

My Educational Philosophy

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My teaching skills were honed in challenging situations: in New York City university classrooms with students who lacked basic literacy or math skills and in Japanese classrooms where students struggled with learning in English more than with basic economics concepts. I've spent much of my professional life giving workshops and seminars to people for whom English is not a native language. Finally at Hult International Business School, my classes are typically 75 students from dozens of countries. These experiences helped sensitize me to the need for appropriate communication, to speak to the students in a manner that they can understand.

I've also taught at some very fine schools, where motivated students brought a high level of skills and a willingness to work hard. It is no less important to tailor the lesson to these students—to help good students meet their potential—than to help those with fewer skills. Helping people learn can be a joy, you learn as they do, but it takes a continual monitoring and self-reflection to ensure that lessons are appropriate and that effective communication occurs.

Teaching economics has some particular challenges. Students who have never faced a hard budget, have never paid bills or looked for a job don't always appreciate the importance of the subject. By relating subject matter to current events—an election year helps—the students start to see the connection between the analysis and their lives. Economics uses abstract concepts, but it must not be an abstract subject to a student. To this end, students must learn to form relationships between concept and the world around them, to use the tools of economics to critically evaluate what people say about their world. Getting the students to speak and to write and to respond to their communication is important to helping them use the tools of economics constructively and personally.