SHOULD I CONSIDER MYSELF A 21ST CENTURY TEACHER?

by:

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The world is changing! Everything in this world has changed already. Recent technological advances have evolved rapidly brought by the existence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution where Artificial Intelligence, Robotics have already introduced. These changes have clear impacts to the educational system. The term now is “21st Century Education”. In order to prepare our learners for this new world of education, we need to upgrade the way we educate them. The system that we used before must be changed to create a curriculum that will help the learners connect with the world and understand the issues that our world faces. Moreover, in order to realize the primary goal of the 21st Century Education, there is a need for the 21st Century teachers to produce 21st Century learners who are ready to compete globally and be productive citizens of the country.

Teaching in the 21st century is truly a challenge, teachers and administrators need to uplift and maintain the learners’ interests in the material by showing how this knowledge applies in the real world. Likewise, they must also try to increase their learners’ curiosity, which will help them become lifelong learners. Furthermore, they should be flexible with how they teach and give learners the resources to continue learning outside of school.

It is not an overnight process to be a 21st century teacher in order to produce 21st century learners and promote lifelong learnings. This may require ample time to develop oneself to be one of the so called 21st century teachers. The question is, what are the
indicators to distinguish the 21st century teachers? What must be the characteristics to possess to be considered a 21st century teacher in this modern era?

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY TEACHERS

1. 21st century teacher is Learner-Centered:

   With the presence of technologies and other media, learners of today’s generation have many accesses to learn on their own. This means that teachers of today’s generation must serve as the facilitators of learnings. Spoon feeding approach is no longer applicable to produce lifelong learners. Learners have the capabilities to explore and learn the lessons in a more meaningful way. The 21st century teachers must be creative and resourceful to think of ways on how to develop 21st century learners using a learner-centered approach.

2. 21st century teacher molds learners as producers of learnings:

   Learners nowadays were called digital natives. Most of them were advanced in terms of manipulating gadgets like cellphones, laptops, computers and other advanced technologies. Sometimes, they are more knowledgeable in using gadgets. These technologies can be the instruments to apply what they have learned in school in a more advanced way to allow others to learn as well. With proper guidance and instructions, learners may apply what they have learned using infographics, blogs, videos and the like and share it using the social media. The 21st century teachers may develop their learners to bring out their full potentials using these media. In this way, they can also produce learners who are also producers of learnings.

3. 21st century teacher is technologically advanced:

   21st century teachers must be at least one step advanced to their learners when it comes to the utilization and application of technologies in teaching. We are now living in a digital world where technologies are no longer new to the digital native learners. Most
of the times, the application of ICT-Based Instructions in teaching became a barrier because of the teacher’s insufficient knowledge on the use of technologies specially in teaching the lessons with ICT integration. We can upgrade ourselves in so many ways. Wide readings, attending seminars and trainings, video surfing could help us improve ourselves to be technologically advanced.

4. 21st century teacher is globally competitive:

One of the goals of the new curriculum, or the K to 12 program of the Department of Education is to mold the learners to be globally competitive individuals. But in order to realize this goal, teachers must be the first to be taught to be globally competitive so that they can teach their learners the same way. Moreover, teachers who really think globally will prepare the young learners to be dynamic citizens of the world. Furthermore, teachers must also be innovative to be globally competitive. Though it is not an easy task for a teacher to make some innovations and make some innovative teachings, proper mind setting and creativity could help them to be one.

5. 21st century teacher is innovative:

Teachers must also be innovative to be globally competitive. Though it is not an easy task for a teacher to make some innovations and make some innovative teachings, proper mind setting and creativity could help them to be one. Teaching beyond our comfort zone could help us to be innovative. Think of new ways to educate our learners.

6. 21st century teacher promotes creative output-based learnings:

Teachers of today’s generation must also encourage their students to create relevant activities that promote higher order thinking skills to be more competitive. Although there are some activities or suggested projects that are already written in the textbooks and teachers’ manual, teachers may also create some modifications to expose
the learners into more competitive learning outcomes like making simple research, infographics, creative learning blogs and the like.

7. 21st century teacher builds positive digital image:

Teaching in a digital world could help teachers achieve the real goals of promoting 21st century education. Technologies have contributed a lot to improve the way teachers teach nowadays. But as we all perceived, the use of modern technologies nowadays became an issue to many especially to the young generations. As teachers, we should be role models to our pupils on how to be responsible in using technologies and how to apply the learnings using technologies in a more meaningful way. We must create positive digital footprints to our learners so that they have guides on how to value the existence of modern technologies and make themselves more productive using these means.

8. 21st century teacher never stops learning:

As new tools and new technologies keep emerging, learning and adapting is essential. Never stop learning new things by studying either individual or collaborative, attending trainings and seminars, benchmarking and the like to keep ourselves knowledgeable about the latest trends on the use of advance technologies in teachings. Everyday we must learn, unlearn, and relearn.

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