

PTE Spring Conference Sample of a Proposal Submission

Name of presenter and professional affiliations:

1. Russ Mason (Ralph L. Mason III)
University of Delaware, English Language Institute faculty member
(member of TESOL & PennTESOL East)

Contact person information:

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Title of presentation:

A Soft Answer: yielding for conflict resolution and classroom management

Presentation type:

Paper (45 minutes: lecture format with a short question and answer period)

Interest Groups:

Higher Education, Secondary Education, Elementary Education, Adult Education

Technical support needed:

Overhead projector

Proposal information:

250 word description--

Effective classroom management is essential to the building of student-teacher rapport and to the cultivation of a productive learning environment. How can the teacher encourage positive relationships and promote a harmonious, cooperative, and learnercentered dynamic while dealing effectively with conflict? The presenter will discuss a personal philosophy of teaching, will offer principles of effective management, and will provide examples of useful techniques and strategies for preventing and resolving conflict.

The focus will be on the application of the principle of yielding in conflict resolution for situations arising in the classroom and beyond. The presenter will draw on personal experience, both as an educator (teaching in various environments since 1984, with 15 years of ESL background) and as a practitioner of Asian martial arts (since the 1970s). The arts of Taijiquan and Aikido emphasize the principle of yielding rather than confronting force with force. The idea is to receive the energy of an attack, blend with it, yield to and follow it, and then to gently redirect it, thereby unbalancing and neutralizing the attack.

The goal of this approach is to maintain harmony and balance in human relationships. In a physical confrontation, this manifests in a desire to neutralize conflict softly, without

resorting to force, and without injuring an attacker. In a classroom situation involving conflict or disruptive behavior, the goal is to gently resolve the conflict while preserving an atmosphere of mutual rapport and respect so that learning may be facilitated.

30 – 50 word abstract for program book—

Using the principle of yielding, one may gently and efficiently resolve conflict. This classroom management approach can help teachers to build an atmosphere of rapport and mutual respect and to create a harmonious dynamic of exchange. Facilitate learning and promote peace in your classroom and community.

15 – 25 word biographical statement of the presenter—

Russ Mason is a faculty member of the University of Delaware's English Language Institute and a practitioner of the soft-style Chinese martial art Taijiquan.

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