

Students, What you Should Ask You Teachers

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SPEAKERS

Seth Perler

S Seth Perler 00:01
Hey students, what's up? The problem is, is that this is the beginning of a new semester. And it is has been a wacky, crazy year. And it is sometimes hard to do well, a lot of my students really struggled last semester, and a lot of things fell through the cracks. And a lot of my students had, you know, had failed some classes and stuff like this, and they don't want to be doing that.

S Seth Perler 00:25
So anyhow, what's up? My name is Seth Perler. I'm an executive function coach, and I help struggling students navigate this thing called education, so you can have an awesome life. And if you want to do well, this semester, I'm going to tell you the exact questions you should ask your teachers and why. And parents, if you're watching this, you may like this as well because you can go ahead and apply the same principles. But students, here's the thing. So I work with students who are resistant, they don't feel like it, they don't want to, they don't want to email their teachers, they don't want to ask their teachers for help. You know, it can be really hard. So the first thing you want to understand is that asking for help is what successful people do. If you want to be successful in life, and you want to have choices as an adult, and you want to have opportunities, and possibilities, and do

cool things with your life, the most successful people in the world ask for help. They learned how to ask for help. And that's one of the hardest things in the world to do.

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In this video, I'm going to show you the questions that I think you will want to consider asking your teachers. So before I start going into what these questions are, I want to tell you that you don't want to send all the questions to them. Just pick three to five questions and send those to your teachers, and that's it. And parents, you need to hear this too. Don't send a giant email, send a quick little email with three to five questions, that's it. Give the teacher something that they can actually respond to. So I'm going to give you a lot of ideas, and I'm going to tell you why I am I'm asking the question. Why you might want to ask these questions to your teachers. I hear these problems all the time, so telling you why will allow you to know if you want to ask the question. So anyhow, here's what you are going to want to do.

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Basically, you're going to want to email your teacher and you're going to want to say "Hey, yo, what's up? It's me, give me a little bit of help here. I want to do well this semester." So here's how it looks. First thing, what you should ask your teachers if you want to do well, first thing you want to do is you want to state the problem. So "Hey, what's up teacher? The school setup is challenging, you know, it's stressful for me, I hate being on screens all day. It's socially hard, I can't see my friends, or I'm with my family too much. I'm getting anxious, I have executive function struggles..." So first thing you're going to do is state the problem. And then you're going to state what you want. "I want to know how to succeed, and I need some clarity." And then you want to say "Will you please help me?" That's the hardest thing in the world to ask, but once you ask it a couple times, you start to realize it's actually not that hard to ask. I think one of the things that makes that question hard to ask is a lot of times when we feel like we've asked for help from a teacher, maybe we felt shamed, or we've heard from the teacher, "Well, I already explained that to the class, why are you asking me this again?" Or things like that. Well, don't let that discourage you. If you ever get pushed back because you're asking for help, just say, "Hey, look, I'm just asking for help. Okay, I'm not perfect. Help me here." Like, just have that kind of frame. You are there to get an education for you. Not for your parents, not for your teachers, not for me, not for anybody, it's for you. This education is for you. So you're not putting them out, just ask the questions you need to. So anyhow, that's it. That's what I want to start you on. Say the problem, "Yo, this has been challenging," real quick, "This has been challenging. Will you please help me? I want to do one your class."

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Then here's what you're going to ask, "What specifically needs to happen in order to pass this semester?" So you're just asking the teacher what needs to happen. It's very open ended, which makes it really easy. And then they can reply to you in a good way.

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Next, "Should I come in for office hours or a quick Zoom call to get some help?" So just ask them, and don't assume you know what the teacher is going to say. Just ask. Then you might want to ask, "Are there any PEPRs this semester?" So PEPR is what I call it. So basically, this semester, any semester, usually, you have very large things. My students who struggle with executive function wait until the last minute on everything. Then they wait until the last minute on PEPR which I'll explain in a second. And when you wait until last minute on PEPR, then you rush it. Sometimes you do well and get an A or a B because you think you're good under pressure, and you might be good under pressure, but it's not a good way to keep living. You want to change that and not always do things under pressure. So you want to ask if there's any PEPR. Are there any papers this semester? Because big papers always take a long time, people always wait until the last minute. Are there any exams? P-E? P is projects, and R is large reading assignments, like novels. So "Are there any big papers, exams, projects, or readings I have to do this semester?" so you want to ask that next.

