

Advice from a veteran teacher **The right attitude makes a promising future**



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Charles Chow, a programme leader from Caritas Bianchi College of Careers (CBCC), tells us about his passion for teaching and the importance of a positive mentality.

Tell us about your study and career background.

I graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree from City University of Hong Kong. After that, I obtained a Master of Business Administration degree at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and a Master of Science degree and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education at The University of Hong Kong.

Before getting into the education sector, I spent more than 10 years in the commercial field working in IT, product management and marketing at a number of multinational companies. I switched gears about 8 years ago, and now I teach mainly sub-degree and top-up degree programmes at CBCC. I specialize in quantitative techniques, strategic management, and computerized accounting.

What made you move into teaching? Do your commercial experiences help?

I have a strong passion for teaching. After graduation, I entered the commercial sector straight away in order to gain practical experience. Some years later, an opportunity came and I decided to grasp it and realize my passion for teaching.

I have learned a lot from the commercial sector and those experiences become a very valuable tool for my teaching. I get to share my experience and stories from those years, which most students find interesting. Story telling is a fantastic tool for teaching and learning. My experience can also help students understand the concepts and substantive content easily. For instance, most management courses involve a lot of theories and these can be difficult to understand for many students. However, once the theories are linked to interesting topics in the students' lives, they can get involved very quickly. Then we can relate the theories back to the business scenarios. I also often use analogies.

What is your teaching motto?

My teaching motto is not so different from what I personally believe in, and that is to stay positive. I would like my students to believe this too – that where there is a will, there is a way. Find your way, strive for your goals.

Realistically speaking, this translates to helping students in finding their vision and striving towards their mission. However, not many full-time students at this level have clear goals. I am eager to help them find their direction and guide them in unveiling their potential.

Also, as a family member of Caritas Hong Kong, we have an overarching philosophy of “We care”. We care for people in need, and we care for our students.

How well are your students doing?

I am glad to say that I have seen great improvement in many of my students over the years. All students have their strengths and weaknesses. We have some students who perform very well while some students who are lagging behind. But you have got to try. You never know without doing.

Last year I also recommended that a group of students join the Accounting & Business Management Case Competition held by the HKIAAT. At first when I introduced the event to the students, they were so hesitant and they had no confidence at all. They agreed to participate in the competition only after struggling with the idea for a whole week. But the final result showed their efforts paid off. They managed to get into the final six. What is most important is that they had really put effort in the process, and that experience gave a great boost to their confidence. I am sure I will encourage more students to participate in the competition this year.

What are your views about the AAT qualification?

The AAT qualification is very practical. Apart from substantive accounting knowledge, it also covers other practical aspects and skills that are crucial in the business environment, say taxation, business law and management. These skills are what employers desire today.

What is your advice for accounting students in Hong Kong?

Attitude determines everything. A good attitude brings you success both in your studies and in your personal life. As starters in a profession, students ought to possess an energetic, dynamic, and positive mind-set. Always be willing to try and be creative. Today, many students lack a far-reaching perspective. Some may terminate their studies and enter the job market for short-term monetary or material gains.

Everybody can have a dream and the dream may come true some day. So, plan for it, and strive for it. Don't sacrifice long-term prosperity for short-term comfort. Never give up!

