

A TEACHER: IN THE MIRROR OF STUDENTS

Good teachers are those who know how little they know. Bad teachers are those who think they know more than they don't know (R. Verdi)

The following handout is the summary of students' point of view about teachers. I asked my students to answer the following two interrelated questions without mentioning the name of any teacher or class.

What a teacher should do?

What a teacher should not do?

The basic purpose was to learn and understand student's feelings and expectations about teacher. I got amazing response from students; some wrote in very emotional way that I could not re-write their experience. One thing is sure that students are very emotional and sensitive and they really feel whenever disrespected or insulted by the teachers. This exercise also gives many lessons that many students who are not very active, unnoticed or ignorant in the class have great things to say or express. The other lesson I got is that encouraging a student to speak really explores his or her hidden potential and abilities. I went through all the opinions and noted down important points. On average, I had to note down 4 to 5 main points for most of the students and many points by some other students. Infact, I had to not down 29 points by a single student which were totally unique and different from other student's points. This shows the hidden and unnoticed abilities of many students we have.

I am just writing the lines/points or feeling of students as they wrote. However, sometimes I slightly modify the sentences without changing the meanings.

1. *Sometimes teachers have intentions in their minds to give certain percentage of specific grades to some students or set standard in their minds before even taking the exams.* If it is said that teacher is like a father then he should also act like a father, is there any father or mother who wants that some of his or her children to get good marks and few should get average and few should get fail? No one would wish to see failure of our children. Similar should be the wish of every teacher about his or her student. He or she should try to make his or her students successful.

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates (William A. Ward)

2. The fate of the students lies in the hands of teachers and they should try to understand our feelings and problems.
3. **Some teachers threaten the students in the beginning of their classes that they should not study this course as it will be difficult for them. This attitude is wrong. Once a student is admitted in the class, it's the teacher's responsibility to teach him in the best possible way and should not make students afraid of at the start of the semester. (Should not discourage students about the subject). What is the purpose of the teacher if he or she cannot make difficult things easy or at least encourage students to take difficult things? If teacher thinks that a subject is difficult then it means he or she does not have enough grip on subject or has the intention to take smaller class to make his or her work easy.**
4. *In a subject I got A grade because I belong to same cast as the teacher belonged to*
5. A teacher should be talented, ambitious, calm and humble
6. **Teachers often consider themselves as full of knowledge and don't respect students opinion or consider student without knowledge.**
7. Sometimes teachers are biased on the basis of gender etc. and some promote regionalism
8. A teacher should strengthen the youth instead of discouraging them
9. Should teach moral values to the students
10. They should also practice appropriate moral and ethical practices
11. Should have strong hold on the subject, should not ask for just cramming, should teach subject with practical approach
12. Should prepare the students for the real world
13. Should teach students to realize the responsibilities to their country
14. Should not discriminate and should never discourage students from asking questions
15. **Should be a problem solver rather than a problem creator**
16. Should plan his lecture
17. Involve students in the classroom

Good teachers are costly, but bad teachers cost more (Bob Talbert)

18. Must return the papers and assignments quickly
19. Must keep in mind that students come from different background and capabilities
20. Inform parents about their education and problems
21. Should not create friendly relationship with students
- 22. Never degrade students which may result in cowardness and lack of confidence and student will not trust teacher again**
- 23. Should not shout in the class**
24. Grade the work of student properly
25. Should be should be a honest person
26. Should be a role model for students
- 27. He or she should not play with the future of students**
28. Should be kind-hearted and helpful
29. Should consider and treat according to the mental level of students
30. Should not use harsh words
31. Students should be given a chance to ask and interact with teacher
32. Should encourage competition
- 33. Should hear the unheard and un-communicated feelings of students**
34. He must be sympathetic and must feel himself in the place of student
35. Should also come in time
36. Should not tired while teaching
37. Should be clear in their lecture and should not confined their knowledge to textbooks only
38. Should make the subject interesting
39. Should pay extra attention to the weak students
40. Should listen the students patiently
41. Should be polite, should strict in discipline
42. Should encourage students to get confidence
- 43. Should welcome the new ideas**
44. Should be creative in methods of teaching