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Then sometimes you want to ask, "What specifically needs to happen in order to pass the semester?" Great question ask. "What specifically needs to happen?" Oh, I really said that. My brain is a bit fried today. Excuse me. Where was I? There we go. "What specifically do I need to do to pass?" Or you can also ask to raise your grades. So if you're failing, you can say "What specifically do I need to do?" That way they're not vague. They're not just saying "Do your homework." You're saying specifically, "What homework should I do? Should I focus on all the missings? Should I focus on the things that are worth 100 points? Should I focus on the missings that are worth 10 points? Should I focus on the big project? What specifically do I need to do to raise my grade?" Ask what you're doing well. That's a great question. Ask, ask them, "What is the one biggest insight that you have for me that would make a difference in my life? What is the one most important thing you would tell me?" That's a great question because they can focus on one thing. "What's your best tip that you have for student success? What should I be looking at online specifically, and how often?" My students don't even know what portals to check, when to check the portals, how often. Teachers don't usually say how often they update things. Is it on Wednesdays? Is it on Fridays? Is it daily? Is it every month? So what should you be

checking, and when? Because I have students who have Schoology and Google Classroom and the teacher website, and all this stuff. "When do you update your grades?" I already mentioned that. "How do I navigate the portal?" So that might be a good one to ask. "Are you aware of my accommodations? I want to make sure I'm getting the support I need." Sorry, for coughing here. I have a super dry throat today. "I want to make sure I'm getting the support I need. Are you aware of my accommodations?" Sometimes teachers don't even know that you have accommodations. And if they know, sometimes they're not doing anything about them and you need to remind them? Great question is, "What if I get way behind this semester? I want to do well, what if I get way behind which I do? feel like it's hard for me to get clear information. What do I need to do to get clarity about schoolwork?" Sometimes teachers post stuff that's really vague, and I don't even know what they're talking about. Your parents don't even know what they're talking about. How are you going to know what they're talking about? What in the world do they mean? So "What do I need to do to get clarity? How much time should be spent studying, reading, writing homework, and ect? I have a lot of students who take forever to do things. And it's good to ask, because if the teacher says, you know, 30 minutes a night, and you're spending two hours, something's wrong, you need to tell the teacher. "What if I'm the type of person who takes forever? What should I do? What should notes look like in your class?" You know, some teachers want you to take notes, some don't care. But you might want to know what notes should look like, because that can help you a lot." Are there any exams?" That's like what I said before with PEPR. But in this case, you're asking, "Is there a study guides and where do I find them?" I cannot tell you how many times I've said to a student, "Do you have a study guide?" "No teacher didn't give us one." "Well did they tell you what's going to be on the test?" "No." And then we email the teacher, they reluctantly email the teacher, and we find out that there is a study guide, or the teacher did outline what needs to be on the test. So if you're like, "No, the teacher didn't tell me," rethink that. Check yourself.

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"Do you accept late work for credit? How specifically does that work?" I have students who are like, "Oh, it's late, my teacher is not gonna give me credit." And then we find out they will give him credit, or the teacher won't give him credit and then we find out well, is it even worth it to do the work at that point. Which is a horrible situation to be in even asking that question. And then later in the semester, after looking at your grades on the portal, sometimes later in the semester, you might say something like this, "Hey, teach what's up? After looking at the grades on the portal, I'm having trouble understanding what's going on. And I don't want to be blindsided and like fail your class. Am I missing something? Or are there any other upcoming items that will be entered?" So what happens a lot is that a student is getting like, let's say a B, or C, and the teacher doesn't

upgrade the grades very often. And then all of a sudden, one day, it's like two weeks before the end of the semester, the teacher upgrades a million grades and you have an F, and you're going "Why do I even have an F? That makes no sense. How did this happen?" So you don't want to be blindsided. You want to be proactive. Say, "Am I missing something? Are there anything upcoming that's going to be entered? If so, what are they and how do I get details?" Excellent question, especially if you're the type of person who gets blindsided a lot.

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Now, next day, if they don't email you back, and this may sound like you're bugging them, but you're not bugging them, okay. Listen to how I'm framing this and say, "Hey, what's up? I know you're busy. But this is urgent. I emailed you the following email yesterday so I'm resending it to make sure you see it. Please respond ASAP so I can do my best. Thanks for understanding all the help. All you do to help me. From, me" and whatever your name is. Now, sometimes the teacher doesn't really respond to you. Or the teacher isn't cool or they shame people, or they're just not very helpful. You're not connecting with them and they're really hard to talk to. And you're like, "Man, that teacher hates me. I don't even want to ask them anything." Well, again, the education is for you and not for the teacher. So I don't care how they feel, how they act like that. Don't just ignore that. You need to do what's right for you. So don't worry about that. Don't worry about it, I promise you. If they're not cool like that, CC others, meaning email this your school counselor, or an admin you're like, or another teacher. You should CC someone else, because that tends to help with accountability, meaning that the teacher is more likely to respond in a positive way if you CC it to others. Just be open about it, be like, "Hey, what's up? I'm CCing you because I don't know if this teacher checks their email, can you make sure they get it?" Don't worry, you're not going to hurt anyone's feelings, nothing bad's gonna happen. But they need to take responsibility for their job and being of service to you.

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Anyhow, what's up? My name is Seth Perler. I put these questions on my website. So if you're watching this on YouTube, just click on the blog post, you can print up these questions and check them out if you like them. And just, you know, never give up. This education is for you. If you struggle with executive function in school and things like that, look, just never ever give up. This education is for you. Who cares about all the grades? Just do your best and get what you can so that you can have good life now, and a good future. My website is SethPerler.com. If you want to subscribe, give it a thumbs up, leave a comment. What do you think? Are there any questions I left out that you would advise people to ask their teachers in order to have a great semester? What kind of thoughts do

you have about this stuff? All right, be well take care of yourselves. I will see you later.