

**TCM – Appendix - Shindler**  
**Ten Biggest Classroom Management Mistakes Made by Teachers**

1. **Inconsistency** – Teacher appears to act from a subjective-reactive set of criteria and or lacks a transparent and consistent set of principles from which to make decisions. Students require a clear sense of cause and effect to build a sense of trust and internal locus of control (LOC).
2. **Disappointment, negative recognitions, chronicling student failure** – Teacher focuses on what is not going well, the misbehavior and the problematic aspects of the students' actions, rather than giving a clear set of expectations for successful behavior and clear feedback related to progress toward academic and behavioral goals. In the long run, disappointment will act to shift the LOC of the student externally, and lower levels of intrinsic motivation. And these strategies do nothing in the long term to improve the behavior of students.
3. **Use of punishments** – Teacher responds to unwanted behavior with penalties intended to give short-term discomfort and send the message that they are unhappy with a particular behavior, rather than providing consequences that are non-personal, related to the problem behavior and are intended to teach long-term lessons.
4. **Use of deficit models such as colored cards or names on the board** – Teacher uses a feedback system that assumes students begin with an adequate behavioral level with each act of misbehavior leading to a lowering of the level on a chart (or results in more checks by a name) same way). These programs/models act to reinforce negative behavior by reinforcing it. They also rely on symbolic consequences rather than meaningful consequences so quickly lose their power to change behavior.
5. **Consistent and perpetual use of extrinsic rewards** – Teacher gives students tangible or quantitative rewards for desired behavior. This has the long-term effect of addicting students to these rewards, and shifting their locus of control externally. The result is a lower level of intrinsic motivation and the promotion of a view of work as a means to an end as opposed to a valuable for its own sake.
6. **Short-sighted focus** – Teacher focuses on what will stop the problem today and relieve the current crisis or stop the unwanted behavior, as opposed to taking action intended to change or eliminate the problem in the long term. The problem seems to go away for a while but comes back again in a short time. Upon reflection the teacher might consider is the goal of the intervention is to feel better, or to get results. Common examples include bribes, guilt and shame, dramatic episodes, sarcasm, put-downs, and punishments.
7. **Personal Praise for Desired Behavior** – Teacher gives general and emotional messages to students for doing what the teacher wants. For example the teacher says that they “like the way \_\_\_ is working,” or they “are proud of \_\_\_ “ for the product they created. These appear to be motivational, but in reality produce students who are afraid of failure and the loss of the praise experience and seek approval rather than tapping into more effective and intrinsic forms of motivation.
8. **Victim and/or external LOC language** – Teacher uses an excessive amount of language that projects a plea to student to change their behavior because the teacher had been wronged or does not deserve to be treated with such disrespect. Asking for respect will not lead to gaining respect.
9. **Ignoring Students' Basic Needs** – Teacher thinks and acts with an orientation based on how student behavior effects their interests, where it is either good or bad depending on how much trouble it gives them, rather than examining all student behavior as meeting a need of some kind.
10. **Irrelevant, Meaningless or heavily teacher-centered instructional strategies.** When the work that students are engaged in is not meaningful to them, they will find ways to engage in activities that are fun, meaningful and interesting to them which be perceived by the teacher as mis-behavior. Alternately, students who do not find the work engaging may check out and/or appear unmotivated. This behavior may appear to the teacher as apathetic, when in actuality it is a logical response to the classroom conditions, and the students would act very differently if given meaningful, student-centered and engaging work.