Give me a fish and I eat for a day. Teach me to fish and I eat for lifetime
(Chinese proverb)

45. Should have sense of humor to release the tension of the students
46. Teacher can make one's life
47. Should present lessons in interesting way, should relate examples
48. A teacher should be a teacher in class only and should be more frank outside the class
49. *Once I knocked the door of a teacher's room, he said I am busy, when I was returning, another student came and teacher welcomed him. It really hurt my feelings and I started hating the subject the teacher was teaching*
- 50. We the students often do not study and leave a subject just due to teacher**
51. Teachers should think positive in every situation
52. Should take care of every individual student
53. Should not get angry while teaching
- 54. Should also give attention to back benchers**
55. Should behave like parent and should treat students as he or she treats to his or her own children
56. Should teach according to the mental level of students and not according to his own mental level
57. The word TC or take care is very common in our institution for teachers
- 58. Grading should be fair and not based upon T.C system because some students cannot take care of teachers**
59. Patience, justice, punctuality, politeness, active communication, knowledge, interest etc. are the main ingredients that can make a teacher remarkable and memorable
60. It always very shocking to the students the dual attitude of the teacher in normal class and in exam class
- 61. I must say that those teachers are wrong who claims that they do justice among their justice, it does not happen even by the parents to their children. Only Allah is the most just and merciful.**
62. The punishments to students should be of this type by the teacher that student cover its mistakes confidentially
63. Many of the male students seems to be frank with the male students only and vice versa

I put the relation of a fine teacher to a student just below the relation of a mother to a son (Thomas Wolfe)

64. A teacher can be the main key to open the doors for the success of students

65. Sometimes teacher's attitude can affect the student's academic as well as social life

66. Should also do whatever he or she says

67. Aggression and negative attitude of teacher really disappoints the students.

Students get confuse whether to ask questions or not and they feel uncomfortable in the class of such types of teachers and study becomes burden instead of desire

68. Some teachers are image conscious

69. A teacher should be humble and flexible enough to absorb the personality of student

70. Teacher must have optimistic approach towards students

71. Some teachers are arrogant

72. Sometimes a little appreciation can leads a student to what he or she was not

73. Should never judge the students on their appearance or gender

74. Should acknowledge the anti-statement to the lecture and must avoid zero marks policy

75. Some good students are brutally stung by the teachers

76. Interesting lecture is the most inspirational quality of a teacher

77. Some teachers are status conscious and they do not well behave with 'lower standard' students

78. Some teachers just do not accept change, they should realize that there is a place for tradition but there must be a space for new ways also

79. A teacher should be open to discussion of new ideas

80. If a teacher is not available then there is nothing else to expect. Non punctual teacher is a demise of teaching.

81. Great teachers empathize with kids, respect them, and believe that each one has something special that can be built upon. (Ann Lieberman)

82. A good teacher should also discuss other aspects of life instead of just teaching from book

83. I like a teacher who gives you something to take home to think about besides homework (anonymous)

Teacher should not ignore the fact that the history tells most of the genius were never good students

84. It is the responsibility of teacher to look closely the concerns of the students
85. Should be polite and friendly but within a certain limit
86. Should not violate any value of institution
87. Should also do career counseling
88. Should update his or her knowledge
89. Should also ask questions from students to make them confident
90. Should be a bridge between book and students
91. Should know the tactics of teaching
92. Should also teach ethical and moral values in the class
- 93. Should know the name of the students because it gives pleasure and honor for student that his or her teacher knows his or her name**
- 94. Teacher must realize the sensitivity of his position. We usually blame doctors for their negligence of killing patients but we don't blame or realize what teacher's negligence can do to our next generation**
- 95. Should not be so strict because afraid students will never ask questions from teacher, what an afraid person can learn?**
- 96. Teacher should love all of this students because every person hankers after love. The teacher who loves his students is respected and loved by his students as well**
97. Should adopt such an attitude towards his students they do not hesitate to share even their personal problems. However, teacher should not be a friend of his or her student in order to avoid favoritism or biasness. Because friendship require natural favoritism
98. Should first of all know the psychology of students
99. Should not come and just pass the time
100. Should not be careless towards lazy students
101. Should be a good evaluator
102. Should make the classroom alive and teach interestingly
- 103.

