

# POWER UP WEEKLY

WELCOME TO THE FIRST POWER-UP NEWSLETTER OF 2018. WE HOPE THAT YOU HAVE ENJOYED THE BREAK AND ARE READY TO START A BUSY NEW YEAR. WE CONTINUE WITH INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES FOR FOSTERING HOPE AND DEVELOPING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALICE B. RODRIQUEZ, DAVENPORT SCHOOL OF THE ARTS AND AMANDA POPE, WINSTON ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING WINNERS OF 2018 THE CALENDAR BUNDLES. TAKE TIME TO ANSWER THIS WEEK'S QUESTION TO WIN A 2018 CALENDAR BUNDLE.

THE OFFICE OF ACCELERATION & INNOVATION

## JENSEN'S 10 MOST EFFECTIVE TIPS FOR USING BRAIN-BASED TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THE VALUE OF TEACHING CONTENT IN EVEN SMALLER CHUNK SIZES. WHY? THE OLD THINKING WAS THAT STUDENTS COULD HOLD SEVEN PLUS OR MINUS CHUNKS IN THE HEAD AS CAPACITY FOR WORKING MEMORY. BUT THAT SCIENCE IS OUTDATED. THE NEW RESEARCH SAYS TWO TO FOUR CHUNKS ARE MORE REALISTIC. IN ADDITION TO THIS SHORTER CAPACITY FOR WORKING MEMORY, OUR MID TERM "HOLDING TANK" FOR CONTENT, THE HIPPOCAMPUS, HAS A LIMITATION ON HOW MUCH IT CAN HOLD. IT IS OVERLOADED QUICKLY, BASED PARTLY ON LEARNER BACKGROUND AND SUBJECT COMPLEXITY. THERE ARE OTHER REASONS OUR STUDENTS GET OVERLOADED QUICKLY WITH CONTENT. LEARNING AND MEMORY CONSUME PHYSICAL RESOURCES SUCH AS GLUCOSE AND OUR BRAIN USES THIS QUICKLY WITH MORE INTENSE LEARNING.



**PRACTICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION:** TEACHERS SHOULD TEACH IN SMALL CHUNKS, PROCESS THE LEARNING, AND THEN REST THE BRAIN. TOO MUCH CONTENT TAUGHT IN TOO SMALL OF A TIME SPAN MEANS THE BRAIN CANNOT PROCESS IT, SO WE SIMPLY DON'T LEARN IT. BREAKS, RECESS AND DOWNTIME MAKE MORE SENSE THAN CONTENT, CONTENT AND MORE CONTENT. HERE'S THE GUIDELINE: THE LESS BACKGROUND THE LEARNER HAS AND THE GREATER THE COMPLEXITY OF THE CONTENT, MAKE THE TIME CHUNK OF CONTENT SHORTER (USE 4-8 MINUTES). THE GREATER THE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE, THE LESS THE COMPLEXITY, THE LONGER YOU CAN MAKE THE "INPUT"

## FOSTERING HOPE IN THE CLASSROOM

### RESEARCH-BASED GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING SKILLS OF HOPE

FOR EDUCATORS WHO WANT TO HELP THEIR STUDENTS BUILD THESE SKILLS OF HOPE, HERE ARE THREE OF THE FIVE RESEARCH-BASED GUIDELINES.

1) **IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE THEIR TOP GOALS, FROM MACRO TO MICRO.** START BY HAVING STUDENTS CREATE A "BIG PICTURE" LIST OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM-SUCH AS THEIR ACADEMICS, FRIENDS, FAMILY, SPORTS, OR CAREER-AND THEN HAVE THEM REFLECT ON WHICH AREAS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO THEM AND HOW SATISFIED THEY ARE WITH EACH. KEEP IN MIND THAT THE GOALS **MUST BE WHAT THE STUDENTS WANT, NOT WHAT THEIR PARENTS OR SCHOOLS WANT.** OTHERWISE, AS **STUDIES** SUGGEST, THEY WILL QUICKLY LOSE THEIR INTEREST AND/OR MOTIVATION, ESPECIALLY AS THEY COME UP AGAINST OBSTACLES.

