

Why are students unmotivated?

Many students who misbehave or simply give up in school are concealing their apprehension that they may be perceived as stupid. To protect themselves from looking unintelligent and being embarrassed in front of other students, parents, and even to themselves, they will simply refuse to do their work. Their need to be in control is so strong that they will choose misbehavior, failure, or other self-defeating behaviors.

6 Beliefs of Motivation

1. All students can learn given the tools to do so.
2. Repeated failure teaches students to be unmotivated. Success reinforces success.
3. Everyone has the need to feel competent and influence events in their own lives. Motivation increases if these needs are met.
4. Mastering challenging tasks improves self concept.
5. Classrooms need to be safe places to take risks in order for learning to take place.
6. Motivation increases if adults treat students respectfully.

5 Keys to Motivate Students

1. **Build relationships** – Try to connect in a positive way with each struggling individual every day.
2. **Stress effort** – Often students look only at the red marks, what they have done wrong, or the final grade. It is important that educators emphasize the learning and the effort that take place and encourage continued attempts.
3. **Convey enthusiasm** – When students are successful, when they have given their best effort, or when they are attempting something for the first time, educators need to express their enthusiasm to reinforce struggling students. Do this genuinely.
4. **Respect power** – Don't get into power struggles with students. Whenever possible, allow students to make decisions or give input. Teachers must decide what the desired outcomes are for the given curriculum but students may be able to decide on the way s/he gets there such as what project to do, what topic to write about, or how s/he demonstrates mastery of the objectives. Students may also be allowed input in the classroom rules.
5. **Engender hope** – Above all, teachers need to create a climate of hope in the classroom that all students can learn. With hope, students will not easily give up and will be motivated to learn.