

Tip 22 - Teach Yourself to be a Teacher

I will get all literary and define the word *teach* ... *Impart knowledge to or instruct (someone) as to how to do something.*

Maria Montessori, Desmond Tutu, Mother Teresa, Albert Einstein. 4 famous names from history, who all imparted their knowledge and instructed in a remarkable way. If you are looking to add another string to your bow, then teaching can be a rewarding role. If you already teach in your Health & Safety role, I hope my points in this *Tip* aid reflection in your practice, and offer possibilities for enhancing your teaching skills. Firstly I am going back to my School and University days. Not just a chance for me to reminisce; a chance to look at the good, the bad and the ugly of teaching that I experienced. My education started at *Chinthurst School* in 1984. An all- boys Prep School in the leafy village of Tadworth in Surrey. For me, the majority of Teachers were fantastic. Two that jumped out for me were my History Teacher *Mr. Tony Young* and my Art Teacher *Ms. Caroline Wilkinson**. *Mr. Young* made History so fun. So fantastically real! His passion for the subject coupled with his individualised approach made his lessons so enjoyable; ones to look forward to. *Caroline's* style was again so individualised. She cared for you; as well she cared for the student in you; knowing her responsibility in her role. And that's what you were to her, her friend and her student. At 13 years old, in 1994, I embarked on a huge change of schooling. From the 'You're everybody's friend!' (even the Teachers') *Chinthurst Prep* to the 'You're a number' *Dulwich College* in South London. This was my first experience of the 'not so good' Teacher. My History Teacher. My God! How boring were his lessons? The French Revolution. I loved French. I loved History. And with one fell swoop with his teaching style of reading from a textbook** for a year, I dumped learning History at GCSE. I recall my Maths and Art Teachers at the age of 17. Maybe it was my adolescent attitude, but I recall they just **weren't** approachable. You couldn't relate to them. My Physics Teacher. He knew his stuff of course. But teaching skills, and an ability to control a group of 16 year old boys (at a leading school)? Not so. And then there was my Design & Technology Teacher 'Sorry I am late boys. I was having a coffee in the Staff Room'. No comment needed about him.

*My first crush as a 12 year old boy. She was lovely :>)

**With reference to *Tip 25 - Ditch the PowerPoint.*

Of course, *Dulwich* had some excellent Teachers. I recall my Spanish Teacher. He made his lessons so engaging, not only with his Expert teaching of the language*, but he was so funny and approachable.

Then my University days at the *European School of Osteopathy (ESO)* in Maidstone, Kent starting in the year 2000. I recall the Head of the School at the time, Professor *Renzo Molinari* (www.renzomolinari.com). His Biomechanics lectures were extremely stimulating and motivational for me to become an Expert like him. He also taught with such a lovely charm. Some didn't like his style. But you can't please everyone in life, can you? And if I am mentioning the ESO, I cannot leave out Professor *Peter Blagrove*; may God bless his soul. *Mr. Blagrove* had exceptional attention to detail and expected the best from you, always. You had such high respect for him, and he set the bar. With this he had authority, and you knew you had to follow his lead. He was approachable but at the same time, you knew you would be properly bollocked if you let your standards drop.



At *Osteopathic Solutions Ltd*, I have become a Teacher. Not only in its early days teaching people in best practice Manual Handling, but since the start (and still) teaching our Team the standards they need to reach. I set the bar like *Mr. Blagrove* did, with my (reasonable) demands to aim for the remarkable.

*Such a shame that (inhumane) country has bastardised what could be a nice sounding language.

There are so many articles and blogs on the internet that I could refer to for this *Tip*. However, from the qualities of the Remarkable Teachers I have encountered in my life, here are my 8 ‘must haves’ on your journey to becoming a Remarkable Teacher:

- Passion for your subject
- Individualised care for your Learners
- Attention to detail
- Authority & ability to control your Group
- Approachable
- A sense of humour
- An Expert knowledge in your subject
- An understanding of the responsibility of your role

One quality I could have added is *Confidence*. Away from this Business, if I was teaching people Sales Skills, from my experience I would be quietly confident in my demeanour. But if I was trying to teach, say Racing Driving, a subject I am not an Expert in, would I be confident? Not a chance. With this, my point is you have got to **KNOW YOUR STUFF!**

The Manual Handling Instructor

There are a variety of ways you can teach best practice Manual Handling. Of course, larger groups can cover* the Workforce in a short space of time. However smaller groups, say 5-6 attendees in a 2 Hour Practical Skills Course, I find is more effective at getting the message across. You know that ‘*imparting knowledge and instructing (someone) as to how to do something*’ sort of stuff. And don’t forget, you are walking across the factory floor or the warehouse floor or whatever type of floor you find yourself walking across, and you spot a colleague handling an inanimate load in a way that you know (as the Expert) will hurt them; and instead of leveraging business growth, they will damage business growth (remember the Legal Shark!). Don’t forget 1-2-1 or face to face teaching. These are the perfect opportunities to remind the colleague of why they need to change their habits and how.

*Whoops! Teach.

Teaching may not be for everybody. Standing in front of a group of people can be very daunting. I get that. But as you are becoming a Manual Handling Expert, you are starting to **KNOW YOUR STUFF**. Soon armed with that 'stuff', *Do a Branson, again!* and go impart your Expert knowledge on someone!

A lot of 'stuff' mentioned there! I hope after reading *Tip 22* you are thinking ...

'Stuff sitting in front of this computer! I'm gonna teach! And I'm gonna teach goooooood!***

*For those of you who like sitting at a computer, all the time, you might just enjoy teaching. It is part of the journey to become a Manual Handling Risk Management Expert.

**Interchange 'goooooood' with 'remarkably'.

Exercises

- Enrol on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) Course.
- Before you book your provider, remember some of my key points from *Tip 10 - Recognise Experts from the Jack of All Trades*.
- Also make sure you read *Tip 24 - You Get What You Pay for*.
- And last but not least attend an Accredited Manual Handling Instructor (Train the Trainer) Programme. You will find our Public *CPD Group Accredited Programme* at our Training Centres across the UK via www.osteopathicsolutions-manualhandling.co.uk/public-manualhandlinginstructor