

In his powerful TED Talk, I think Steve Pemberton touched on several themes. He talked about being a human lighthouse for others. In our case, we should be a lighthouse to our students. I interpreted that to mean we should be an advocate, a mentor, a role model, and an inspiration to one's students. As a human lighthouse, we are also nonjudgmental, impartial, positive, and encouraging. As instructors, we have the opportunity to shine a beam of hope for our students. He compares it with the "arc of life." He talks about those little interactions in our daily lives and expressions of gratitude as opportunities to "bend the arc." This can probably be said about life in general, let alone the daily interactions in the classroom or in the workplace. It reminds me of the Japanese expression, "ichigo ichie" (one time, one meeting). We have to embrace each moment, each interaction, each encounter. Make the most of it. He talks about seeing the possibilities. As teachers, I see this to mean that we have to understand our students, seek what possibilities await, and implement strategies to help bring those possibilities to reality. Pemberton talks about recognition. Through recognition, we could possibly spark for a student who can't see beyond a chanceless world. As instructors, we must recognize great work, stellar effort, and scholastic achievement. I often tell my students I want to be the teacher that inspired me. My approach would hopefully embody these themes in a strategic way. He also talked about collaboration, community, and communication. I would make an effort to get to know them, understand their backgrounds, talk to them regularly and individually, and promote collaboration and inclusivity.

I remember an activity I was introduced to many years ago as part of a self-improvement seminar. It was an activity to build trust within a group. The participants were divided into small groups. One person in the group would stand in front of the group with back facing the group and eyes closed. That person would lean backwards and free fall. The group would catch the person falling. The idea is to place your trust in those around you.

Although I have no experience in an ESL setting and if I were teaching adults, maybe I could have students pair up. Each pair will team up to prepare job interview questions and responses. One person will be the interviewer and the other the job applicant. They can rehearse it together and practice the dialogue in front of the class. Students can then listen to other pairs and compare questions and responses.