



## TEACHING TIPS BY MELODY SHUMAN



*Dear Melody,*

*"I run all of my classes at my dojo just like you do. I'd like to know what goes through your head before and during class."*

*Instructors,*

*"The first thing I do before a class begins is get on the same page as my students. We have quite the group of personalities in each and every class. My first goal is to start chatting with my students so I can get them focused on me. I ask them how their day was; I share a bunch of high-fives and fake-fives; and I point out the students that are already showing me they are ready to perform.*

*I think my students are hams. They love POSITIVE attention. They'll do almost anything to get me to pick them for any questions; they also feed off of winning a prize; they also feed off of the attention they get when I point out who's sitting with their legs cross and hands on their knees.*

*There is not a minute that I do not commit to my students. I put first what I think is best for each-and-every student. If I know he (or she) is not as sharp as others at sitting still, I prompt the opportunity to catch him (or her) in the act. Also, when I have to use force to discipline, I immediately prompt an opportunity to re-direct the student to positive behavior.*

*Prompting is something I think all instructors should master. When you prompt a student you are basically spelling out what you are looking for loud-and-clear, so that EVERY student does what you say and then you compliment a specific student for his or her effort.*

*For example: "When I say go, I want everyone to line up before I count to five." Then, catch a student that you feel needs a boost. This reminds the student that you are on his or her side.*

*Once you master prompting, the next step is mastering how to balance your teaching approach so that you are not a cheerleader, but more so a healthy balance of being both a motivator and teacher. To do so, you must focus on results. If it is not obvious that students are not learning and growing then they won't get better and eventually that will come back to haunt you. Focus on results in each and every drill, and you will find your balance.*

*So now you know what goes on in my head before and during class. Take some time to really digest this tip, and put it into action over and over again. The more you practice improving your teaching skills the better you will be.*

*Good luck!*

*Melody*