

COMPLAINING ABOUT STUDENTS

by:

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In faculty rooms and instructor lounges across the nation, complaints about students are frequently voiced. Though it takes a lot of labor to teach, however, whining about pupils is detrimental to instructors' attitudes toward their employment and, consequently, their ability to stay in those positions for a long time. In return, students suffer because of it.

It is understandable that sometimes teachers do need to vent. It is not easy teaching students who do not come to class prepared, seem to always want the easiest way, are prepared to cheat, if necessary, do not have good study skills, and aren't interested in learning what their teachers love to teach. Venting, especially to a trusted colleague, helps teachers put things in perspective. At some point, though, venting morphs into complaining, and what they say about students becomes what they think about them. And that is when it starts getting dangerous, because it affects how they teach.

Additionally, whining encourages low expectations. Teachers foster the notion that pupils are incapable of living up to expectations by griping about their charges. Furthermore, voicing grievances with other instructors might foster an environment where low standards are accepted by the school's administration.

Likewise, complaining absolves teachers of responsibility to reach all students, and blames students instead. By blaming pupils, educators give way to nurture; instead, they are cautious when granting feedback. It also creates distance between students and teachers. Criticism about pupils with colleague can generate an "us versus them" mentality. Complaining breeds negative feelings about the profession.

In a nutshell, teachers need to remember to speak kindly about their students and kindly about each other.

References:

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