

# Twenty-Five Time-Tested Tips for Maintaining a Positive Attitude and Personal Motivation in the Classroom

Bill Collar – “All The Way With PMA!”  
www.BillCollar.com

- 1. Self-Esteem** - You must believe in the value of your teaching and your impact on youth. You are an important person. Feel good about your accomplishments and wear a smile -- it's contagious!
- 2. Goals** - Establish a number of concise, written goals and develop a plan to reach them. You should include short range, intermediate, and long term goals. Consider all areas of your life when planning for the future. It is important to keep your "wheel" round.
- 3. Imagination** - Set your imagine free. Continually search for new ideas that will help make your lessons more appealing. Develop a "constructive discontent" with the status quo. Utilize various approaches to reach all learning styles.
- 4. P.M.A.** - Develop a positive approach to life. Begin each day with a positive expectancy. Program your subconscious mind to expect success and the "law of attraction" will do the rest. An essential ingredient to a great attitude is to maintain a sense of humor. Laughter in the classroom helps promote an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- 5. Motivation** - Be a self-starter. Your goal setting plan will help you develop enthusiasm toward each day. Believe in your value to the system. Internal motivation will serve as the spark to get you started for another day of achievement.
- 6. Adversity** - Grow with each hardship in your life. Rededicate yourself to overcome fear, worry and doubt. These will sap your strength and smother personal growth.
- 7. Decompression Routine** - It is important to get away from school and get your mind off teaching at times. Take a vacation, follow an exercise program, take up a hobby, all of these are important to your mental health. These will help you avoid "burnout." Physical exercise is a must to help combat lethargy. Peak performers are not workaholics.
- 8. Relaxation** - Set aside a time each day when you can put your mind at ease by "thinking black." A fifteen minute relaxation session can be very refreshing and beneficial.
- 9. Gratitude** - Teachers must cultivate a sense of satisfaction for a job well done. This internal reward is essential when working with teenagers who are usually too self-centered to express thanks for all the effort and assistance granted.
- 10. Positive Feedback** - Keep any letters or notes from students praising your teaching or expressing thanks for the efforts you have made. File them in a special place and refer to them when you have a "down day." This will help you realize a sense of purpose and keep your self-esteem high.
- 11. Unsigned Letters** - Ignore unsigned letters. Tear them up and throw them away. Part of your plan for dealing with criticism is to consider the source. This is impossible with an unsigned letter. Usually they are from someone attempting to make you feel bad who doesn't have the courage to sign their name.
- 12. Communicate With Parents** - Telephone or send letters to parents of your better students. They deserve recognition and you will feel good about the positive comments you have made.

13. **Teamwork** - Support other teachers. Congratulate your colleagues for their achievements and the successful programs they generate.
14. **Administration** - Work with the administration to build the best possible learning experience for the students. When you have concerns or suggestions speak with the people responsible. Be persistent with concepts you believe will be beneficial to all.
15. **Respect Students** - Mutual respect between student and teacher is ideal. Exercise caution when Students need counseling and refer them to professionals for assistance. Beware of student "friendships" and maintain the proper relationship. Some students will demand an inferior education, we must not allow it.
16. **Extra-curricular Activities** - Students appreciate teachers who are sincerely interested in them. Your support of activities tells them you care about their accomplishments. Find the time to work as a coach or advisor — it keeps you young!
17. **T.L.S.** - Avoid the "Teacher's Lounge Syndrome." Keep your comments upbeat in the lounge. It is easy to become critical of just about everything when you are having a challenging day. Associate with optimistic people and avoid the "if a, would'a, could'a, should'a, and yeah-buts"!
18. **Professionalism** - Teachers often speak about their desire to be treated as professionals. Make it a point to uphold high standards. Always keep confidential information privileged and school news at school. Use good judgment when socializing.
19. **Community** - Be actively involved in your community. Parents and students will appreciate your interest in local activities. Make it a point to share your unique programs with civic groups such as the Lions and other organizations.
20. **Time** - Make effective use of your time. It is easy to waste valuable time that could be spent in a constructive manner. Keep a daily "will do" list and prioritize your tasks. Consider taking a class in time management.
20. **Personal Growth** - An occasional summer class, clinic, conference or workshop can be very stimulating. Make it a point to have experiences that will enhance your teaching effectiveness. This will keep you fresh and aware of the latest educational research.
22. **Change** - Look at change as a challenge. Modify your classes through using different approaches and various teaching techniques. Make twenty years' experience pay off rather than repeating one years' experience twenty times. Welcome technology into your classroom. It is stimulating and provides you with the opportunity to reach more students.
23. **Student Behavior** - It is your responsibility to maintain a classroom atmosphere favorable to learning. No one has the right to destroy the learning environment for others. Make sure you take the time to establish proper behavior guidelines for the classroom.
24. **Enthusiasm** - Take time to plan lessons you are enthusiastic about. Enthusiasm is contagious. Make an effort to obtain maximum student involvement in learning. Be the "guide on the side" and not the "sage on the stage." Decrease the gap between what you teach and what students learn.
25. **Patience** - Always keep your composure when dealing with students. It is best to reason things out without resorting to emotion. Allow individuals a way to avoid public embarrassment when they put themselves in a difficult position.

