



I taught college ... when I was a younger man, and in my first day of classes, before you have a reputation and before they know what kind of teacher you are going to be, you have an opportunity to have some fun. And I was teaching college freshmen, college juniors, college seniors and graduate students in that semester. And in the freshmen class I decided to have some fun. I came in, and I was just a few years older than the students, and I said to them, "Okay, let's take some notes." For about 25 minutes I went through and gave them the typical outline -- Roman numeral I, A, small 1, 2, 3 -- and I just talked normal.

At the end of the 25 minutes, I said to them, "Okay, it's time for a quiz. Please put away your notes." And you heard this sucking sound as the students in the room were saying, "Ah!" And I quizzed them on the first 25 minutes. And they almost all failed. And you could see the students looking across the room at each other like, "I'm going to transfer out of this class." And a lady in the back, a girl in the back, raises her hand and says, "Professor, ah, you're not really going to count that grade are you?" I said, "Why? How did you do?" "Oh, I'm not used to this grade." "What is the grade?" "It's an F. You're not going to count it are you?" She got a little emotional. And I said, "Well, why not?" She didn't know what to do with that. And I took another person, a guy, and I said, "What do you think about counting this?" "It's not fair. It's not fair." "Why not?" "Well, you didn't give us a chance to learn it." I said, "I thought that's what you were paying me for." "What?" "I thought you were paying me to be the teacher. Didn't you pay a lot of tuition here?" They paid a lot of tuition there. "I thought you were paying me to teach you. So, if I am the person who is teaching you, and you gave me a grade

for how effectively I taught you for the bucks you're paying me, what grade would you give me?" The college freshmen didn't know what to do. They were scared to death. And this guy didn't know how to answer. "So, what would you give me?" He said, "Well, sir, probably not too high." "What did you get?" "I got a D-." "So, shouldn't I get your grade?" "What?" "Well, if you got a D- then how much did I really teach you?" "I don't know sir." I said, "I'd give myself between a D- and an F."

I said, "Now put away your papers. Close your workbooks. I now want to teach you." "What?" "I want to teach you now." I said, "Don't take any notes. Let me talk to you." And for the next 20 minutes, I taught them. That is, I caused them to learn it right then, right now. And at the end, I said, "Okay, let's take another test." I said, "Now, let's test how well I did on the second half." And I think there was just one person who got a B. Everybody Aced it! I said, "I am hereby committing to you that I will cause you to learn all semester long, and that you will learn so much, this will be a favorite course for you."

Well, on the day before the midterm exam, I came into class and I said, "It's time to review. Please stand up." And I took my chair and I sat down, and these college freshmen, in unison, spoke 26 minutes nonstop – 26 minutes! They had the information.

So I gave them the midterm test. And I had to hand in my grade book to the academic dean of the university. He was a brilliant man. And he called me up and he said, "Dr. Wilkinson, you need to come on over to my office today. You're a new teacher and there are just a few things I need to talk to you about." So, I said, "Yes, sir." And I came over and I brought a little file folder with me. And he said, "You know, sometimes as a new teacher we just are too easy on our students. We really can't have all these students getting As. It's just not right. You're grading too easy." I said, "Would you like to see the midterm exam?" And I gave him my midterm, which was 6 pages, single-spaced questions. 150 questions! He's reading these and he says, "You gave this test to freshmen--and they got an A on this? "Yes," I said. "Do you think I should give them a lower grade than an A if they got this?" "No. Gee whiz, if they got an A on this, give them an A+!"

You see, once you really buy into learning the secrets of causing your students to flourish under your teaching, your students will rise up and call you blessed, and kiss you on your forehead! Because you've got to understand that teachers are responsible to cause the students to learn.

Excerpted from the Teach Every Nation Course:
Anyone Can Become a Great Communicator: Anyone. Anywhere. Anytime
Session 2: Learner Maxims

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