

Preface

Welcome to all teachers, from preservice to veteran educators.

I'm excited to offer you this second edition of *Rethinking Classroom Management*, which attempts to differentiate instruction and offer you an opportunity to personalize your learning needs as you become a classroom leader rather than a classroom manager.

This book continues to present an interactive process that invites you to rethink your classroom management practices; in addition, it includes some updated research and stories, as well as some additional strategies to build a sense of community in your classroom. Every chapter begins with some essential questions that you will be able to answer at the end of the chapter. Addressing these questions allows you to assess your needs before the teaching and to skip ahead if you already know the answers. It is my hope that introducing each chapter this way will not only model good teaching but also provide you with a way to customize your learning. The essential questions are followed by an authentic classroom scenario so that you can create a personal connection between the text and your experiences as a student and teacher.

Rethinking Classroom Management is a work in progress that is always changing. Deborah Meier, in her book *The Power of Their Ideas*, identifies four characteristics of exemplary teachers. One of them is that we are always learning. This book reflects my learning as a teacher over the past five years. It has evolved from a behavior management workbook, to a self-esteem workbook, to a classroom management workbook, and most recently to a classroom leadership workbook. This edition continues to offer new ways of rethinking old paradigms.

I have been using this book with student teachers in classroom settings, as well as with many veteran teachers in their classrooms for the past five years. I have noticed some shifts in what teachers and students need relative to social skills, with so many students coming to school with unmet needs. Thus, I have updated the quotes that begin each chapter and made some practical changes to support your use of the strategies. For example, students seem to need more time to connect to each other and to their teacher; with this in mind, I added personal activity time to Chapter 3: Personal Relationships for Trust. I hope you will find the suggestions of using curriculum games and activities to provide structured opportunities for students to build connections without competition helpful. Likewise, students today seem to need more support with building social skills to be

successful learners. I placed “target talk” in Chapter 4: Prerequisites for Success, as it connects this feedback skill to supporting students in developing and using appropriate social skills.

Rethinking Classroom Management is still a teacher-driven, integrative framework of research-based strategies that will invite responsibility, resourcefulness, and cooperative and mutual respect on the part of both teachers and students. Successful teachers have used the strategies presented here for years. They were formally documented and labeled after observing and annotating what excellent teachers do when orchestrating instruction. Unlike other professions, teaching has a minimum amount of agreed-upon professional language to describe what is done in the classroom. Physicians from around the world can talk to each other about a patient and use the same terms. Lawyers can communicate from one continent to another using common language. This book seeks to provide teachers with the same ability to share successes and be consciously competent about their leadership skills.

The strategies in *Rethinking Classroom Management* will provide you with initiative and increased flexibility in being congruent with your beliefs, and it will provide the research about students and teachers needs for successful experiences in the classroom. The framework and techniques presented come from real-life classrooms, both my own and those of the teachers and student teachers I’ve worked with for the past 40 years. The richness of this content developed as I learned more and more about how effective teachers use their leadership skills to create classrooms where students are invited to be self-managing. Teachers who model and teach the students these strategies are able to accommodate individual and cultural differences and create a climate for learning academic and social skills.

During my own process as a teacher, I evolved through rethinking my own classroom management and made my last years in the classroom the richest and best. I experienced a shift in students toward intrinsic motivation and a lessening of my own need to “control” as a benevolent dictator. These changes created a more peaceful and positive environment for both the students and myself. As my stress level decreased, I shared leadership in the classroom. My hope is that you can learn and use these same strategies sooner rather than later and make your first years as enjoyable and reflective as your last.