**NEXT, USING THIS LIST, TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO CREATE GOALS THAT ARE BOTH SPECIFIC AND TAKE A POSITIVE, SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED APPROACH.** THEIR GOALS NEED TO FOCUS ON ACCOMPLISHING SOMETHING IN THE FUTURE RATHER THAN AVOIDING SOMETHING NOW-FOR INSTANCE, "I WANT TO PLAY ON THE BASKETBALL TEAM" IS A MORE EFFECTIVE, MOTIVATING GOAL THAN "I WILL STOP DRINKING SODA." **FINALLY, STUDENTS SHOULD RANK THEIR GOALS IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE.** **RESEARCHERS** HAVE FOUND THAT THIS IS PARTICULARLY VITAL FOR STUDENTS WITH LITTLE HOPE, AS THEY OFTEN ATTEMPT ANY GOAL THAT COMES TO MIND, WHICH DISTRACTS THEIR FOCUS AND ENERGY FROM THE GOALS THAT CAN HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON THEIR OVERALL WELL-BEING.

2) **BREAKDOWN THE GOALS-ESPECIALLY LONG-TERM ONES-INTO STEPS.** **RESEARCH** HAS SUGGESTED THAT STUDENTS WITH LOW HOPE FREQUENTLY THINK GOALS HAVE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED ALL-AT-ONCE, POSSIBLY BECAUSE THEY HAVEN'T HAD THE PARENTAL GUIDANCE ON HOW TO ACHIEVE GOALS IN STEPS. **TEACHING THEM HOW TO SEE THEIR GOALS AS A SERIES OF STEPS WILL ALSO GIVE STUDENTS REASONS TO CELEBRATE THEIR SUCCESSES ALONG THE WAY-A GREAT WAY TO KEEP MOTIVATION HIGH!**

3) **TEACH STUDENTS THAT THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO REACH A GOAL.** **STUDIES** SHOW THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES FOR STUDENTS WITH LOW HOPE IS THEIR INABILITY TO MOVE PAST OBSTACLES. THEY OFTEN LACK KEY PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS, CAUSING THEM TO ABANDON THE QUEST FOR THEIR GOALS. **SO TEACHING THEM TO VISUALIZE DIFFERENT PATHS TO THEIR GOALS WILL HELP THEM GET BEYOND INSURMOUNTABLE BARRIERS. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, TEACHERS NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT STUDENTS DON'T EQUATE THOSE BARRIERS WITH A LACK OF TALENT; INSTEAD, THEY NEED TO BE REMINDED THAT EVERYONE FACES OBSTACLES. SUCCESS USUALLY REQUIRES CREATIVE WAYS TO OVERCOME THESE OBSTACLES, NOT AVOIDING THEM ALTOGETHER.**

### Turn it Around Positive Attitudes Activity:

As your students may have discovered as they answered the questions in the Attitude Inventory, how they look at or react to things can make a big difference in their overall attitude.

If they're blaming other people for their problems, it's going to be harder to have a good attitude about things. This activity is designed to help them learn some self-talk skills so they can reframe things with a positive attitude.

1. Give your students a piece of paper and ask them to fold it into thirds. Ask the students to write three of the following headings on the front side of the paper and three on the back side of the paper: *School, Friends, Family, Home, Self-Image, and Activities.*

2. Now ask the students to think about any problems they are having in any of these areas. Once they have an idea, have him/her list it in the correct column as an actionable question. (For example, "How can I get along better with my brother?" as opposed to "My brother keeps bugging me.")

3. Once the students have listed the problems that affect their attitude, ask them to reframe them (or turn their attitude around) by asking themselves:  
How do I feel about this? Do I enjoy having this problem or do I want to solve it? Have I been blaming other people for this problem? What will happen in the short-term if I don't solve this problem? What about the long-term? What little things can I do to work toward solving this problem? How do I have to change my attitude to solve the problem? What will happen once this problem is resolved?

### Teacher Success Story

A positive attitude is a choice that we all have to make daily. With the growing amount of work, lessons, grants, ideas, repairs, and meetings/planning, there is no time to tell all those little faces about the stress that we are experiencing and furthermore, no need. There is just a demonstration of how we act and react to our circumstances. Students feed off of our attitudes and can either suffer or thrive from how we react to daily situations. As a specialist teacher, I can make or break a student in the 45 minute period that they have for STEM. I would rather have them leave excited to return the next week to STEM than dreading their next experience with a cranky and ill-tempered Mrs. Pope. I feel that recognizing that it is not about MY experience at school/work that is important and further about how I react to daily with a positive attitude that will ultimately affect my STUDENTS' experience.

Amanda E. Pope, Winston Academy of Engineering

**YOUR CHANCE TO WIN! SEND AN EMAIL TO: [OAI@polk-fl.net](mailto:OAI@polk-fl.net)**

**PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:**

**WHAT STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING TO PROMPT A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?**