

Commonly Used Counterproductive Approaches

1. ALIENATING
Every salesperson knows **not to alienate**, but adults too often talk to young people in ways that prompt negative feelings. Negative feelings stop any **DESIRE** to do what the adult would like young people to do. **People do good when they feel good**, not when they feel bad or when they feel coerced.

2. CREATING NEGATIVES
The brain thinks in images, not in words. When people tell others what **NOT** to do, what follows the "don't" is what the brain images. **Always communicate in positive terms of what you DO want.** "Don't run in the hall" becomes "We walk in our hallways."

3. RELYING ON RULES
Rules are meant to control, not to inspire. Rules are necessary in games, but between people rules create adversarial relationships because they create an enforcement mentality. A more effective approach is to refer to *responsibilities*.

4. AIMING AT OBEDIENCE
Obedience does **NOT** create desire. A more effective approach is to *promote responsibility*. Obedience then follows as a natural by-product.

5. BEING REACTIVE
Rather than reacting to inappropriate behavior, it is far more effective and less stressful to employ a *proactive* approach so young people *want* to behave responsibly. The *Raise Responsibility System* specifically shows how to do it.

6. CONFUSING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT WITH DISCIPLINE
Management is the **adult's responsibility** and has to do with teaching, practicing, and reinforcing procedures. **Discipline** has to do with impulse control and behavior and is the **young person's responsibility**. *Having clarity* between the two prevents problems.

7. ASSUMING
Adults too often **assume** young people know **how** to do what is expected of them *without first teaching how to accomplish the task*. A more effective approach is (a) teach the "how," (b) practice, and (c) reinforce neural connections by practicing again. In this way, when young people are on their own, they will *already have a procedure to follow*.

8. USING COERCION
Although adults can *control* young people temporarily, no one can actually *change* another person. **People change themselves**. Coercion—in the form of bribes, threats, and punishments—are the **least effective** approach for long-term behavior change. *NOTE: Noncoercion is not to be confused with permissiveness or not using authority.*

9. ANNOUNCING CONSEQUENCES
Announcing consequences for irresponsible behavior **BEFORE** they occur **infers that young people will misbehave**. This is a **NEGATIVE APPROACH**. Besides, **not knowing is far more effective in handling irresponsible behavior**. Whispering in the ear of a misbehaving young person, "Don't worry about what will happen; we'll talk about it later," immediately redirects attention, stops the misbehavior, and takes no time away from the activity.

10. NOT BEING CONSISTENT OR FAIR BY IMPOSING, RATHER THAN BY ELICITING
Consistency and fairness are important. However, **imposing the same consequence** on all involved **is the least fair approach**. For example, if one sibling or student is continually bullying another, is **imposing** the same consequence on both fair? Also, when a consequence is **imposed**—be it called *logical* or *natural*—young people are **deprived of ownership** in the decision that affects them.

A more effective and fairer approach is to **ELICIT a consequence or a procedure** that will help *redirect impulses*. **This is easily accomplished by asking young people if they would rather be treated as individuals or as a group**. They will prefer to be treated as *individuals* and have ownership in the decision. **Using the procedure of ELICITING** satisfies the consistency requirement, is in each person's best interest, and is fairer than imposing the same consequence on all parties.

11. RELYING ON EXTERNAL APPROACHES
We want to assist young people to be self-disciplined and responsible. **Both traits require internal motivation**, but rewarding appropriate behavior and imposing punishments are **external** approaches. They place the responsibility on someone else to instigate a change and, thereby, fail the critical test: **How effective are they when no one is around?** In addition, by rewarding kids with something they value (candy, stickers, prizes), we simply **reinforce their childish values**—when what we really should do is to teach them values that will last a lifetime.

12. RELYING PRIMARILY ON PROGRAMS
Every few years a new **program is introduced** that becomes the **silver bullet** for "fixing" schools. For example, *open classrooms* were the cure-all. *Large group lectures, small group discussions, and independent study* were the "fix" for high schools. *Teaching by Objectives* was the rage. Where are these programs now?

A current fashion is *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS or PBS)*, based on the old *Skinnerian erroneous premise* that rewarding desired behavior **externally** is the most effective way to reinforce the behavior. PBIS is an outgrowth of working with special needs students where something tangible is used for reinforcement. But when a youngster has done what was expected and anticipates receiving the reward—*but doesn't*—the youngster is **"punished by rewards."** Most significantly, **behaviorism neglects any mental processes**. Its entire approach is **EXTERNAL**. Yet all behavior and learning require **motivation**—something that by its very nature is an **INTERNAL** characteristic.

Both successful parenting and successful teaching rest with **PEOPLE, rather than with programs**. Two reasons for the success of *Discipline Without Stress* and *Parenting Without Stress* are that **they build people skills** and are **TOTALLY NONCOERCIVE** (although not permissive).

To learn more effective approaches, see ***WithoutStress.com***.

