

I Did Not Start on the First Day of School

It's mid-year and you've just been hired or you want to wipe the slate clean. Find help for starting again after the real first day in the **Going Beyond** folder for Chapter 19 at EffectiveTeaching.com.

I Did Not Start on the First Day of School

You've been hired and school has already started. Or you want to wipe the slate clean and start all over again. You can do it!

Everyday things are started after the beginning. A pitcher is sent into a game in the seventh inning. A caterer is fired and a new caterer is hired for your party. A flight is canceled and you need to take a different flight. You spill something on your shirt as you prepare for dinner out, so you find another shirt. Changes and transitions are a part of life. **Very simply: You can reboot.**

Kazim Cicek spent his first three years as a “warrior” with his classes, and then changed for the best to start his fourth year. He's now a successful teacher with a classroom management plan. His story is on page 5 in *The First Days of School*.

Elmo Sanchez made a transition between his first and second year of teaching. He, too, is successful with a classroom management plan. His story is on page 315 in *The First Days of School*.

So, what if you start teaching after the first day of school or want to start all over again? This is what you can do.

1. Ask yourself, what it is you want your students to do so that you can teach them what you want them to learn. The key word is “do.”
 - a. Do not say, “What can I do to get them to behave?”
 - b. Do not say, “What activity can I find to keep them busy and quiet?”
2. Instead, pick one procedure that you want to teach. In all probability, it will either be the procedure of what to do upon entering the classroom and getting started on the bellwork assignment or the procedure for getting a class's attention.
3. Tell your students that you are going to teach a procedure. **Explain that a procedure is not a rule; thus, there are no punishments or rewards. Rather, a procedure is simply something you want them to do so they can be successful—and you do want them to be successful.**

If you have high school students, ask them about some procedures they do when they are at their part time jobs.

If you have younger students, ask them what procedure they follow when they come home from school. Do they get a snack, do homework, play?

4. Then, use the following three steps to teach a procedure:

Step 1. Introduce the procedure. Model it, demonstrate it, role play it, allow for questions. Ask for confirmation that they can do it.

Step 2. Rehearse the procedure.

Step 3. Reinforce the concept that they can do it by rehearsing it again and again. Praise them for doing the procedure correctly.

Teach the same procedure again the next day, and the next.

The following week, introduce another procedure and go through the same three steps used to teach a procedure.

Each week, introduce a new procedure.

After four to six weeks, notice how organized and safe the class has become.

It's never too late to start being successful. Any day can be a first day of school.