



How To Be Consistent From The First Day Of School To The Last

By Michael Linsin

There is great freedom in consistency.

Because when you follow [your classroom management plan](#) to a tee, you remove the guesswork.

You eliminate the stress of lecturing, correcting, and trying to convince your students to behave.

You wipe away the friction and resentment.

The responsibility for misbehavior, then, falls entirely on them – with none of it clinging to you.

Your students are free to reflect on their mistakes, and you're free to move on as if nothing happened.

A Slippery Slope

It's common for teachers begin the school year determined to be consistent.

But somewhere along the line [they lose their way](#). They get distracted and let minor misbehavior go. They look the other way when crunched for time.

They take misbehavior personally, become angry, and deliver a dressing-down instead.

Before long they're enforcing rules based on their mood, who the student is, or the severity of the misbehavior rather than what their plan actually says.

Which leads to distrust, animosity, and more and more misbehavior.

Unfortunately, it's so, so easy to ski down this slippery slope . . . and so, so difficult to find your way back up.

One Thing

There is, however, one simple thing you can do on the first day of school to make sure you stay consistent throughout the year.

It's a strategy that makes following your classroom management plan something you do naturally, even effortlessly.

It becomes automatic, like opening the door when an expected guest knocks or answering the phone when it rings.

It isn't, however, for the fainthearted, for it entails going on record, making a commitment, and **putting your reputation at stake**.

The Promise

The way the strategy works is that on the [very first day of school](#), within the first hour, you're going to make an ironclad promise.

You're going to make a promise to your class that you will follow your classroom management plan precisely as it's written. No exceptions.

It will come while you're introducing your plan and be repeated during every subsequent classroom management lesson as you teach, model, and practice the ins and outs of your rules and consequences.

"I promise that I will protect your right to learn and love school by following our classroom management plan every time a rule is broken."

Pause, look them in the eyes, then say it again.

Keep on saying it every day until doing it becomes second nature to you, until you've proven to yourself and your class that you are indeed a person of your word.

All In

Teachers are quick to ask students to make promises regarding their behavior, even asking for them to be written out and signed.

But the real power is when the teacher makes a promise.

Because when you publicly state your intention and commitment, you create powerful internal leverage to actually do it.

Even when it's inconvenient. Even when you're rushed. Even when the storm of the century is raging outside your classroom door.

By putting yourself on notice and holding yourself accountable for doing what you say you're going to do, being consistent becomes remarkably easy.

In no time you'll be someone your students know they can trust and count on – maybe for the first time in their life. You'll become someone worth looking up to and following and behaving for.

Go all in.

Lay it on the line within the first moments you meet your new class.

And the soft pressure to honor your promise, to do the right thing, to ensure your students the best learning experience they've ever had . . .

Will never, ever leave you.