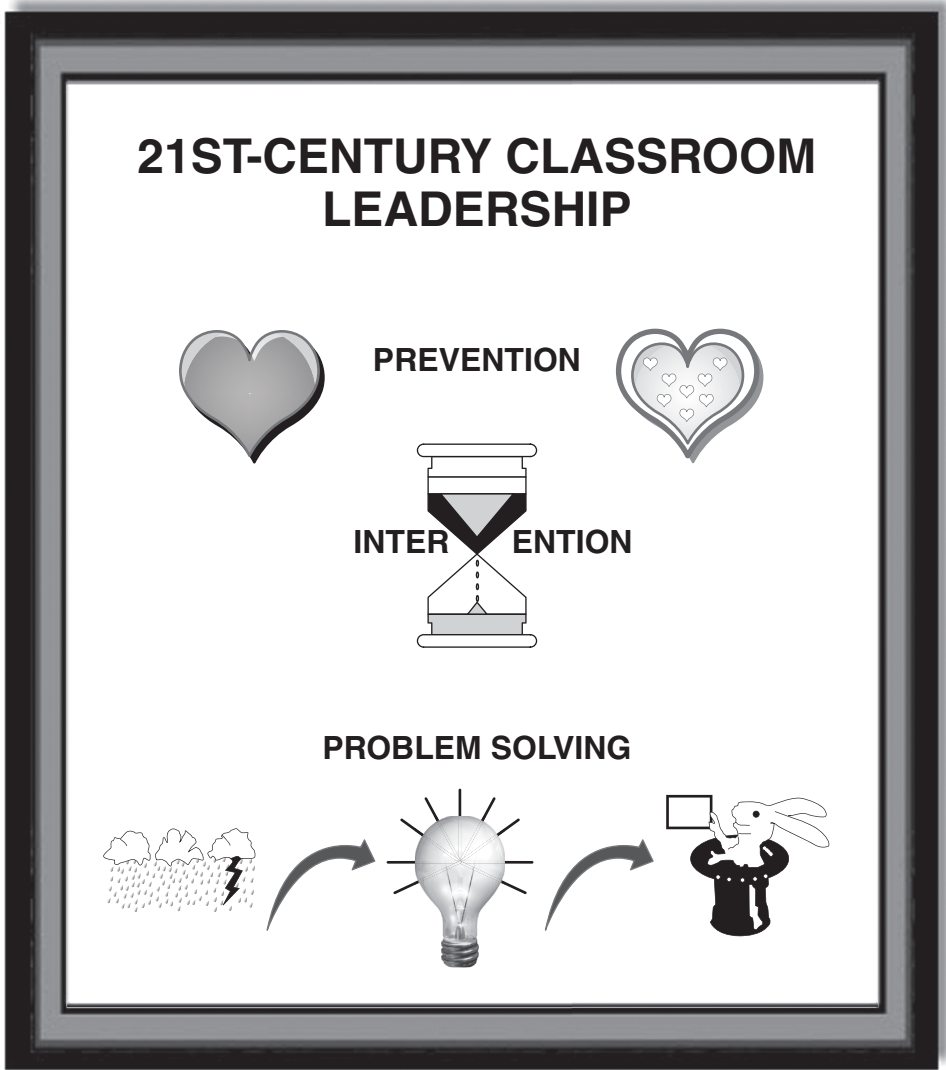
■ OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Rethinking Classroom Management begins with Part I: Rethinking Our Role in the Classroom. Here you are empowered and encouraged to take the time to shift your thinking and discover your beliefs and values as an educator. The leadership framework is built upon this shift and provides a structure for *Rethinking Classroom Management*.

Parts II and III present three sets of strategies: prevention, intervention, and problem solving (Figure 0.1). Part II focuses on prevention strategies, since we all know that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” These strategies are at the heart of classroom management and provide the foundation for you to be an effective and influential leader in

your classroom. In 80 to 85 percent of your interactions with any group you are leading, whether in the classroom or in any other setting, these prevention strategies will foster student and teacher success. By the end of Part II, you will be able to build the relationships that are the foundation for cooperation and establish a positive classroom climate using more than 10 prevention strategies. These strategies are designed to create a caring community of learners, inviting students to become citizens rather than tourists in your classroom.

Figure 0.1 Three Sets of Teaching Strategies for Leadership



Part III addresses temporary intervention techniques (Chapter 7) and solution-focused problem-solving strategies (Chapter 8). Temporary interventions are for use when learning ceases and a classroom upset has caused the brains of both teachers and students to “downshift” into unclear thinking. You will find here a clear differentiation between discipline and punishment and a clarification of the leader’s role in teaching

and modeling respectful behavior that honors others' needs. These interventions, in addition to the prevention strategies addressed earlier, will eliminate the most common disruptive student behaviors seen classrooms. As preventions increase, the goal is to have interventions constitute less than 3 to 5 percent of your leadership interactions in the classroom. By the end of Chapter 7, you will be able to manage classroom disruptions in ways that are congruent with your beliefs about mutual respect. You will be able to apply the "principles of positive intervention" that are embedded in all of the techniques presented to shape students toward more appropriate behaviors.

