Finding Your Way in a Dynamically-Changing Profession

Randall Davis
English Language Institute
University of Utah
rdavis@aoce.Utah.edu

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Life’s Dream Trajectory

Wouldn’t it be nice if our career path and life journey followed this graph?
Purpose of Presentation

- Explore SIX keys to reshaping the way that we view our personal and professional lives that lead toward greater enrichment.
Socrates

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

Greek philosopher
1. Realize that you could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.
Situations

1. Making faulty assumptions about people or their beliefs.
2. Holding on to our certainty that particular methodologies are the best methods.
Application

“However disorienting, difficult, or humbling our mistakes might be, it is ultimately wrongness, not rightness, that can teach us who we are.”

Kathryn Schulz, *Being Wrong*
Application

- Observe other teachers where and when possible.
- Invite teachers to observe you.
- Learn more about how our currently-held views can limit us from growing more.
1. Realize that you could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.

2. Accept your imperfections and limitations.
Key #2: Accept your Imperfections and Limitations.

“What was your college major?”
Quotes

“We often wear ourselves out trying to be someone we aren’t or aren’t meant to be.”

“I was born to make mistakes, not to fake perfection.”

Vulnerability > Authenticity
Brené Brown
Researcher on Vulnerability, Shame, and Courage

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”
Situations

1. Pretend to know when we don’t know.
2. Consciously or unconsciously, create conflict with colleagues to get ahead.
Application

❖ Be honest with yourself.
❖ Share your stories about your uncertainties and show radical empathy for others.
❖ Do the best where you are with what you have. Your best is often good enough.
3. Use technology judiciously.
Technology in the Classroom: Utopia or Chaos?

*utopia*
noun - (the idea of) a perfect society in which everyone works well with each other and is happy

*chaos*
noun - a state of total confusion and lack of order
Andy Rooney once noted:

“Computers make it easier to do a lot of things, but most of thing things they make easier to do don’t need to be done.”
Useful or Not?

Just because you CAN do it doesn't mean it SHOULD be done.

“Technologies are becoming inherently more unusable because they often are trying to do too much.”
“Less is More” Principle

Use only what you need!
Easier to learn, support, and maintain.

Don't abandon what already works for you.
Don't abandon what already works for you.

“The best education is to be found in gaining the utmost information from the simplest apparatus.”
- Alfred Whitehead, mathematician, 1922
Situations

1. Schools invest all their money in hardware and software with no money left over for training.

2. Schools purchase iPads for tasks that can be done with simpler tools.

3. Schools evaluate teachers’ performance on whether they use technology or not.
Application

- Suggest technologies that work even in low-resource environments.
- Don’t penalize or stigmatize teachers who don’t use technology.
- Support others who may feel unneeded embarrassment for not using what you use.
3. Use technology judiciously.

4. Develop a tolerance of ambiguity and the unknown, but create a clear path for students.
At times, life follows its own path no matter how much we try to alter it.
Teacher’s Goal

Don’t create unnecessary ambiguity for students to overcome, especially in testing situations.
Scales from 0-10

But what is the difference between a 6 and 7?
Scoring Rubric

Speaking Test: Tell me one thing you did last week to improve your English skills.

I reviewed the vocabulary in the book on Monday.
I went to the teacher’s office to ask questions on Friday.

Grammar (past tense verb correctly.)     1  0
Idea       (clear and complete.)          1  0
Time Expression (last week, yesterday)    1  0
Pronunciation (key vocabulary)            1  0

1 = correct/mastery    0 = incorrect
Application

- Adapt your materials as needed.
- Try to plan for multiple scenarios in your classrooms.
- Make your policies, expectations, and grading clear for students.
5. Embrace diversity and apply the Platinum Rule.
Situations

1. Misunderstand students’ perceptions, feelings, and needs, especially when they struggle personally and academically.
Understanding Culture

*Big “C” Culture*

What you see . . .

- Behaviors

What you don’t see

- Beliefs
- Attitudes

*Little “C” Culture*
Be Careful not to Stereotype!

A mental picture that might not be true. Stereotypes can also hurt.

- Men can’t cook.
- All Asians are good at math.
- All Mexicans ______________.
Treating People with Dignity and Respect

Golden Rule – Treat others the way YOU want to be treated.

Platinum Rule – Treat others the way THEY want to be treated. This accommodates their feelings and backgrounds. It also preserves diversity.
Application

❖ Learn about others and their lives. Validate their perspectives.
❖ Suspend judgement about others’ actions and ideas until you really understand them. People may be juggling with difficult issues beyond your awareness.
5. Embrace diversity and apply the Platinum Rule.

6. Dare greatly . . . model what you expect from your students.
Life can be extremely difficult, and things usually don’t go as planned.

Don’t expect yourself to be perfect the first, second, or a hundredth time.

Support others along their personal and professional journeys.
Socrates

“The only true wisdom is knowing you know nothing.”
References

Brown, B. (2012) *Daring greatly: How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead.*
