



Why Accountability Is Key To Building Rapport

When students aren't held accountable for misbehavior, they take advantage of it.

They become brazen and disrespectful. They affect a cool, uncaring attitude. They take their sweet time responding to instruction.

And no matter how hard the teacher tries to stay positive, no matter how earnestly she tries to build rapport with her students, resentment inevitably begins to surface.

She starts taking their behavior personally. Her tone turns sharp and adversarial. She finds herself raising her voice in anger and **pulling students aside for lectures** and how-dare-yous.

She becomes the teacher she never wanted to be.

And thus, her relationship with her students becomes strained. It's hard for her to make personal connections. Building rapport is forced and awkward.

Every day feels like a battle.

The truth is, accountability is the foundation upon which positive relationships with students are built.

For it is accountability – that which is defined by the fair use of **a classroom management plan** – that is key building rapport.

Here's why:

Accountability protects students.

A classroom management plan is a contract between you and your students that protects their right to learn and enjoy school. Its primary objective is to benefit *them* and their right to learn in a peaceful environment – without interference, annoyance, or aggravation.

It frees students to embrace learning and friendships, and everything school has to offer. And because so many of them have been in chaotic, ill managed classrooms in the past, they become deeply grateful and appreciative to the teacher who stands firmly committed to this principle.

Accountability isn't personal.

A classroom management plan allows you to **hold students accountable** for misbehavior without causing friction or resentment. When you let your plan do the work for you, you have no need, nor do you have any reason, to yell, scold, or otherwise take misbehavior personally. And so your relationship with your students is never negatively affected.

When a student does misbehave, he has only himself to blame. So instead of sitting in time-out and stewing in anger at you because of the tongue lashing you gave him, he is left to reflect on his own misbehavior. When

you lean on your plan for accountability, instead of taking misbehavior personally, rapport, influence, and leverage remain intact.

Accountability builds trust.

Following your classroom management plan builds trust between you and your students because in a very concrete way it shows them that you can be counted on to do what you say you're going to do. It shows them that you're a person they can confide in, laugh with, and be influenced by.

It opens a harmonious connection, an understanding, between student and teacher that says that yours is a special classroom, sacred even – where membership and participation is a privilege earned through respect, kindness, and polite behavior.

Effortless Rapport

The biggest surprise to teachers who make the unwavering commitment to hold students accountable is the reaction they get from their students.

They're taken aback by the smiles, the thank yous, the notes and pictures, and the invites to lunch or to play at recess.

The loving attention from students – even from the most challenging among them – can come as a shock, particularly because the only change made was a simple one.

When you follow your classroom management plan to a tee, when you honor your commitment and do what you say you're going to do, when you refrain from yelling, scolding, or creating friction . . .

Your students will become so appreciative that you don't have to work hard at building influential relationships.

Your students will come to you. They'll seek you out.

They'll want to get to know *you* better.

And rapport becomes effortless.

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