

**TODD WHITAKER  
ANNETTE BREAUX**



**40 Simple Training Sessions  
That Build Teacher Effectiveness**



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## More praise for *The Ten-Minute Inservice*

“Todd Whitaker and Annette Breaux offer concise, practical suggestions for reinforcing effective teaching practices. *The Ten-Minute Inservice* is a powerful resource for school leaders who want to make the most of every opportunity to promote growth and improve school climate.”

—**Justin Baeder**, director, The Principal Center

“An integral piece of building teacher capacity is the transformation of faculty meetings, from a time for sitting and listening to an opportunity for reflecting and learning. Whitaker and Breaux demonstrate how simply that can be done with quick, easily implemented inservice activities that focus on the fundamentals of teaching.”

—**John G. Gabriel**, principal, John Champe High School,  
Loudoun County, Virginia; coauthor, *Dealing with the Tough Stuff*



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# THE TEN-MINUTE INSERVICE

40 Quick Training Sessions that  
Build Teacher Effectiveness

Todd Whitaker  
Annette Breaux

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# About the Authors

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**Dr. Todd Whitaker** has been fortunate to be able to blend his passion with his career. He is recognized as a leading presenter in the field of education, and his message about the importance of teaching has resonated with hundreds of thousands of educators around the world. Todd is a professor of educational leadership at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana, and he has spent his life pursuing his love of education by researching and studying effective teachers and principals.

Prior to moving into higher education, Todd was a math teacher and basketball coach in Missouri. He then served as a principal at the middle school, junior high, and high school levels. He was also a middle school coordinator in charge of staffing, curriculum, and technology for the opening of new middle schools.

One of the nation's leading authorities on staff motivation, teacher leadership, and principal effectiveness, Todd has written thirty books, including the national best seller, *What Great Teachers Do Differently*. Other titles include *Shifting the Monkey*, *Dealing with Difficult Teachers*, *Teaching Matters*, *Great Quotes for Great Educators*, *What Great Principals Do Differently*, *Motivating and Inspiring Teachers*, and *Dealing with Difficult Parents*.

Todd is married to Beth, also a former teacher and principal, who is a professor of elementary education at Indiana State University. They are the parents of three children, Katherine, Madeline, and Harrison.



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**Annette Breaux** is one of the most entertaining, informative authors and speakers in education. She leaves her audiences with practical techniques to implement in their schools and classrooms immediately. Administrators agree that they see results from teachers the next day.

Annette is a former classroom teacher, curriculum coordinator, and author of Louisiana FIRST, a statewide induction program for new teachers. Annette also served as the teacher induction coordinator for Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana. She coauthored *New Teacher Induction* with Dr. Harry K. Wong.

Her other writings include *101 Answers for New Teachers and Their Mentors*; *REAL Teachers*, *REAL Challenges*, *REAL Solutions*; *101 Poems for Teachers*; *Seven Simple Secrets: What the BEST Teachers Know and Do*; *50 Ways to Improve Student Behavior*; and *Making Good Teaching Great*.

Teachers who have read Annette's writings or heard her speak agree that they come away with user-friendly information, heartfelt inspiration, and a reminder that theirs is the most noble of all professions.

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# How to Use This Book

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If you're an administrator or a staff developer, your days are already crammed with meetings, projects, and crises. Still, you're charged with finding ways to maximize teacher effectiveness. So we've given you forty simple, easy-to-implement inservices designed to improve teaching and learning, each of which can be completed in ten minutes.

Even the book's design is deliberately simple, its format easy to follow. Each inservice is divided into three parts:

1. Purpose
2. Inservice
3. Implementation

In other words, the three sections will tell you what each inservice will accomplish, give you the content, and then show you exactly how to move from talk to action. There's no particular order to the inservices. Some do refer back to the previous inservice or build on its lesson. But each stands alone, and you can skip around as your teachers' needs require. There is no right or wrong way to use the book. Decide which inservices will work for you and when you'd like to use them. Each inservice will give you a quick, effective way to provide useful, meaningful, ongoing training for your teachers. And they've all been designed to take the least possible amount of time.

Because our focus was on inservices that can be conducted in a short amount of time, there are some topics that we have not been able to cover as they are too

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complex to tackle in a mini-workshop. These include differentiation, data analysis, and assessment, to name a few. However, the inservices provided here cover topics that are vital for good teaching, and implementing them with your staff should lead to schoolwide improvement.

