PRINCIPLES OF THE 21ST CENTURY TEACHERS

by:
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Education is dynamic. It goes along changes in time. Thus, students in this fast-paced world ought to possess and exhibit 21st century skills. This entails that student of the millennium may not be called a 21st century learner if s/he does not possess the digital literacy, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, collaborative skills, and communication skills to name a few (Cox, n.d.). Transforming students to becoming genuine 21st century learners requires teachers to be 21st century teachers.

Likewise, Walsh (2013) brought into the attention of teacher-education institutions in the USA in the world through web commentaries that today’s teachers perform mediocre instruction as they themselves are not equipped with 21st century skills that must be observed by their students for guidance and imitation.

In the 15 Characteristics of a 21st Century Teacher published by Palmer (2015), it is suggested that teachers are more likely to become responsive to the needs of their students if they adopt some strategies and behavior of the modern teacher. Some of these are innovating; keeping a positive footprint, personalizing lessons, and promoting student-centered teaching.

However, no matter how techno-savvy or skilled a teacher is any of the areas mention above, a teacher cannot inspire and transform his/her students if s/he is not armed with key
principles that guide him/her along the way in performing the very crucial role in the field of education.

These tenets will not only work for us, teachers, but also effect amazing developments among our learners.

*Be guided by God in performing your profession.*

Being a teacher, life would be more directed and blessed if God is within us. Ask for the Lord’s guidance in everything we say. We would be empowered to do the best things in our profession if we will let God be the source of our strength and inspiration.

*Love your job.*

Always remember that it takes hard-work to make our profession favorable for us. Let us love our profession and be proud of it. Work becomes sheer joy when we love what we do and when we perform it with pride, dignity, and honesty. Bear in mind that teaching is a vocation and what we invest in it is what we also reap. If we sow love, we reap love.

*Teach with quality.*
Mediocrity has no place in teaching. Always carry the flag of quality in the teaching profession. If we want to yield good results we have to plan, prepare, teach, evaluate, guide, and follow up with quality. Quality is a catalyst that makes a big difference between the youth.

Work for the benefit of our students.

Teaching is more of a profession than an occupation. It exalts service over personal gain. We have to think of the welfare of the learners and prepare them for the future by educating them to the fullest and by helping them to become productive. Let us keep ourselves abreast with the latest trends in teaching. As a teacher of the 21st century, we need to update ourselves with the latest pedagogical strategies, interventions and breakthroughs in the teaching field. Let us not embark into conventional ones, let us instead, follow the most relevant and related methods in teaching.

Be morally upright.

Always stay good and do what is good. This is one principle which keeps us an upright or righteous people. A teacher who is moral and decent in living a life will be much respected and admired by the community. Lest we forget, intelligence without virtue leads us to oblivion. At the time when technology, fame and money become more valuable than chastity, principles, honor and dignity, a morally upright teacher must lead and influence his/her students.

Walk the talk; involve stakeholders.
Be a living example of what we say. Be able to do what we mean for people will follow us, we abide by the rules we have set. Let us reach out to our community and other stakeholders to make them informed of our daily school undertakings. They would love if we give them importance and consult them on significant matters of concern. Positive changes will arise and prevail if we do not settle on our laurels and do lip service.

*Follow the superior’s good intention.*

Be an epitome of obedience and kindness. The 21st century teacher should set a good example of what a benevolent teacher is. This does not mean that we should blindly follow our superiors, but rather collaborate with them, communicate with them and be a part of the change we want to see.

These are the timeless principles a 21st century teacher ought to follow and live up to. These will be beneficial to all of us, teachers, as we perform our duties and responsibilities in the academia. These principles bring together core elements for learning in the 21st century. They encompass the notion of learning that involves knowledge, competence, attitudes and not just narrow technical skills. With all these principles as our shield and sword, we will emerge victorious in our battle for education.
References:

