

# Professionalism as Motivation for Teachers



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# Professionalism as Motivation for Teachers

(by Nuno Dias, CertTEYL Course Tutor)

Learning in the classroom will be drastically affected if teachers lose their own motivation to continue teaching. We assume that helping students with the challenges of learning and watching students reach their goals is enough of a catalyst, but teachers need more than this for long term motivation. Teachers need to be motivated outside of the classroom and a good source for this type of motivation is the challenge of becoming a true professional.

I tutor for a professional development course for English teachers (the CertTEYL E-Learning course) and one of the questions in the final tasks asks to, "*Discuss what makes any teacher a professional.*" Some of the responses that I receive describe: being on time, dressing professionally, knowing grammar rules, and other cursory elements. It is important for teachers to look and act in the manner of an expert; however, this is not what makes a teacher a genuine professional.

There is an article in the course that I tutor called, "The English Teacher as Professional" provided exclusively for use in the course by Penny Ur. In the article Ur summarizes what teachers must fulfill to become true professionals. All professionals, including doctors, lawyers, engineers, and others, actively practice these pointers as part of their careers. The following professional elements can also be great motivators for teachers who are a bit "bored" with the everyday routine of being a teacher:

## **"We are a community."**

Join a local or national teacher's association or even an online chat group for English teachers. Share experiences and get excited by the energy of being with your fellow teachers.

## **"We publish."**

This can be anything from materials for local seminars/workshops, to articles for journals/online websites, to full length books. We are English teachers; we should definitely use our language skills to communicate with our peers!

**"We learn."**

Grab some books, read some Internet articles, get full articles for free from ERIC Database! Learning is a great motivator and gives us new confidence and energy.

**"We are responsible for training new teachers."**

If you have only been teaching for a couple of years or have taught for decades, you have many experiences to share with newer teachers. Working with novice teachers will help you to feel that initial surge of energy that we had at the beginning of our careers when we wanted to change the world!

On a daily basis, I have the privilege of working with my fellow teachers. I learn as much from them as I hope they learn from me. Sometimes I am a bit too didactic; however, these teachers put me in my place with their excellent ideas and new approaches to teaching. I am always open to new thoughts from my colleagues because I have never been disappointed with their solutions.

What we do as teachers outside of the classroom and in the professional teaching community can be as motivating as the daily challenges of helping our students to learn English. Give it a try!

**Nuno Dias is the Head Tutor for the CertTEYL E-Learning course for those who teach English to children.**

He has one final suggestion:

*Try to join a group, write an article, read a book about educational issues, or volunteer to help new teachers find their footing. There are several other points in Ur's article about professionalism. You will find these other suggestions in the CertTEYL E-Learning course.*

*I work as a tutor for the course, so it is a biased suggestion, but I sincerely believe that the CertTEYL course is a great motivator for any teacher. [Take a look!](#)*

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