

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE
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Background

I come from a family with a business background so business was something that I naturally went into when I completed my degree. However, through my ad-hoc teaching assignments and community work, I found it more fulfilling to share knowledge with others and make a difference in their lives. Hence, I decided to make a mid-career switch and applied to teach. This is one of the best decisions that I have made – I derive great satisfaction in my work as I am able to influence and impact young lives.

Teaching & Learning Philosophy

In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., “Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.” As an educator, I equip my students with knowledge and skills so that they can excel and be competent in this fast changing world. I also believe in developing my students to be discerning, and to have a strong moral compass. I try to achieve all these through the effective use of curriculum time and informal interactions with students. I build strong rapport with my students as this contributes to their success in learning. I develop them to be intrinsically motivated and to have positive self-esteem, as I endeavour to deepen their knowledge in the subject matter.

As life is a learning journey, mistakes and failures are part of it and students need to be able to learn them and move forward. My own classroom ethos is reflected in the words of Samuel Smiles, “He who has never made a mistake, has never made a discovery.” As such, making mistakes is a crucial part of the learning process. Personally, I feel that it is important for students to feel confident to try even if they may not always get things right. It is how we as educators capitalise on the learning from each mistake that develops our students.

In relation to this, I also feel the strong need to inculcate resilience in the next generation. Resilience is a set of attributes that provides people with the strength and fortitude to confront the overwhelming obstacles they are bound to face in life. Instead of sidestepping the challenge, we should teach students to cope positively, to learn and grow from adversity.

Modelling Life-Long Learning

I am a teacher, and also a learner. Professional development is required for any teacher who seeks continuous growth and self-improvement. I facilitate my own learning process and welcome any opportunity to upgrade my knowledge and skills in the areas of content and pedagogy. As a reflective practitioner, I constantly evaluate and improve on my instructional practice and the programmes that I oversee, taking into consideration feedback and suggestions from my peers as well.

Reflection

As teachers, we face many challenges. Our challenges range from teaching the subject matter, managing students and their parents, keeping up with administrative matters and juggling many other responsibilities. As a retired Vice Principal, Mr Chris Gomez, once told me, “Don’t carry the burden of a problem you face as a teacher on your shoulder. Instead, put it down, step on it and use it as a stepping stone to move ahead.” Together, let us encourage one another as we continue to invest in our future generation.