

Good Reasons to Teach

The teaching profession is a unique career field in a lot of ways. Because you are taking on the challenge of educating children or teenagers, along way you will become very much a part of their society with all the positive and negatives that go with that. Its for that reason that before you make even the first step toward making teaching your career, its good to examine your motivations to make sure you have good reasons to teach.

The downsides of teaching are well known. Teaching historically does not pay well, particularly if you teach at the public school level. You can find niche situations that pay well like working for a wealthy private school, tutoring or working for a "for profit" teaching operation. But by and large, you don't go into teaching for the money.

That said it is also true that if you are a good teacher and your resume is strong, you can expect strong job security. There is always a need for good teachers. Unlike going into business, you do not have to make your employer profitable to be a success teaching. You are judged in lives and in the results of your teaching that is evidenced in the grades and strong academics of your students. If you can learn to teach young minds and bring them wisdom and knowledge, you will have a job for life.

Many people go into teaching because they love the academic environment. For those who grieved the closing of each school year and who never wanted to leave high school and then college, teaching lets you take up residence in that part of society that fits your personality so well. To those who have no idea how the calling to teach works, this seems insane because for many getting out of school a stronger motivation than continuing on in the academic world. So if you have an affinity for the social setting of a school system and the idea of taking up residence in a culture that the pursuit of knowledge is, at least in theory, the primary goal of the institution, teaching is for you.

Another motivation many have for going into teaching is love of your subject matter. If you have always been passionate about math, history, philosophy, art or physical education, one way to feel fulfillment of your passion is to pass along not only your knowledge about your field of expertise but your passion as well. This is particularly true of a field of study where there is no direct corollary in the business world such as history or philosophy. By making a career in academics teaching the field of knowledge you love and excel at, you keep the legitimacy of that area of knowledge alive by passing it along to the next generation.

If the core reason you love to teach is the love of your subject matter, you do

have to be a realist especially if you find yourself teaching in the public schools. Don't go into a classroom of 30 high schoolers and expect every one of them to be come a zealot about your field of expertise as you are. Yes, from time to time you will light a fire under a kindred spirit and see the light come on about the love of your subject area. That experience alone can make the sacrifices of teaching worth it. But be reconciled that if all you do is at least hold the attention of the students and broaden their knowledge and appreciation of your field of knowledge, for many that is all you can expect. But you are still an educator and you have done a good thing at even that very basic level.

Teaching is a calling no matter what your core reasons to teach is. A true teacher does not go into the field for the money or for a glamorous or exciting career. The excitement of teaching is seeing young minds come alive in class and to take youth people one step further along their path to becoming truly educated individuals. And if that is your passion and what gets you out of bed each morning to go to that school and deal with the negatives of a teaching day, then you have found the right reasons to teach which means you will be successful, well liked and remembered by your students as a great teacher.

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