Note: The Appendix includes a number of tips for making these inservices effective and engaging.

At the end of each inservice, we've left a section for notes. Use this section when you're preparing for the inservice, and use it again after you conduct the inservice, to add ideas and document results. These notes will prove invaluable the next time you conduct the inservice.

If you are a principal, you might choose to conduct all the inservices yourself. You might also choose to use a staff development trainer or one of your assistant administrators to conduct some of the inservices. If you have new teachers on staff, they will benefit from all the inservices, so you may choose to have one of your new-teacher mentors or your new-teacher induction coordinator use this book as an ongoing course. If your teachers meet regularly by grade level or subject area, this book can easily coordinate with those meetings. And it's a perfect fit for professional learning communities. Basically, this book will benefit any teacher, any administrator, and any staff development professional.

Think of it as quick, easy, meaningful, *doable* professional development.

Note that many of the inservices include material that can be displayed during your presentation or handed out to inservice participants. Those materials are available for free download from our publisher's website, at [www.josseybass.com/go/10minuteinservice](http://www.josseybass.com/go/10minuteinservice). Throughout the book, we'll remind you which materials can be downloaded by displaying the following icon:



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# Introduction

Do you want to see your students' achievement soar? Then improve the teaching in your school. It really is that simple.

How, though, do you improve teaching when you don't have time to grab a cup of coffee, let alone monitor every teacher's classes, hold private review sessions with them, and conduct weekly faculty meetings? It's not even practical to take up an entire faculty meeting with teaching demonstrations; everybody's too busy.

So we'll show you how to accomplish your goals with simple, clear-cut ten-minute inservices. Who says faculty meetings have to last an hour? **One of the most important goals of every faculty meeting should be for all teachers to walk out more excited about teaching and more effective tomorrow than they were today.** In this book, we'll show you how to conduct brisk, efficient ten-minute inservices that will improve teaching immediately. Teachers will look *forward* to these meetings. And you, the administrator or staff developer, will become a more effective instructional leader.

FACT: Better teaching leads to better student learning—and improved student outcomes.

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As an administrator or staff developer, you want to ensure that all teachers are continually improving. **Basically, there are three types of teachers: ineffective teachers, good teachers, and great teachers.** You're responsible for helping all three groups improve their effectiveness. The ultimate goal, of course, is to have nothing but great teachers in your school. The day that that happens, you can relax and start your novel. But in the meantime, there are quick, specific steps you can take to make an immediate difference in the quality of teaching in every single classroom.

If you take an ineffective teacher and help that teacher become better, you have just improved student achievement in that teacher's classroom. That's not to say that this teacher is now a great teacher; chances are good that he isn't. We're also not suggesting that this teacher's students will outscore the students in better teachers' classrooms; that's not realistic. But the teacher will be better, and that is what we're focusing on—*improvement*. (If a teacher simply cannot improve, then he or she shouldn't be teaching, period.) If you take a good teacher and help that teacher improve, again, you have just improved student achievement in that teacher's classroom. And if you take a great teacher and help her improve, you have just ratcheted her students' achievements even higher. Now every student in your school has improved.

Great school leaders aren't aiming to make every teacher perfect. There's no such thing as a perfect teacher. Instead, great leaders continually strive to help each teacher—whether ineffective, good, or great—improve on a daily basis. ***The Ten-Minute Inservice will show you how to improve both teaching and learning, in the fastest, easiest way possible.***

You'll be making yourself a great leader, ten minutes at a time!

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PART 1

**Classroom  
Management**





## Securing Students' Attention

### **PURPOSE**

FACT 1: All effective teachers are effective classroom managers.

FACT 2: Even the most effective teachers work diligently to continually improve their classroom management skills.

FACT 3: Not all teachers are effective classroom managers.

FACT 4: Without effective management skills, effective teaching cannot occur.

FACT 5: *All* teachers possess the ability to become more effective, yet many fail to do so because they lack management skills. This leads us back to FACT 1: **All effective teachers are effective classroom managers.**

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Any administrator will admit that if all teachers were effective classroom managers, discipline problems would be dramatically diminished, and learning would improve instantly.

