

Problem **solved**

Build Real Motivation in Your Virtual or Real Classroom Includes FREE Poster/Worksheet

By Ruth Herman Wells, M.S.

Director, Youth Change Workshops

www.youthchg.com, dwells@youthchg.com

Whether it's a real or virtual yawn, you may have plenty of unmotivated, half-asleep students in your real or virtual classroom. Whether the student is sleeping at the desk right in front of you, or asleep in front of a screen half a continent away, an apathetic, uninvolved youngster isn't going to benefit very much from your instruction.

For all the differences between actual and virtual classrooms, motivation is the big common denominator that can overshadow any style of instruction. If students think your class is boring, irrelevant, or dumb, they will learn accordingly. If students think that education is a joke because they're going to be rap stars, sports stars, models, or win the lottery, they will learn accordingly. In my teacher training workshops, I try to vividly capture this apathy for my participants. I tell my workshop attendees that I am tired of talking about unmotivated students and will be switching to a discussion of funeral insurance instead—then I ask the participants "How many of you will be staying in the room?" None of them plan to stay. Unlike my participants, your students may not be allowed to physically get up and go, so they leave mentally instead. The truth is that although you as an adult can clearly appreciate the enormous value of education, some of your students may view education with the same disdain that my participants reserve for funeral insurance. I can't force-feed my adult learners instruction on funeral insurance, and you can't force-feed your young learners instruction on subjects they deem irrelevant.

Here's the good news about motivation for both the real and virtual classroom: Even though most universities and teacher training courses still don't provide educators with specific, real-world methods to pump up and motivate unmotivated students, there are plenty of terrific, attention-grabbing methods you can use to turn on even your most apathetic "real" or cyber-student. Let me give you a few examples from my thousands of motivational methods. These innovative approaches may be little known by the K-12 education field at large, but they can still produce big-time results. I've selected some of the methods that have historically drawn the most effusive comments from the teachers I train throughout North America and on into cyber-space.

MOTIVATORS for STUDENTS WHO SAY THEY CAN FIND WORK WITHOUT EDUCATION

If you work with youngsters who say that they don't plan to finish school, they should know that even robots finish school. That's important to know because these educated robots are in training to take over many of the jobs that are still open to dropouts and people with little education. Name the job that is still open to

dropouts, and USA Today (5-1-03) can name the robot that can do the job cheaper. Here's just two examples from dozens; you can display the data below on your projector then discuss with the class:

G O I N G Nursing Home Aide
G O I N G Aide to the Disabled
ALMOST G O N E Caregiver to the Elderly

Have you heard about Pearl? Pearl is a robotic nurse. She "has cameras for eyes, a computer screen for a chest and a tray or basket in which she can carry items to an elderly or disabled person," says USA Today. "That's so far away," your potential dropout may say hopefully. "Not true," you can reply. Pearl has already passed the testing stage for use in both nursing homes and private residences.

G O I N G Maid
G O I N G Housekeeper
ALMOST G O N E Custodian

It's called the Roomba FloorVac, and it's not even expensive. For about the price of a regular vacuum, you can now own a robotic vacuum that can do the job without supervision. The Roomba will never call in sick, ask for a raise or beg for the day off either. Other devices exist or will soon exist for other household chores like mowing the lawn. Get more interventions like these here: <http://www.youthchg.com/guidance.html#20036>.

MOTIVATORS for STUDENTS WHO SAY THEY'LL AVOID NEEDING EDUCATION

According to the teachers who attend my live and online courses, the poster shown below is by far their top-rated intervention for motivating unmotivated students. This device looks like an official government poster and says "Official Notice: All Jobs Now Require Education." You can use the device as a poster but it works well verbally as it most definitely sparks discussion among students. If you want to reproduce this image on your projector or screen for use with your real or virtual class, we are giving permission to SEEN Magazine readers to use it in that manner. Normally, using or reproducing the image of Poster #128 is not free, but there will be no charge to use this image electronically if you are a SEEN reader. To get the image in a large size, visit this link: <http://www.youthchg.com/poster43.html#classroom>. View the image in enlarged size so you can read the small print at the bottom of the poster. That small print can add a second element to the intervention, and spark additional insight and discussion. For an additional intervention, you can ask students to produce similar posters, like "All Jobs Now Require Math Skills."



MOTIVATORS for STUDENTS WHO SAY THEY'LL AVOID NEEDING EDUCATION

Includes Free Motivation Lesson Plan and Worksheet

Students often tell you that they won't need school because they'll marry a wealthy man, become a model, or become a sports star. Here's a wonderful worksheet that you can use in both the real and virtual

classroom to convince your students that their assumptions may not be accurate. It's called "Sooner or Later, Will They Really ~~Never~~ Need School." Pick up this lively handout and the accompanying lesson plan here: <http://www.youthchg.com/performance.html>. It's excerpted from my Turn On the Turned-Off Student book, but free to SEEN readers at no charge. You are granted permission to print and duplicate the worksheet portion and to reproduce it on your projector or screen in your real or virtual classroom.



WANT MORE TERRIFIC MOTIVATIONAL INTERVENTIONS?

Find additional, more effective strategies to motivate apathetic students in the real or virtual classroom here: <http://www.youthchg.com/solve.html>. Read selected additional articles on motivating students here: <http://www.youthchg.com/student.html#motivational>

Ruth Herman Wells M.S. is the Director of Youth Change Workshops, <http://www.youthchg.com>. Her **Breakthrough Strategies to Teach and Counsel Troubled Youth Workshop** is coming to Seattle, WA on May 3-4, 2012, and to Portland, OR on October 11-12, 2012. Ruth's classes are also available online and on DVD, with college credit and clock hours. Ruth is the creator of the **Maximum-Strength Motivation-Makers** online course, and her books include **The Last Chance School Success Guide** and **Turn On the Turned-Off Student**. Email Ruth at dwells@youthchg.com or call 800-545-5736. To get Ruth's free **Problem Student Problem-Solver Magazine**, and hundreds of other interventions, visit www.youthchg.com.