Twenty Tips on Motivating Students

Few teachers would deny that motivated students are easier to teach, or that students who are interested in learning do, in fact, learn more. So how do teachers motivate their students? Here are some practice, tried-and-true strategies to get (and keep) your students interested in learning.

1. **Know your students' names** and use their names as often as possible.
2. Plan for every class; never try to wing it.
3. Pay attention to the strengths and limitations of each of your students. Reward their strengths and strengthen their weaknesses.
4. If possible, set your room in a U-shape to encourage interaction among students.
5. Vary your instructional strategies; use lectures, demonstrations, discussions, case studies, groups, and more.
6. Review the learning objectives with your students. Be sure students know what they are expected to learn, do, know, etc.
7. Make your classes relevant. Be sure students see how the content relates to them and the world around them.
8. Move around the room as you teach.
10. Put some excitement into your speech; vary your pitch, volume and rate.
11. Give lots of examples.
12. Encourage students to share their ideas and comments, even if they are incorrect. You'll never know what students don't understand unless you ask them.
13. Maintain eye contact and move toward your students as you interact with them. Nod your head to show that you are listening to them.
14. Provide opportunities for students to speak to the class.
15. Be available before class starts, during break, and after class to visit with students.
16. Return assignments and tests to students as soon as reasonably possible. Provide constructive feedback.
17. Be consistent in your treatment of students.
18. Make sure that your exams are current, valid, and reliable. Tie your assessment to your course objectives.
19. Plan around 15-20 minute cycles. Students have difficulty maintaining attention after a longer period of time.
20. Involve your students in your teaching. Ask for feedback.