

## **Soft Skills: A Remedy to the Challenge of Teaching**

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Teaching as many say is the easiest and the noblest of all professions. But if it's taken honestly, it's the most challenging of all jobs. With the rise of various professional courses, institutes have mushroomed in every nook and corner. The growing number of colleges faces the faculty crunch and often a compromise is made with the lot that is available. The faculty, thus appointed to teach the products of the highly technical and competitive world, often feels his worth at stake when he faces numberless eyes with radiant dreams ready to achieve their golden mansion once they register themselves in a good institute.

A teacher's task in a professional institute becomes much of an ordeal. He has to forge a balance between his content and presentation keeping into consideration the class control and maintenance of decorum in a way. We have to understand the fact that the majority of students want to listen to the lecture and the numbers of those who are disinterested are the ones who have joined the institute just for fun and fashion.

### **Challenges**

Teachers who find their classes either unattended by large number of students or find them opposed to listening have first to identify the problems that block their minds. In most of the cases students in technical or management institutes (if private/self-financed ones) comprise the lot of those who come from sound families lacking in exposure to the crass commercial and educational competitiveness. The result is that students find such institutes as a resort to expose all their hidden mettle and suppresses ambitions. Secondly, even if some students found bright in terms of input, are found inadequate in communication skills which hamper their beautiful mind to be bold and their bold bodies to be beautiful. Thirdly, their inflated dreams too block their thought processes to understand the nitty gritty of their courses. Moreover, their noises too are interpreted negatively by their teachers. But I feel that certain amount of patience and perseverance on the part of teachers to understand these inviolable truths may result in showing them remedies. To my mind using soft skills may be the best remedy to answer these challenges.

### **Remedies**

There is nothing in the world that is without a remedy. A modern day teacher's job becomes rewarding only when he uses his soft skills in his classroom. Most often it so happens that the teacher in management/ technical institutes find themselves in the same boat as that of students. Teaching, which they join as a second option makes them over-enthusiastic and they try to pour all the manna of their knowledge in their classroom. To my view, if they make use of soft skills, they will prove to be better teachers.

Soft Skills as an umbrella term comprises various skills viz. Effective Communication Skills, Attitude, Adaptability, Team work, Problem solving skills, Time & Space besides Cultural considerations. As a teacher one has to ensure that one's effective communication skills becomes a medium through which he can pour contents like a doctor who knows the dosage of medicine his patients require. A successful teacher will find to his delight that his voice and vocabulary do the marvels which no other device can do. Another important thing to mull over is his attitude which comprises proper planning and zeal to stir sensations in the classroom. A teacher has to adapt himself according to the situations; he has to bring in himself a proper blend of rigidity and flexibility allowing him to create humour at times to drive away the monologue. Teaching has to be a dialogue and not monologue. One should also remember that

examples work more than theories. But while exemplifying one should be wary enough not to hurt anyone's cultural and religious beliefs. Challenging though such things are, they are not devoid of satisfaction if practised earnestly. If we as teachers remain aware of the importance of such soft skills in teaching, it not only will establish proper rapport between the teacher and the taught but also ensure our competence and bring admiration. Rightly has Aristotle said: "I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think." The beginning of thinking thus on the part of students will undoubtedly pave the way for smooth teaching.