

---

# Foreword

The interesting thing about successful teachers is that they never stop learning. I said that five years ago in my foreword to the first edition of *What Successful Teachers Do*. Perhaps that original statement is more relevant and more important today than it was then, because we are leaving too many of our kids behind today. In fact, many of the original predictions have become validated by the publication of this update. This new edition will help teachers teach the kids of today and tomorrow.

The new revised book has some of the best strategies from the first book, along with many new strategies based on the latest educational research.

More and more states are struggling with teacher retention problems, and this book may serve as a helpful resource for teacher induction programs to assist new teachers on their journey toward classroom effectiveness. Veteran teachers will also find new strategies to kick-start their classrooms.

This book, by Neal Glasgow and Cathy Hicks, both veteran and master teachers, makes it easy to keep on learning. The format reads like a well-thought-out lesson plan. The Strategy, Research, Classroom Applications, Precautions and Possible Pitfalls, and Sources provide the teacher with the confidence needed to apply the Strategy in tomorrow's lesson. It offers solid research to develop real strategies in a brain-based, learning-friendly way.

After teaching for more than 30 years, I am still constantly striving to be a better teacher. However, I prefer to work smarter, not harder. This book cuts to the chase. The nine chapters arrange the Strategies in categories which are useful for both beginning and seasoned teachers.

When I first looked at the book, I was instantly hooked. Since my life has been a search to become a more effective teacher, I was pulled in by the title, *What Successful Teachers Do*. After 30 years of teaching, however, I have learned to be wary of books that carry messages such as "believe and you can achieve." I want proven methods and materials, not feel-good promises. This book delivers with 101 research-based classroom strategies for teachers in the real world.

The Strategies cover a wide spectrum of important topics for investigation for successful teachers, from working with students, colleagues, and families to managing classroom, curriculum, assessment, teaching style, and self.

Perhaps most important to me is that the authors have written with the underlying belief that students don't care what you teach if you don't teach that you care. Strategies deal with test anxiety and the use of humor to help put students at ease, to gain attention, and to let students know that the teacher is indeed an empathetic, caring human being. Successful teachers take time to talk to and listen to their students.

Strategies that encourage peer coaching are invaluable. I am amazed that even today, as I travel the world providing teacher training, many teachers do not realize the wealth of knowledge and experience in their own buildings. Teachers do not need to suffer in the silence of isolation. They need to talk, share, and grow with their colleagues. A worthwhile caveat is to surround oneself with mentors who are positive and to avoid the teacher who is negative.

This book addresses the timely issues of technology, diversity, students with special needs, and professionalism, which are paramount for today's educators. It helps a teacher deal with integrating technology and diversity in the classroom. It offers time-saving classroom management skills as well as suggestions on how teacher support Web sites can help you avoid inventing the wheel with existing classroom methods and materials. And the ideas on becoming a professional, like dress for success and join professional organizations, are priceless because many teachers find out about these secrets only after years of experience.

The authors also explore an important area that needs more attention for both students and teachers. It seems as if almost everyone involved with education today is stressing proficiency and standards testing. These are important concerns, but what about reality testing? Do you know about youth culture and how it relates to student health, to school safety, and to learning? Is your classroom youth-culture friendly? And what about you as a teacher? Are you eating a well-balanced diet, getting a good night's sleep, and exercising? Teaching is a stressful occupation. Teachers need to keep themselves safe and healthy because safe and healthy teachers do make better teachers and teach more effectively.

An intriguing thing about these Strategies is that their effectiveness may vary from teacher to teacher, class to class, school to school, and year to year. But becoming a successful teacher is not a destination; it is a never-ending, wonderful journey. And successful teachers continually reflect on their classroom experiences along the way.

No matter where you are in your teaching career, this book will take you places you have been, will be, and wish to be. In fact, I have found some strategies that I can't wait to try!

Dr. Stephen Sroka  
[www.DrStephenSroka.com](http://www.DrStephenSroka.com)