Chapter 8 explores problem-solving strategies for solving repetitive problems. Here you'll also learn how to find solution-focused outcomes using a "no-blame" model in which one thinks about "the problem as the problem" rather than "the person as the problem." The remaining 5 to 15 percent of classroom problems will require problem solving, which is an ongoing process for any group leader and requires continual rethinking. By the end of this chapter, you will be able to use solution-focused problem-solving strategies with individual students and with groups. These strategies will invite them to take responsibility and to become involved in creating constructive solutions that are "win-win" for everyone in the group.



Essential Questions for Classroom Leadership: What will you learn?

These are the questions you should be able to answer after studying this book. The most relevant corresponding chapters are listed as well.

1. Why are leadership and the three dimensions of the leadership framework important? (Chapter 1)
2. What role will my beliefs and the research have in my success in the classroom? (Chapter 2)
3. What are the four *Ps* of prevention in the classroom? (Chapter 3)
4. How are the principles of intervention focused on discipline rather than on punishment? (Chapter 7)
5. How do the principles of problem solving support a solution-focused approach to student responsibility and success? (Chapter 8)

THE FRAMEWORK APPROACH TO CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Jeanne Horan Herrick developed the original concept of a framework approach to classroom management in 1980 as part of a model staff development plan in Milpitas School District. I have adapted, expanded, and revised this original work on the basis of the latest research of Ruth Chaney, Steven Covey, Howard Gardner, Leslie Hart, Eric Jensen, Fred Jones, Vernon and Louise Jones, Rachel Kessler, Alfie Kohn, Larry Lowery,

Robert Marzano, Allen Mendler, Linda Metcalf, Parker Palmer, Frank Smith, Marilyn Watson, and Rick Wormeli. Strategies from these other classroom management models were chosen and placed in the framework on the basis of their congruence with the values and beliefs and research of effective leadership, which puts relationships and mutual respect at the heart of such leadership.

In addition, I have relied on the experience of thousands of professional teachers who have practiced and used these strategies successfully. For the past 40 years, these strategies have been shared with thousands of teachers, new as well as seasoned. As I have coached teachers in their classrooms, strategies were adapted and new ones added. I pass on to you what I've learned as I've worked with student teachers and the many veteran teachers I've seen applying the strategies from this book in hundreds of unique situations.

The following invocation guided my writing of this book. It captures my mission and my hopes for you and your compassionate leadership in the classroom and in our world:

May the One, known by many Names

Support and guide this work

For the highest good of all teachers and students.

Let IT light the way to invite teachers

Into new ways of thinking about their students and themselves,

May IT spark and nourish the creative genius

That lies within us all.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The following are the structural elements of the presentation of each skill. The accompanying icons are provided as visual clues to remind you of the flow and process of your learning.

All of the chapters and many of the chapter subsections dealing with specific skills or concepts are introduced with a quote from respected educators to capture and support the outcome of the concepts being presented.

All of the chapters and many of the chapter subsections begin with an essential question or questions, which you will be able to answer at the end of the chapter or section, followed by a classroom connection, which is a true classroom story (with fictitious names) to allow you to immerse yourself in a real-life experience.

This is followed by a personal connection activity to access what you already know. It is the reader's responsibility to create a meaningful connection to this material from his or her own prior knowledge.

Next, the strategy or skill is introduced with research and rationales. Benefits for teacher and students are summarized, specific examples for using the skill in the classroom are presented, and key criteria are summarized. Benefits, examples, and key criteria may be presented in varying order.

Most skills have a practice activity called Checking My Understanding for self-assessment.

The final activity for each technique is a personal commitment. This is the crucial action step you will take to bring the skill to life in your classroom.

Each chapter ends with a summary to use for closure and review.

■ PERSONAL GOALS FOR READING THIS BOOK

1. What do you want for yourself out of reading this book?

(If you answered, "Less stress, peaceful relationships with students, and strategies for feeling successful in creating a positive learning environment," read on, this book is for you!)

2. What would you like for your students as a result of reading this book?

(If you answered, "Less teacher dependence, more respect and responsibility, increased learning, and more community among students," keep reading!)