Though we are not downplaying the importance of content knowledge, all the content knowledge in the world will not make someone an effective classroom manager. **You cannot teach any of the content effectively until you can manage the students.** Thus, in the classroom of a teacher who lacks effective management skills, effective teaching simply cannot occur.

Believe it or not, what many administrators and staff developers fear most about conducting an inservice is securing and keeping the attention of their audience. Have you ever attended an inservice and watched the presenter struggle—and fail—to get and keep everyone’s attention? Or an inservice where attendees spoke out of turn? Or an inservice whose presenter, as a last resort, strained her voice to present *over* the talking of attendees? Those are not effective inservices. Likewise, have you ever observed a teacher struggling to get and keep his students’ attention? That’s not an effective lesson.

The good news is that there is a simple, effective solution. And that’s the focus of today’s inservice.

## INSERVICE

Begin today’s inservice by asking your teachers, *What is the most important procedure that any teacher must have?* Allow them a couple of minutes to share their answers. When they have finished, tell them that all of their answers are good and valid. However, the single most important procedure any teacher needs is a way of securing the students’ attention.

Having established that fact, ask the next question: *What is your procedure for securing your students’ attention? In other words, what is the one thing you do, consistently, every time you need the attention of your students?* Far too many teachers do not have one procedure solidly established for securing their students’ attention. You know this already, of course, based on your ongoing observations of your teachers. Some say, “I need your attention.” If saying this doesn’t work the first time, they repeat it—often three or four times—until it does. If “I need your attention” still doesn’t work, they try variations: “Excuse me. Stop the talking.” Some resort to threats. And most of these teachers look unhappy while they’re

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trying to get their students' attention. The list of methods is long, but the results are the same: chatty, distracted students.

Your best teachers, of course, will be happy to share some effective techniques for securing student attention. Though the sharing of ideas is important, keep in mind that this is a training session and that you are the trainer. You'll want to demonstrate an effective way of securing students' attention.

Here is ours. Feel free to use it:

*Tell the students, "There will be times when I will need your undivided attention. When I need your attention, I will do two things. Here's what I will do." At this point, smile and raise your hand. Ask the students, "What two things do you see me doing?" (Note that they will almost always notice the smile first.) Once they have answered, say, "When you see me doing these two things, I need for you to stop talking and raise your hand. That will be your signal to me that I have your attention." Then say, "Now we will practice it. When I say 'Go,' start talking as much as you'd like. When I raise my hand and smile, stop talking and raise your hand. Go!" [Note that you will be demonstrating this for the teachers, so they will be the students for this activity.] Allow the room to get noisy. Then smile and raise your hand, and do not begin speaking until all hands are raised and the room is quiet again. It will take only a few seconds, by the way. [You will also notice that some of the teachers (students) will smile also, though this is not a condition of the procedure.] Smiles are contagious. And smiling teachers experience far fewer power struggles with their students.*

*Okay, so here you are, smiling and raising your hand. When everyone is quiet, say, "Thanks for following the procedure. But just so you know, students won't follow it that quickly. So you will simply continue to practice the procedure with your students. Remind them when they forget. Continue to implement the procedure consistently, with a smile on your face. The moment you appear upset, they win, you lose, and no procedure will work." [This will be addressed in detail in Inservice 6, "The Biggest Mistake Teachers Make."]*

Remind your teachers that procedures apply to all grade levels. There's nothing "elementary" about them. Professional football coaches implement procedures and practice them over and over and over, every day. That's how their teams win.

Finally, remind your teachers that classroom management begins to go awry when teachers stop being consistent. The bottom line is that you have to have a way, one way, of reliably securing your students' attention. You have to use that

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procedure consistently. And if you do so with a pleasant look on your face, you remove the allure of a power struggle.

Tell your teachers that you will use this procedure with them for faculty meetings from here on out. It's also a great idea to implement a schoolwide procedure for student assemblies.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

You have demonstrated for your teachers a procedure for securing students' attention. Now you want them to go to their classrooms and implement this new procedure. If some teachers already have a procedure that works well for them, then tell them to continue it, by all means, and to share it with their colleagues. Your teachers don't have to use the exact procedure that you've shared. You simply want them to implement one consistent procedure for securing the attention of their students. It is important to note, however, that whatever procedure they implement should have two components: (1) it has to be consistently implemented, and (2) they have to look happy while they are implementing it.

