How To Make A Difference: Inspiring Students To Do Their Best

Marjan Glavac

www.howtomakeadifference.com
Praise for Marjan Glavac’s
“How To Make A Difference: Inspiring Students To Do Their Best”

Normally, our company only sells just the books that we produce, but when we read this book, we decided that we had to make an exception. This is a landmark book for teachers. This book has so much heart, insight and passion, that we asked the author to let us sell it on our website. It's the book we wish we'd written. This book has wonderful, inventive strategies but it's more than just a book of strategies. It is that rare book that can make you remember why you signed up to be a teacher. But, even more importantly, if you have hated your job lately, this book can make you glad again that you teach. It can help you re-discover your passion for teaching while loading you up with improved methods to use in your classroom every day. With these improved tools, your job might not be so hard and the days might not seem so long. The author, Marjan Glavac, a veteran teacher, has thought of everything that you need to maximize your impact on your challenging and struggling students. He even gives you (without charge) a free workbook to help you apply and fully utilize the information from his book. Even better, you can own this instant ebook and the free companion workbook in just 60 seconds. Let Marjan's wisdom and ideas transform your those long, hard days into inspirational ones.

Ruth Wells Youth Change

Marjan Glavac’s new book How To Make A Difference - Inspiring Students To Do Their Best provides *sensible sunlight* as it emerges from Education’s verbose jungle. It is, in fact, creative relief from the ubiquitous published convention of intellectual posturing. It is not written in pompous style (represented by my previous sentence) but in a down-to-earth attitude of conversational tone representing a connection between author and reader as interested colleagues.

Another topic which impressed me was his interest in developing a
collaborative attitude as an educator by bringing in other teachers who have special interests in order to widen the scope of the students’ experience.

Al Beck, Professor Emeritus Culver-Stockton College Canton, Missouri, USA

How to Make a Difference reviews strategies for bringing order, industry and success to students’ working environments. It provides busy educators – particularly new ones – with practical, field-tested teaching and organizational strategies.

Reviewed by Gail Lennon, Professional Speaking magazine Teacher of distance education online adult secondary courses with the Bluewater District School Board in Chesley, Ontario, Canada

Your eBook *How To Make A Difference: Inspiring Students To Do Their Best* works very well at the high school level. The principles of effective teaching can be used at all grade levels.

I found that many of the strategies described in your book match very nicely with Dr. Glasser's Choice Theory and Reality Therapy. Many of the activities can be modified for middle and high school students.

The workbook is an excellent self-evaluation tool for teachers to use for personal and professional improvement.

Mrs. Latricia Dulaney
Eau Gallie High
Melbourne, FLORIDA USA
The Tools of Success

“If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up people to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.” - Antoine Saint-Exupery

“Don’t sell the steak, sell the sizzle.” - Dale Carnegie

What amazes me time after time, year after year, in dealing with my students, is that a lot of them really don’t know how to achieve success. School should be a great place to teach children the methods to achieve success.

One concept that I introduce very early are the simple, yet very effective principles of goal setting. Some students in the early grades have heard about the importance of goals. By their high school years, virtually all students have heard about the need to set goals. Few students however, are taught how to achieve their goals.

One day my principal walked into my class as I was teaching about goal setting. I had just asked my grade 5 class the question “How can you eat an elephant?” After a long pause I asked my principal and he answered, “One bite at a time!” After another long pause, my students start to get it. At that point, I elaborated with the statement that no matter how huge the goal may be, “A journey of a thousand miles, begins with the first step.” It’s at this point that I tell students that everything is incremental.
I give them the example of me and my weight. I didn’t put on 20 extra pounds all at once. Over the years, I exercised less and less and ate a bit more and more until I started to put on an extra pound (or two) a year. Over 20 years, those pounds add up! Since it took me 20 years to gain the extra weight, I’m not going to lose it all at once.

**How To Set Goals**

Most goals are reached one step at a time. The most important thing is to get started. I made a conscious effort a number of years ago, to get back into shape and exercise. Since I’m often too tired to exercise before and after school, I started to exercise with my students by running and doing stretches with them during our physical education classes. I not only show students how goal setting works in theory, but also in practice.

Early in the year, I distribute a goal-setting handout to the students. I also make a transparency for the overhead. Then I explain each point to the students. (See Workbook for sample and black line master.)

When I first started this practical goal-setting exercise with my students three years ago, my goal was to run 5 minutes non-stop by the end of the school year in June. That was no easy task. I tried all summer, before school started to get into shape by running. For some reason, although I ran all the time in high school and partly throughout university, I couldn’t run more than one and a half minutes! For some time, I just couldn’t break that barrier. So, I went “public.” After telling my students my goal, writing it down, then posting it publicly for all to see, I was determined to show my students how to implement a goal.
I am happy to write, that before the year was over I did achieve the goal of running 5 minutes without stopping. The next year, I doubled the goal to 10 minutes and showed those students how to achieve their goals while I modeled how I achieve mine. Again, I succeeded. Flush with success and confidence, the following year, I doubled the goal to 20 minutes. That was definitely a year long goal, which I succeeded in achieving. The following year, I continued with the goal increasing it to 30 minutes. That goal was also achieved. Next year, I’m looking at doing 60 minutes!

I tell students that their goals don’t need to be school goals. Over the years, their goals have included doing more reading, to becoming a better soccer goalie, getting an advanced yellow belt in karate, earning more “I Did It Awards”, scoring a goal in hockey, and watching less T.V. Some students duplicated my goal of running. Knowing these students’ goals and what’s important to them, gives teachers a great opportunity to help students to connect them to success. If I know that a student is looking for a babysitting job and I know parents who are looking for a babysitter, I can connect them. It’s the same for students looking for jobs or places on the school team. If I know of someone who can help them, I will connect them. This approach also shows students the power of networking and getting to know other people.

