

RESTORATIVE ESSENTIALS

Effective communication skills
Restorative Conversations

TIME REQUIRED

20 minutes minimum
(excluding the observation)

FORMAT

Pairs, observation, feedback

RESTORATIVE PRACTICE LEVEL

Levels 1, 2, and 3

OBJECTIVES

- To explore and discuss strategies for enhancing Restorative Conversations.
- To observe and give feedback on one another's practice.

PROCESS PHASE COVERED**COMMENT: NOTICING THE RATIO**

Handling misbehaviour in class is one area where a little care can have a significant impact on the final outcome; what is said is as important as *how* it is said.

An experiment conducted in the 1980s looked at how the wording of signs on a bush track encouraged tourists to keep off regenerating tussock. When the sign said 'Keep off the grass', 72% of tourists ignored it and only 28% complied. When the sign was changed to 'Keep to the tracks', the compliance rate jumped to 70%.

Such improvements in behaviour, achieved by changing a few words, are a compelling reason to look at the language we use with students in our classes.

Very few teachers are aware of the ratio of positive to negative comments they make and how this translates into student perception. For a student to feel that there is an equal balance between the positive and negative comments they receive, we need to use the 80:20 rule – give four positive comments for every negative.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the findings of the tourist experiment with the person next to you and reflect with one another on the balance of positive and negative statements in your own practice.

What are some things you could do to achieve a better balance in your approach? Share these thoughts with your colleague.

Observation

Have a colleague sit in the back of your classroom or watch you at work, noting down every time in your interactions with students you make a negative comment or statement and every time you make a positive one.

Feedback

Sit down together afterwards and discuss:

- what you thought your balance was
- what your colleague observed.