The best teachers teach from the heart, not from the book (anonymous)

104. The teacher should take the students from where they are and lead them to the way of success
105. The teacher should have never-ending willingness to ensure that all the students reach their maximum potential
- 106. *Should avoid using grades as threats***
- 107. *Should accept if he or she does not know anything about the subject (accepting that you don't know is the half of knowledge)***
108. Should frequently give positive feedback to the students
109. Should assign different tasks to the students to judge their abilities
110. Helps students feel that they are active members of the learning community
111. Should get feedback from the students also
112. Should maintain informal classroom observations
113. Should share his or her education and common life experience to the students that may be helpful for them in their practical life
114. Should be a good communicator
115. Should assess their students on the basis of performance instead of personal likings
116. Should plan his lecture before coming to the class, should plan his tasks etc.
117. Should be ready to learn from other teachers and students as well, he should be a good listener and open minded
- 118. *He should be able to make the difficult things easy and should not threat students that subject is very difficult***
Should make his class feel at ease and should keep him or herself calm
119. Should motivate the students to do good things in life
120. He should look active, smart, fresh and lively in the class
121. Should know the real life application whatever he or she teaches and should tell the students
122. *Everybody needs attention so a teacher should know the students individually*
123. *Many teachers discourage students about the level of difficulties of the course they have opted, so many students drop that course just due to the instructor's suggestions*

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops (Henry Adams)

124. Some teachers smoke in front of students which may have impact on student's mind, students often follow teachers, if he will do that then he should not expect good from students
125. A teacher should establish the link between the subject being taught and other disciplines and subjects
- 126. Some teachers are always impressed by the students who belong to the elite class and give them favor to make the personal contacts with them**
- 127. A teacher should not underestimate the dull students in the class or make jokes on them, rather he or she should encourage them to work hard and take part for the development of the society**
128. A teacher should be a good listener
129. Teacher should accept the emergency of student in genuine cases
130. Teachers should not go out from class during lecture
131. A teacher should talk more about students and not about him or herself
132. Teacher should know how to evoke interest in the class
- 133. Some teachers show a strange attitude with female students that seems very awkward**
- 134. Equal attention must be given to all the students and more attention should not be given to old students only**
135. Teacher should not impose his or her thinking on their students
- 136. Sometimes teachers behave in the way that they are very superior persons and they do not listen the point of view of students**
- 137. Teachers think that students sitting on front seats are very brilliant and talented while they ignore back-benchers. They can also be brilliant**
- 138. Sometimes teachers discourage students to take higher-level course by saying that course is very difficult; you cannot take that, not of your level etc.**
139. Some teachers teach so much course which is left on last day of the semester
140. Should promote reading from book and should not provide prepared notes
141. Should give equal opportunities to female and male students in the class

A good teacher is like a candle: it consumes itself to light the way for others
(anonymous)

- 142. Should not speak in English only, some sentence, phrases or expression can be expressed in local language only which may have forceful impact**
143. Should not ask their personal work to students
144. Should not waste time in irrelevant discussions
- 145. Should not make in his or her mind to pass certain number of students**
146. A good sense of humor differentiates a good teacher from average teacher
147. Should also encourage and appreciate students when they perform better
148. Teacher must be socially active
149. He should also invite students to take his or her course instead of discouraging them
150. A teacher should be trustworthy because many students want to share their problems with teacher
151. Should encourage students to overcome their fear of speaking
152. Should maintain an eye contact with students
153. Should use the easy language understandable by students
154. Should move in the class and watch the students
155. Should give them time to think, speak or write
156. Should have believe in their students
157. Should admit the mistakes if done
158. Should share their own students life experience
159. Should quote proverbs and stories related to subject, wisdom based
160. Should give current affairs examples
161. Should allow their students to talk or share something
162. Should listen the phone calls outside the class
163. Should allow students to join the class no matter how late he or she is.
164. Should have a smile on his face at least once in a class

