



Why The Ordinary, Everyday, And Mundane Is Key To Good Behavior And Academic Improvement

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It's only natural to want to focus on what matters.

To concern yourself primarily with content, lessons, and academic performance.

To be a stickler about students getting their essays or projects done right.

And give short shrift to the ordinary, everyday, and mundane.

But this is a big mistake.

Because the things that matter most don't happen in a bubble. They're influenced profoundly by the nuts and bolts of running a classroom.

The truth is, everything you do as a class affects how well your students behave and progress.

In fact, it's the wee little boring details – like the way students turn in work or [transition](#) to a new activity or take out their laptops – that have the greatest impact on behavior, success habits, and the like.

Because excellence isn't something that can be turned on and off like a spigot.

It must be stubbornly pursued from morning bell to dismissal. It must be developed through your insistence on doing *everything* in a certain way.

“Success is in the details” is as much or more true for teaching as any other profession. Yet, it’s the most underutilized and underappreciated key to effective classroom management and academic improvement.

And make no mistake: It begins and ends with you.

It’s the teacher, after all, who through visualizing exactly how each task, procedure, and nano-moment should look like teaches and [models those expectations](#).

It’s the teacher who lays out, step-by-step, how to successfully and efficiently navigate the ins and outs of the school day. It’s the teacher who knows that small, seemingly inconsequential habits transfer to the big and important matters.

This doesn’t mean that you should treat your students like soldiers. Your expectations can be as relaxed or fun or purposeful as you want to make them.

The key isn’t rigidness.

Visitors to my own classroom are often surprised at my students’ sense of freedom and casualness. In fact, we often walk across campus not in a line, but in one silent but happy herd.

But what these visitors don’t see is the precise teaching of what is and isn’t okay and the backing of fair and consistent accountability.

It’s the details and focus on doing the ordinary, everyday, and mundane in a clearly defined way that groove the habits of careful reading, intentional listening, sustained concentration, cooperative working, and every other important learning skill.

It’s the focus on what most teachers gloss over that is the secret to inspiring pride, boosting morale, improving behavior . . .

Or whatever else that ails you.