

## GO AHEAD – *Talk to Me!*

Talking to your professor outside of class is an absolute must. Find out why. **By Zach Kyle**

Talking to your instructors outside of class is absolutely necessary if you intend to get the most out of your education. A minute spent picking a professor's brain will go further to helping your grade than a minute spent doing *anything* else. Think about it. How much information can you absorb after studying for a few minutes, or reading textbooks? Not much. But making a point to seek out and chat up your instructor can make a world of difference, be it to your grade, strategy for the class, or even direction you choose to pursue after college.

Savvy students develop relationships with their professors. Here's five reasons why.

### 1. Be a Human, Not a Number

At small universities, you might enjoy small classes where your instructor will know you and all of your classmates by name. If you attend a large university, chances are at least some of your classes will be in huge lecture halls where your identity is enumerated by the bubbles you fill in on a Scantron sheet. Periodic visits will put you on a name-to-name basis with your instructor, which can result in more personable interactions and come to your aid if you forget to attach your emailed assignment or need to miss class.

### 2. Better Grades

Don't expect to *use* your instructors, but understand that they are more likely to divulge more information about tests to students they've developed rapport with than to the assembled class. But don't just show up the day before a test and expect to be in the know. Introduce yourself early on and try to keep in touch through visits and email.

### 3. Guidance

Most professional fields are big, and it's easy to get lost in the vast opportunities they offer. Instructors are experts, and as such can offer the sagest wisdom available to you.

### 4. References

On that note, if you are to put that degree to work after you graduate, you'll need references. Instructors are just the ones to give them: not only do they know what professionals want in an employee, they can also write well. Plus, they know people in the industry. Instant contacts!

### 4. Make Friends

It sounds cheesy, but most instructors are far more personable one-on-one than inside class. Visiting them outside of the classroom will allow you the opportunity to see them as a real person – not a professor. In fact, most graduates keep in touch with at least one professor once they leave college. But, it only happens if you take the initiative to make it happen.

For more information about interacting with your professor and other great college success tips, read *Life During College: Your Guide To Success*.

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