Each of us has just 86,400 seconds every day to use. How we use them, determines our success.
How To Achieve Excellence

“You cannot help someone get up a hill without getting closer to the top yourself.” - General H. Norman Schwarzkopf

To achieve excellence, students need to know what it is. That very first day of school when new students enter my room, above the front board I have my I Did It Awards posted from the year before. I explain to the newcomers that one of my goals is to have every student in the class earn an I Did It Award. This award is given when a student achieves excellence. It can be earned for a number of accomplishments: perfect tests, dramatic improvement in behavior and attitude, being the most improved student of the month, exceptional improvement in a school subject, first student in a physical education class to run 20 minutes without stopping, most improved in reading, writing, etc. How many ways can an I Did It Award be earned in your classroom?

The appeal of the award is that it is special. It is not given out for something that anyone can accomplish. For example, students will often ask if they will receive an I Did It Award for passing a particularly easy review test. I tell them “No. It’s not challenging enough for the award.” So the award is very appealing and motivating, particularly to my high achieving students. In feedback I receive from my high achieving students, they consistently rate this award as a top motivator in my class because it is a special award that not everyone can get every time. I also
make the award special by having a mini-award ceremony. I call up each student individually, shake their hand and congratulate them on earning the I Did It Award. I then get the entire class to acknowledge the achievement by a round of applause.

The award is also very appealing to my special needs students and students with low self-confidence and self-esteem. By having the previous year’s awards posted above the front board, students can see who earned it the year before. The award is set up to give all students a place, all students hope and encouragement, all students a chance to achieve excellence. I believe every student comes to class with at least one strength. It may not be self-evident, but the strength is there. It’s my job to find, note it and strengthen it. The I Did It Award does that!

**Building Good Public Relations—One Kitchen At A Time**

The very first time that a student does get perfect for a unit math test for example, I print out two I Did It Awards. One of the awards is posted above the front board for everyone to see. The other award is a keeper award. I tell the student to put it on their refrigerator. By having the award on the refrigerator, the student sees a solid reminder of excellence and success every day before going to school and after arriving back home. Nothing succeeds like success. Success breeds success. Parents too are proud to see the award and they encourage their children to keep up their excellent work. Family members, friends, and visitors who come into the kitchen, also see the award. Often they make a comment to the child about his or her achievement. The children also go away with a
solid example of how achieve excellence and success and the rewards that come with them. The other tangible benefits are the positives that reflect on you as a teacher and on the school itself. Our teaching and educational system will get better whenever we can bring the positives around the kitchen tables and homes of our students and their families.

How many awards can a student earn? The more the better! Some of my high achieving students have earned over twenty. Some of my below average students have earned only one. However many awards they achieve, only their first award is posted. All are equal above that front board. Subsequent awards are their keepers for home. Once their refrigerator at home gets overcrowded with awards, a number of my students put them into their albums and scrapbooks.

Another way to build a bridge to your students is to allow them to know more about you. A number of teachers have a bulletin board or corner of the classroom showing their personal side. This may consist of a class photo of when they were in kindergarten, high school and university graduation photos, sports teams, wedding and family pictures. On my bulletin board I post the awards that took me years to achieve. They are my university degrees. Students need a visual reminder that their teacher has achieved success and excellence too! Perhaps the teacher has overcome some failure as well.

For example, I tell them of how I failed at French. Then after high school I went on to live with a French speaking family for 3 summers and I started to really enjoy the language and culture. This kind of sharing is an encouragement to students and can give them hope.
NEXT STEPS:

Would you like more ideas like this? In my eBook: "How To Make A Difference: Inspiring Students To Do Their Best" you’ll learn:

- How to prevent your students from pushing your buttons and stressing you out so you can go home refreshed and rejuvenated for the next day (page 8)

- The 7 questions that establish your base of strength in the face of challenges and setbacks. They keep you from the sand trap of depression and make you a more relaxed and effective teacher (page 8)

- The single best source of help when dealing with difficult behavior and save you from enormous frustration (p. 16)

- How you can easily get parents to open up about their kids and reveal golden nuggets of information that make your job easier (p. 16)

- The "Reason Why" method of getting your students to comply. Plus, how to get the students to encourage the "rule breakers" to behave and follow the rules (p.23)

- When good students "go bad" and ignore your routine or signals, what do you do? Use this quick and easy tip on page 49 to get your students to relax and calm down
• 6 keys to building trust and respect through responsibility (p.67)

• The 3 questions that help diffuse almost any classroom problem you’ll ever encounter (p.77)

• 44 ways to quench the flames of teacher burnout to enable you to survive and thrive in your teaching career (p.100)

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Thank you very much for reading my sample chapters. If you have any questions about the eBook or about classroom management in general, please don’t hesitate to contact me at: marjan@glavac.com
If you have any suggestions for improvements or strategies, tips that have worked for you in the classroom, please feel free to share them. My goal is to help all teachers make a difference in their classes.

All the best in your teaching success,

Marjan Glavac

'Talk to each other, support each other, take care of each other.'
Stu Cunningham

Marjan Glavac is a best selling author, speaker and elementary classroom teacher with over 29 years of teaching experience. He is the author of: The Busy Educator’s Guide To The World Wide Web 1st and 2nd Editions, How To Make A Difference: Inspiring Students To Do Their Best, Teaching Is...Moments That Inspire And Motivate Teachers To Make A Difference and co-creator of How to Thrive and Survive in Your Classroom teleseminar. He is also the creator of one of the Internet’s longest running free teacher monthly newsletters: The Busy Educators Newsletter (1998).