

**Success Strategies for Re-engaging the Disengaged Young Man of Color**



Prepared by: Wes Hall

Helping Students Connect A Quality Education to Their Future Financial Well-Being.

An independent research project designed to measure the attitudes of economically challenged students, revealed a significant number struggled to connect education to their future financial well-being. The study also found the inability to make that critical connection contributed to tune-out, disengagement, truancy, and dropout.

**Question:** How can we expect students who come from economically challenged environments to vigorously participate in a process that, in their opinion, is not a means to improve their lives financially?

*According to an ad placed by the Wall Street Journal, “Information is the new currency,” (December 1, 2011, Wall Street Journal). In this era, information is a marketable commodity, yet many students don’t connect information with money.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *% Agree* | *% I don’t know* | *% Disagree* |
| *Money comes from information* | **35** | **43** | **22** |
| *I seek out information on my own* | **44** | **37** | **19** |
| *I know how to turn information into money* | **33** | **41** | **26** |

**I seek information on my own**

44% agree 56% I don’t know or disagree

**I know how to turn information into money**

33% Agree 67% I don’t know or Disagree

**Money comes from information**

35% agreed 65% I don’t know or disagree

Strategies to help young men of color connect **education** to their **future financial well-being**.

**Flawed Assumption:**

What is the “Flawed Assumption?”

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If a teacher disseminates pedagogy to a student who understands the connection between education and upward mobility, the same as she does to the student who does not make the connection, what is the possible outcome?

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**Education can be** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Information can be** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**6 Strategies for Re-engaging Disengaged Young Men of Color**

**Strategy #1: Control Your Energy, Control Your Outcome**

Young men who emanate from challenging environments grow up surrounded by constant danger. Their antennas are constantly on the lookout for energy that could spell trouble. Be aware of your energy when you are in their space. Your energy signals to them what to expect from you.

**Strategy #2: Have a Firm Grasp on Your Subject-Matter**

Timing is critical to young men of color. Lapses in your approach could signal uncertainty – a deadly element when dealing with students who come from challenging environments. Keep the pace moving and you stand a better chance of holding their attention.

**Strategy #3: Recognize Their Apprehension and Seize Their Attention Immediately**

For the young man who has disengaged from his educational process, your class is just another waste of time. He’s seen and heard it all before and your class will be just another boring repeat of all his other educational experiences. Be creative. Find an off-beat approach to get his attention, in-line with the subject you want to teach him. His surprise at your attempt may be all that is needed to trigger his curiosity and spark his interest.

**Strategy #4: Present an Attitude of Certainty.**

Assertiveness, not aggression is the key to pulling off this feat. “Know,” that you are in control and nothing can shake you. Meet any challenge with an exterior of, “Calm.” Be firm, yet flexible. Allow for, “Energy Moments,” then get right back to business. Be approachable, but not to the point of discomfort – set boundaries. Represent authority without being bossy. Confidence is the key.

**Strategy #5: The End-Game**

Every student must have an, “End-Game.” It is even more important for young men of color. Helping him create his end-game will help make his educational experience real, as well as, provide you a tool to help keep him on track. Always reference his end-game if he gets off-track or falls behind in class. The fact he created his end-game will enable you to use his own words as a personal incentive to re-engage his efforts.

Wes Hall is an Educational Consultant to the Los Angeles Unified School District. He heads the “Village Movement,” under the direction of Dr. Brenda Manuel, Director of the Student Unit. He provides professional development training to principals and teachers throughout the district in the area of, “Relationship Building and Success Strategies for Re-Engaging Disengaged Students,” (particularly, young men of color). He is the author of three books, “You Are the Money!” “Jack and the Sly Fox,” and his newest children’s book, “I Raise My Hand.” He is the moderator for the district’s new television show, “Inside LAUSD’S Student Voices,” which airs every Sunday at 4:30pm, on channel 15.

More information is available at [www.weshall217.com](http://www.weshall217.com)

Wesley.hall@lausd.net or weshall217@gmail.com