A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the pupil with a desire to learn is hammering on cold iron (Horace Mann)

I was facing some issues in a course, I went to teacher and ask for help in some questions. The behavior of instructor was so rude and handed me a book and said ‘ go home and read the whole book you will get the answer” that was a worst course in my degree, I studied the whole course without understanding

165. Must reply the greeting or Salam of a student
166. Should not discriminate on the basis of intelligence level of students
167. Should not provide all helping material by self, rather ask them to go and explore the things
168. Should not get bored of students nor let them to get bored of you
169. Should not look students with anger
170. Should not stick to book only but also something social, religious, moral etc.
171. Should not let student to over-react in front of class or making jocks of their fellow students
172. Should not get tiered while repeating the things
173. While having introduction of students, should not ask irrelevant questions
174. Should not make students afraid of course or your teaching methods
175. Should not ask the student to drop the course or you can not do it
176. Should not be too fast in delivering the lecture
177. Should not deliver lecture by book reading
178. Should not make confusion for students
179. Should not deliver a monotonous lecture, ups and downs in conversation should be there
180. Should not be very serious, to make class boring and embracing
181. Teachers should also teach human values other than class lecture
182. We respect some teachers and try to forget about behavior of some teachers
183. A teacher should not answer the question unless he or she knows the correct answer

Should not give 'Alert Form' in front of class

Many student come from Urdu medium background, but it doesn't mean that they don't have critical thinking and understanding of subject. The only thing they lack is the effective communication to express themselves. The teacher should put him or herself in the position of students and should pay extra attention to these students so that they can speak and express themselves

184. *Teacher should not give wrong answer instead it is much better to accept that he or she does not know and will tell you latter. Wrong information or answer can create bad impression, it is also dishonesty, and cheating and can also lead a student to wrong direction or understanding*
185. Sometimes teachers just try to cover the syllabus only and don't see whether students are understanding or not
186. Teachers should not see the writing materials only but also judge the understanding, inspiration towards subject and improvement that a student can bring due to his or her teachings
187. Should remove the hesitation of the students
188. Should tell the students about the purpose of education
189. Some teachers just try to murder the creativity of students
- 190. There are many Ayazs and Mehmoods in the class, it is the duty of the teacher to bring all thos Ayazs and Mehommod in one line**
191. A teacher should also try to make a good human beings instead of just good students only
192. All teachers should see the movie of "the society of dead poets" in order to see what a teacher should be
193. A teacher should not discourage students, it will result in illiteracy or destruction of one's career
194. They should deliver the lecture with interest assuming that students don't know much about the topic. If they are already assumed to know about the topic what is the purpose of the lecture

One of the teachers said that he don't want to see the students perfect instead he wants to see whether they are improving or not

- 195. One of the student who has CGPA more than 3.5 explained his experience when he opposed the point of view of a teacher. The teacher directly attacked his personality and beard face and insulted him and the people like him by saying that *Molvies only need Halwas to eat and they do nothing else.....* The student shocked at the behavior of teacher and he had to drop the course after sometime because of teacher's behavior and class fellow's teasing.**
196. A teacher is a biggest mind setter and change agent, he should creates optimism among students so that they can serve the nations
197. Should not discus in the class to only his favorite students but also ask questions from weak students
198. He must ensure that every student is getting equal share of his attention
199. Should try to develop the sense of patriotism in the students
200. Should try to explore the qualities in the students because everybody is born with some qualities
201. A teacher should not lead his students towards failure and then get happy on their failure and in the end make the students realize that he has all the powers to destroy their future
202. "The future of nation depends upon the intellectual manpower and the intellect of men is in the hands of teacher"