

Management Models

What is a classroom management model?

Effective classroom management is a multi-faceted system that must address the multitude of factors that impact student behavior. When building a classroom management plan that comprehensively addresses this complex issue, one can easily become overwhelmed by the magnitude of this undertaking. Fortunately, educational researchers have been able to study and evaluate a tremendous number of teachers and classrooms to identify distinct approaches to classroom management. These approaches—or models—are foundations onto which teachers can build a classroom management plan. Starting with this foundation, each teacher should then begin to build a toolbox of effective strategies and teacher behaviors to create a comprehensive and effectual classroom management plan.

A Few Models

While the number of management models available for teachers to use is great, a few have remained popular—or risen to popularity in recent years. The following selections are in no way meant to comprise a comprehensive list of models but are instead meant to capture the spectrum of models.

Assertive Discipline

Developed by Lee Canter and Marlene Canter, the Assertive Discipline model is characterized by positive reinforcement of desirable behaviors and negative consequences for undesirable behaviors. When effectively and consistently applied, students begin to associate desired behaviors with reward, increasing the frequency of these behaviors. Conversely, students will learn to associate undesirable

behaviors with negative consequences, decreasing the frequency of these behaviors.

Teachers who successfully use this model create an appropriate system of rewards and consequences, which is then effectively communicated to students and consistently applied.

Restitution

The Restitution model is based on the work of William Glasser in *Control Theory* (1984). In *Control Theory*, Glasser explains that, as humans, we have basic human needs (to survive, to love and belong, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun), and our behaviors are a result of our desire to have our basic needs met.

Glasser's work prompted Diane Gossen to create the Restitution Triangle. In *Restitution Triangle* (March, 1996), Gossen explains that school can be "needs-satisfying for both teachers and students." In a needs-satisfying system, students and teachers "evaluate their own behavior and make their own judgments about how effective it is." This process of self-evaluation of behaviors and their effectiveness is accomplished through the Restitution Triangle.

Each side of the Restitution Triangle features one of three key control theory concepts:

1. We are all doing the best we can.
2. All behaviors are purposeful.
3. We are internally motivated.

Teachers and students can use this triangle to evaluate their behavior by relating their behaviors to these three key concepts. For example, the first concept—"we are all doing the best we can"—means that when a student makes a mistake, teachers should react with the understanding that a student is doing the best he can. The

second concept, "all behaviors are purposeful" would lead a teacher to determine the purpose of a student's actions. Lastly, "we are all internally motivated" can allow teachers to guide students toward behaviors consistent with who they want to be.

Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline

This model, created by H. Jerome Freiberg (1996), provides a framework for creating student-teacher partnerships in the classroom, through the incorporation of five themes—prevention, caring, cooperation, organization, and community.

Step 1: Prevention

In this step, students and teachers work together at the beginning of the year to create classroom rules, laying the foundation for high standards of behavior. The idea is to prevent behavioral issues by addressing them before they have a chance to begin.

Step 2: Caring

Most people will go out of their way for someone who cares about them, and students are no exception. When students feel a teacher truly cares about them, they are encouraged to do and to be their very best. Note that Module 3 of this course further discusses strategies to build caring relationships with students.

Step 3: Cooperation

According to Freiberg, "helping, sharing, participating, planning, and working together—these are the heart of a cooperative classroom¹." Providing students with ownership of classroom tasks and procedures allows them to feel responsibility for what happens in their classroom.

Step 4: Organization

Classroom organization is an opportunity to provide students with ownership of the

¹Freiberg, J.L., (1996). From tourist to citizens in the classroom. *Educational Leadership*, 54(1), 32.

classroom. This can be accomplished by allowing them to take on classroom organizational tasks such as passing out papers or helping with attendance.

Step 5: Community

Involving parents and other community members can be challenging, but creative and flexible schools can accomplish this. Schools can have parents give talks comparing school rules to workplace rules, or bring in community leaders as speakers.

Classroom Management that Works

In *Classroom Management that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Every Teacher* (2003), Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering compile their research on classroom management to identify the most effective techniques for improving student achievement. Classroom Management that Works is based on specific action steps drawn from and supported by their research. The action steps focus on:

- Creating effective rules and procedures
- Administering appropriate disciplinary interventions
- Creating a positive mental set
- Developing effective teacher-student relationships
- Creating a climate of student responsibility
- Getting off to a good start
- Managing behaviors at the school level

The action steps in the Classroom Management that Works model are collections of specific teacher behaviors designed to support effective teacher-student relationships, helping teachers find appropriate levels of dominance and cooperation and to build an awareness of "high needs" students

Beyond Discipline

This model of classroom management, which stems from Alfie Kohn, seeks to break the mold of traditional classroom management approaches by challenging the relevance of rules and tasks. According to this model, teachers manage their classrooms by providing students with relevant rules and learning tasks and opportunities to make choices. According to Kohn in *Punished by Rewards? A Conversation with Alfie Kohn* (Brandt, September 1995, p. 15), programs that emphasize consequences or rewards manipulate students. If teachers focus on content, community, and choice (Kohn's three C's of motivation) classroom management is not an issue. Kohn explains the three C's:

“The first C is content. Far less interesting to me than whether a student has learned what he was supposed to is the question, "Has the child been given something to do worth learning?" If you ask me what to do about a kid being "off task"—one of our favorite buzzwords—my first response is going to be, "What's the task?" If you're giving them garbage to do, yes, you may have to bribe them to do it. If the kids have to endlessly fill in the blanks on dittos, you're not going to get rid of rewards or threats anytime soon.”

“The second C is community: not only cooperative learning but helping kids feel part of a safe environment in which they feel free to ask for help, in which they come to care about one another as opposed to having to be manipulated to share or not be mean.”

“The third C is choice: making sure that kids are asked to think about what they're doing and how and with whom and why. You know, kids learn to make good choices not by following directions but by making choices.”

Common Elements

While these models have very different components, the teacher-student relationship is a critical thread running through all of them. Building caring, supportive relationships with his or her students is critical to the success of whichever model a teacher chooses. Every decision a teacher makes impacts and reflects his/her relationship with students. Every rule shows how much students are respected and

valued. Every lesson shows how much student learning matters. Choosing a classroom management model is just the beginning. It is a foundation upon which the teacher will add rules, procedures and strategies to create a comprehensive classroom management plan that facilitates and supports student learning.