

## No Such Thing as Enough Questions

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My teaching philosophy is simple. Higher passion drives higher learning. When people are passionate about something, they are fueled to learn. One of the greatest ways to build passion into students is to probe them to ask more complex and in-depth questions. You've heard it said that "there is no such thing as a dumb question." While I agree with this statement, my experience has taught me that **there is no such thing as enough questions**. When I interact with my students, I always encourage them to think about what questions they haven't asked or what angle they haven't looked at, because questions grow passion and learning. During my sophomore year at Purdue University, I took a Psychology of Law class that was taught by a defense attorney. This professor would tell us about his adjudicated cases, and it was absolutely fascinating to me. After class, I would always stay behind and ask him intricate and detail-oriented questions about the cases. Halfway through the semester, he asked me if I had ever thought about pursuing a career in the field of forensic science, because he would hate to be the defense attorney on any case that I worked! This professor planted a seed and made me realize how important asking probing questions would be in the forensic science arena, and in any arena of learning.

I'm sure that you have met people who seem to know it all. It is very frustrating to try to teach a person who acts like they know it all. However, when you have the opportunity to teach a person who can't seem to know enough—wow!

I am committed to an interdisciplinary and synergistic approach to teaching forensic topics, and my courses are structured with this in mind. Rather than simply lecturing to a class, I try to cultivate an interactive environment where students can participate in hands-on demonstrations and practical applications. For example, my students do not just learn about footwear casts from a textbook. They physically mix dentstone and pour the casting material into the footwear impression for a real-world experience. In other words, knowledge plus experience equals effective learning. That is why after disseminating information to my students, I also physically walk them through the steps of processing a crime scene using *the Systematic Approach to Crime Scene Investigation*, a standardized guide which directs the crime scene investigator how to process the scene—from the moment they enter the scene for a preliminary scene survey to the final scene walkthrough.

The best professors are lifelong learners. A hunger for learning is the most important tool a student can have in their lifelong pursuit of education and growth. My job is to cultivate hungry, passionate learners!



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