

A growing number of school districts in the United States are using interview-rating systems to assist in selecting quality teacher candidates for employment. Ventures for Excellence, Gallup Teacher Insight, and the STAR Teacher are such examples of interview-rating systems being used (Clemons, 2010). Teacher interview-rating systems have become more prevalent and the process used to hire teachers has changed. The changes are due to the influence of quality teaching on student achievement (Clemons, 2010).

Previously, teachers have been assessed based on submitted resumes, interview skills, and experience; however, there has been a shift to identify teacher candidates based on character traits (Clemons, 2010). Research of Sanders and Rivers (1996) determined that hiring teachers with certain character traits could promote student achievement. Character traits are now evaluated along with job applications, resumes, letters of recommendation, and transcripts.

One such hiring instrument that predicts to measure candidate character traits is Ventures for Excellence. Ventures for Excellence claims that their structured interview is only one piece of a candidate assessment, but it is the most important. Ventures for Excellence was founded in 1978 by Dr. Vic Cottrell after 30 years of studying the qualities of excellent teachers (Ventures for Excellence, 2004).

According to Ventures for Excellence (2004), children learn best when the following 16 behaviors are modeled by teachers:

1. The teacher is highly committed to their intellectual and emotional growth.
2. The teacher is empathetic and caring toward them.
3. They are accepted as unique individuals.
4. There are high expectations for all students.
5. Positive relationships are built in the classroom.
6. They are listened to and involved in two-way sharing with the teacher.
7. There is support for them as individuals.
8. The teacher is highly committed to their intellectual and emotional growth.
9. Learning is structured around a process which includes knowledge about the students, clarity on what is to be learned, guided practice, checking for understanding and adjustment of the learning process for those students who need it.
10. Learning is tied to experience and real-world application.
11. Learning is tied to their interests.
12. They are active participants in the learning.
13. They see the connection between what is being taught and their present life. 14. They take responsibility for their own behavior and learning.
15. Teaching strategies, well documented by research, are used consistently.
16. The building administrator facilitates teachers in being learning specialists.

References:

- Clemons, B. L. (2010). A correlational study of the ventures for excellence interview- rating system and first year teacher evaluations (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 3389740).
- Sanders, W. L., & Rivers, J. C. (1996). Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.
- Ventures for Excellence. (2004). Teacher selection and development resource workbook.