sophisticated generation ever. This so-called 'Generation Z' comprises nearly 2 billion people globally. They do not just represent the future: they are creating it. (adapted from <http://generationzcomau/characteristics/>)



Your learners are growing up in a world of continuous updates. They process information faster than other generations, supported by an endless supply of Apps. They have a relatively short attention span, but are exceptional multi-taskers. Gen Z quickly and efficiently shifts between work and play, with multiple background distractions, working on many tasks at once. Because this generation grew up with technology, it is probably hard for them to give up their devices. If they think they can learn something themselves, or through a more efficient, non-traditional route, you can bet they will take this opportunity.

(adapted from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-beall/8-key-differences-between-b_12814200.html)



Reflect on the characteristics of the generation of learners you are going to teach.

How should you adapt **your style of classroom management** to accommodate this type of learner?

2. Classroom constitution

It is important to have a **basic set of rules for learners** to follow to help maintain classroom management and discipline.

Helpful hints for a student teacher:

- It is important to **include the learners** in drawing up classroom rules.
- Create a **positive environment** when deciding on the rules. These rules should not be too radical but contribute to **managing realities** such as punctuality and handing in assignments on time.
- Have an **enter-and-exit strategy** for the classroom. If learners enter disruptively, chances are your lesson will be disrupted.

- **Avoid negative rules.** Rather than *Do not*, use phrases such as *In this classroom we*
- Rules need to be realistic and **consistent**. It is important that your learners know what type of behaviour you expect.
- Be **specific** in the wording to avoid misinterpretation.
- **Remind your learners regularly** about the rules and expectations for their behaviour.
- **Apply the constitution** as the core of your own classroom behaviour. If you do not, how do you expect the learners to respect it?
- Provide your learners' **parents and your principal** with a copy of the rules and management techniques that you implement in the classroom.



Keys to success: be firm, practise fairness and be consistent!

Reflect on the fact that this generation grew up with technology. Consider how to create classroom rules that accommodate today's **learners and their cell phones.**

3. Be prepared

Managing a classroom of learners who quickly and efficiently shift between work and play, are not distracted by background noise and are exceptional at multi-tasking, is challenging. **Being well prepared for every lesson** is the best tool for an efficient classroom.



As a novice teacher you may lack **extensive content knowledge** that may make it more difficult to teach or explain subject content for a whole (or even a double) period. Managing a class who have a relative short attention span is a challenge but **being prepared builds confidence.**

To combat boredom, adapt your planning to hold the interest of the class. Learners who are interested in the material and activities are less likely to cause disruption. Designing a short activity where your learners are personally engaged in the learning process will go a long way to keeping them interested for the rest of the lesson. Technology is not optional: it should be a given. Consider, for example, adding a 5-minute task, using cell phones to break the monotony of listening to the teacher or working from the textbook for a long time.

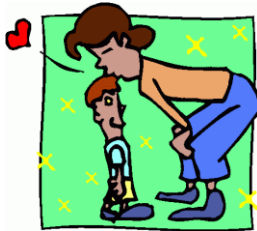
4. Lead by example

If you expect learners to meet a certain standard of behaviour, make sure you set the right example. Do not come late to class, for example!



If you want to be treated with respect, **treat your learners with respect**. Expressing **appreciation** is one of the simplest and most uplifting things one can hear. Even a simple task such as sweeping the class deserves a *Thank you for your effort*.

If you have a temper, leave it at the door. Teachers who lose their tempers will eventually lose their **credibility** and create an **unfavourable learning environment** for their learners. Humiliating your learners will cause you to lose your **authority** and contribute to fear and resentment and even psychological damage in children.



Children are great imitators, so give them something great to imitate.

5. Dealing with troublemakers

No matter how great your plan or classroom management techniques, there will always be learners who want to disrupt or break the rules. The secret is not to lose your temper but to **discipline with dignity**.



Remember that all behaviour, appropriate and inappropriate, has a cause and underlying purpose. Some learners misbehave in an attempt to **gain attention**; others may **feel defeated** if they do as they are told because they **seek to defy authority**, break rules, or bully others. Learners who **lack self-confidence** and **expect to fail** may play and talk to others when they should be studying. Some learners 'find their place' by being insufferable. Failure has made them give up. Unfortunately, they may find **personal satisfaction** in being mean, vicious, and violent.

In most cases, **do not reprimand the learner in front of the class**. This builds their reputation. Furthermore, the learner will know they have 'pushed your buttons'.

Something simple, such as a move to the front of the class, may be all that is needed to provide the attention they seek.

Do not carry a grudge. An altercation with a learner should be resolved and then forgiven. Student teachers must remember they are the adults. Try to **regain their trust** and deal with them as normal members of the class.

Sending troublemakers to the grade head or principal is a short-term solution and is unlikely to solve the problem.