

Mindsets for School Success: Effective Educators and Resilient, Motivated Learners

www.drrobertbrooks.com

contact@drrobertbrooks.com

The power of mindsets

Mindsets: The assumptions and expectations we possess about ourselves and others that guide our behavior; often we are not even aware of these assumptions

Mindsets and “motivating environments”

“Motivating environments” are characterized by people being cooperative, willing to learn from each other, willing to take risks because they feel safe and secure, and all parties feel a sense of ownership

As we attempt to create such environments there are two key questions to consider

Mindsets and “motivating environments”

What is the mindset of educators and other professionals who help to create motivating learning environments?

What is the mindset of students who are motivated, resilient, and learn effectively?

The mindset of effective learners

To believe educators are supportive and available and are not experienced as judgmental or accusatory: The influence of a “charismatic adult”

Students don't care what we know until they first know we care

The mindset of effective learners

To believe that their ability to learn is based in great part on their own attitudes, motivation, and effort. They feel a sense of responsibility for their own learning. This is a basic premise of locus of control and attribution theory

However, students must also believe their efforts will result in successful learning

The mindset of effective learners

To recognize that making mistakes is part of the learning process and that mistakes are both *expected* and *accepted*. This is also a basic tenet of attribution theory

To understand their unique learning style, strengths, and vulnerabilities as well as their mindsets: The importance of demystification

The mindset of effective educators

To believe that students are capable of becoming more optimistic, successful, and resilient, but they need the presence of “charismatic adults” in their lives to reinforce these attributes

To believe that we can serve as a “charismatic adult” even if we do not receive ongoing positive feedback

The mindset of effective educators

To believe that if a student is having difficulty learning and appears unmotivated, we must ask, “What is it that I can do differently to help this student become more hopeful and successful?” rather than wait for the student to change first. To continue to use unsuccessful interventions is a prescription for failure

The mindset of effective educators

To be empathic: To see the world through the eyes of students and to use empathic communication to reach and teach all students

Empathic communication: Three key questions

Would I want anyone to say or do to me what I have said or done to this student?

In anything I say or do with students what do I hope to accomplish?

Am I saying or doing things in a way in which students can understand what I am attempting to communicate and appreciate that I am not being judgmental or critical but rather I am attempting to be helpful?

The mindset of effective educators

To appreciate the need to identify, reinforce, and honor each youngster's strengths or "islands of competence"

To recognize the importance of nurturing a sense of personal control and ownership in students by offering choices, reinforcing problem-solving skills, and demystifying both educational practices and learning styles

The mindset of effective educators

To remove “raging elephants” from the learning environment by openly discussing and preparing students for setbacks and mistakes

To recognize that one of our main roles as an educator is to be a disciplinarian, but we must remember the roots of the word discipline

The mindset of effective educators

To appreciate the importance of providing students with an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of others: A powerful ingredient of motivation