Tell the teachers that you will be walking through classrooms this week (and in the future) observing their procedures for securing students' attention. When you meet a teacher in the hallway, especially one who struggles with classroom management, ask how the new procedure is working.

Once you have each teacher implementing a consistent procedure for securing student attention, discipline problems will improve immediately. And now that your teachers have a way of securing attention, they can move forward in establishing better overall classroom management. Stay on top of this one and continue to monitor its implementation. Teachers who are consistent have fewer students who are resistant!

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**Notes**

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of 25 horizontal lines within a rounded rectangular border.

## Establishing Rules and Procedures

### **PURPOSE**

Have you ever noticed that your best teachers have the fewest discipline problems? Is it because you've given them the best-behaved students in the school? Probably not. Have you noticed that your best teachers almost always possess the happiest demeanors in the school? Who wouldn't be happy when their students are behaving so well? Yet you may have also noticed that these teachers have the fewest rules of anyone in the school. Have you noticed that the few rules they do have are enforced consistently?

Your best teachers will tell you that they rarely have to discipline a student for breaking a rule. Yet those same students are breaking rules left and right in the classrooms of other teachers. So what are the secrets known only to the very best teachers? Not only will we share these secrets, but we'll guarantee that anyone who implements them will begin to experience fewer discipline problems.

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Speaking of problems, let's establish just what the main problem is when teachers are struggling to manage their classrooms. If you walk through almost any school, you will notice that most teachers post their rules somewhere on a classroom wall. Notice that there is often a rule to "raise your hand before speaking." It can be stated in many ways, but the point is that this particular "rule" has something to do with talking. This is a giant red flag: it alerts you that these teachers do not understand the difference between rules and procedures. And because the most basic components of classroom management are rules and procedures, good classroom management will be lacking in these classrooms.

Regrettably, many teachers do not possess a basic understanding of classroom management because they've never been taught the difference between rules and procedures.

Today you will teach them.

And, by the way, knowing the difference between rules and procedures and implementing them consistently is the first secret to the success of your very best teachers. Another secret is that they have very few rules and lots of procedures. By the end of today's ten-minute inservice, all your teachers will know what the best teachers have already figured out.

## **INSERVICE**

After greeting each teacher today as he or she enters the faculty meeting, use the procedure you established in Inservice 1, "Securing Students' Attention." Spend a minute or two allowing a few to share how their new procedures for securing student attention have been working. Remind them that consistently implementing such a procedure was necessary to get them to the next step of classroom management.

Tell your teachers that today you will be sharing some of the secrets of effective classroom managers. These secrets will help them have fewer discipline problems. Share the fact that many teachers, through no fault of their own, do not understand the difference between a rule and a procedure. And because clearly established rules and procedures are the key to effective classroom management, a lack of understanding of the difference between the two can lead to many discipline problems.

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Provide the following example to prove your point:

*Some teachers have a rule about talking. Yet talking is not a serious offense. An aggravating offense? Yes. A serious offense? No. Because rules regulate serious offenses only, then talking out of turn falls under the category of “procedure” as opposed to “rule.”*

Make and share a copy of the following for each teacher:



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### Rules and Procedures Simplified

- A rule regulates a serious offense.
- A procedure is simply a way that you want something done in your classroom—the same way, every time.
- When a student breaks a rule, a consequence follows.
- When a student does not follow a procedure, you remind him of the procedure and practice it with him if necessary.
- You should never have more than five rules.
- You should have many procedures.
- An example of a rule: *We agree not to hit each other.* (Fighting is a serious offense.)
- Examples of procedures include *how to walk to lunch, how to ask permission to speak, how to get into and out of groups, what to do if you need a pencil sharpened, and how to pass in papers.*

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You will probably notice that once teachers are clear about the difference between rules and procedures, most will have trouble thinking of five rules. Some have only one or two. This is fine, as long as those one or two are enforced consistently.

Make the point that all effective classroom managers have lots of procedures. However, they do not implement them all at once. Rather, they implement the most important ones first (such as a procedure for securing the attention of their students), and they continue to add a few at a time. In the classrooms of effective managers, students are never confused about what is expected of them. The procedures are discussed, modeled, and practiced. When a student forgets, he is reminded of the correct procedure. If practice is needed, it is provided by the



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