



Guiding principles in Studying and Work

Purpose:

There are many principles that allow us to be more effective, more productive and cope better with challenges and problems. There are even principles for spiritual growth.

So, what is a principle?

It is a law that has its application and exceptions. An example is *Begin with the end in mind* (Steven Covey). It is not a rule, it is not obligatory. Just like gravity it is a way of doing things that has proven in many situations to be effective, productive or leading to certain result. Unlike gravity it has different applications for different people (learners, educators). It also has exceptions. Then maybe one would say: why bother to deal with this when we have already so many things on our plate?

See “ Why use *Working Principles* in class”

This idea can be used both in class, clubs and extracurricular activities. In my experience it is of particular importance for students to build, foster their organizational and communicational skills which are applicable in professional, social and business environment while they participate in clubs and youth organizations. Working out, creating and adopting working principles is a milestone in that process. (link – youth organizations – comingsoon).

And why do we care about this in class?

The best way to discover a principle, start using and applying it is to experience it, over and over again. The class work provide us with many opportunities to explore, practice, instill and internalize these principles, to build habits and create a productive attitude towards the work and co-work.

More specifically:

Here I suggest some principles that can be a red thread in class. They are not a focus themselves but are referred to or mention when appropriate (see Activity).

Project principles:

1. Be aware of your motivation and role
2. Begin with the end in mind



3. Test if your idea will fly: do you need it, does the world need it, it is beneficial for you and others?
4. Plan
5. Manage information:
 - Keep track of working process and decisions
 - Make sure all are on the same page and agree on the above
 - Communicate information to everyone



Communication principles:

1. Speak out – always share when you have something to say
2. Don't make assumptions, ask
3. Feedback
4. Be honest
5. Seek the hidden message (pearl)

Preparation:

I think before these principles are established is good to see what is the school mission, learner profiles, objectives and vision of where students are going. This may provide some ideas about school-wide principles of work.

Activity:

The working principles are tightly linked to the working process. There are possibilities to explore them at the beginning of the classes, but what would make most sense to me is for these principles to be present in the classroom (board, books, poster) and for the teacher to find the moments to refer to them.

If the teacher has established a class/ course frame (see link – coming soon) in the reflection part of it is a good time to look at principles with relation to work that has been done.

Some aspect of the class work can be put into the spotlight, but in my mind, the working principles should be woven into the process and put in the spotlight only in relation to the work of the individual student or the group.