

MASTERFUL
RETENTIONBY CHRISTOPHER
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"CONNECTION IS HOW [YOUR STUDENTS] FEEL ABOUT YOU, AND IF THEY PERCEIVE THAT YOU HAVE THEIR BEST INTEREST PRIORITIZED IN THEIR MIND. IT IS AS IMPORTANT TO THEM AS THE PHYSICAL TRAINING YOU PUT THEM THROUGH."

How to Transform Your Instructors from Good to Great!

Long-term relationships are based on consistency. The best of them provide the predictability of what you would expect and mix it with some occasional pleasant surprises. If you are lucky enough to enjoy some relationships that have provided enjoyment over the long haul, you know what I mean. The best relationships make you feel better about yourself.

How does this apply to retention? Within every school there is a culture and way of treating and interacting with students. If you're lucky enough that your way produces positive feelings within your student body to want to continue their training, you're on the right track.

Some point to everyone snapping to attention, bowing, kneeling when asked and answering with a loud, "Yes sir," as examples of a strong connection. I would say this is proof of student compliance.

Connection is how they feel about you, and if they perceive that you have their best interest prioritized in their mind. It is as important to them as the physical training you put them through. And while there are many ways to interact to grow a connection with students, like always, the best of the best instructors observed over the years have a few commonalities.

1. They Are Student-Focused. Like walking into a fine hotel and being greeted by the receptionist, martial arts schools with a student focus make sure to take the time to remember to keep the students imbued with a feeling of being important. They do this by taking the time to greet each student when they see them, checking in with them on their training and caring about their well-being beyond the mat.

2. They Follow Through. Martial arts schools make promises in the beginning of a relationship. They create a picture of what training in the academy will be like. The best make the sale into a basic-training program, then they go to work on exceeding the vision they created for the new student and their family. They ensure all details are ironed out, because they know any detail left unattended will potentially be a friction point in the relationship with the student.

3. They Follow-Up on Student Progress. Have you ever had a student that was seemingly having a great time in class and, all of a sudden, he is gone? *Ouch!* If you've been teaching long enough, you know it does happen, unfortunately, from time to time. There are many causes for a student's sudden departure. But you never want it to be *because you assumed* his or her attendance meant they were happy with their training and they were getting the results they wanted.

Take the time and have the courage to ask your students, "How is your training going?" "Are you getting out of it what you like?" "Is there anything we could do that would help you enjoy your training more or help you reach your goals faster?"

The old saying, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," is as true today as it was when it was first quoted. Building strong relationships within your school may be the very best competitive advantage and long-term success strategy you can employ. It will transform your instructors, in your students' minds, from good to great.

Connection is not just compliance. It is the ultimate leverage for a martial arts school owner and instructor. Embrace these best practices and watch your school soar to the heights you desire. 🏆