

The Five P's of Professionalism in Education

Another way to be a professional in education through participation is to value and seek collaboration and professional development. Again, professionals value their time and are intentional on being open to ideas and obtaining feedback from other educators — this will only strengthen and grow one's commitment to learning. Although school administration may provide professional development, one must continue to be a student of learning and growing through not only content knowledge but also personal growth. This means utilizing resources such as:

- Books
- Podcasts
- Blogs
- Professional associations
- Online or in-person classes

2. Be Positively Particular

To be a professional means you are paying attention to your surroundings. First, when it comes to interacting with students, there's always that tension between being a teacher and being a friend. Professional teachers abstain from the need to be liked so they can stay consistent with enforcing classroom and school rules. This means not showing any favoritism, believing all students can learn and succeed. Of course, there are exceptions, and the professional teacher has the discernment to adjust when needed.

Next, remember in middle school when your so-called friend would share some type of gossip with you about another so-called friend? It's no secret that if the gossiper is gossiping about another, they are doing it about you as well. The fastest way to lose trustworthiness is not only to be a gossip but then to listen to it.

Professionals have healthy boundaries, seeking relationships that are particularly business only — never sharing confidential information. This could mean limiting conversations to only edifying comments about others or asking questions working toward clarity when needed. A professional teacher is a role model of being quick to listen and slow to speak.

3. Plea and Be Prepared

Professionals are people "Plea"ers! That means you are looking to grow as an educator by having mentors. Lifelong learners seek to become better at their craft, which means feedback is always welcome. When you do receive feedback or you are making a promise to try something, professionals follow through and follow up. Moreover, you honor your commitments and role-model that effervescent hunger for knowledge and growth.

4. Be Punctual

Professionals live by this motto — arriving five minutes early is arriving on time. This may seem like a no-brainer, but it speaks volumes to your value system. It has been said that punctuality is a sign of respect when you show up not only on time but early. Arriving to your commitments on time demonstrates your care and appreciation for others' time and their presence in your life. It can also be a sign that you are prepared and ready to learn and listen. This applies to professional development meetings, grade level meetings, conferences or any other gathering where your presence is needed.

5. Be Present and Present Yourself

The most important person in the world is the person you are talking to. This is how the person on the other end should feel. When conversing, it should feel as though you matter to them and your laser beam focus on what they are saying takes precedent over anything at that moment. Why? Because you are actively listening — not just hearing. This might play out when speaking to a student, a colleague or a superior. Be present.

While you are present, you are also presenting your best self with modest and professional clothing. Dress the part of how you would want to be treated. If you want to be treated like a professional with respect, then dress the part.

The Professional P's Lead to Achievement

When you add up these five P's of professionalism and ethical behavior, it's an automatic win in creating a safe and effective learning environment, which is conducive to students achieving beyond the standards. Students know and feel that their teacher is committed to their personal education because the standards are set high and they can see trust being built. This makes positive and successful learning outcomes a given.

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