

Models Main Text

Hi this is AJ. Welcome to lesson number 6, today's topic "Models." Models are very important, and by model I mean role model, not the models you see on magazines. That's a different meaning. A role model is kind of like a hero. It's someone that has success, the same kind of success that you want. So, for example, if you are a basketball player, you want to be great then maybe Shaquille O'Neal or Michael Jordan is your role model, maybe both. It's important to have role models. Role models are people who have done already what you want to do. Why is that important? Well, it's important because you can learn from them. You can learn much faster if you find out, if you discover what they did to succeed. This is the fast track for success. You don't have to make all the same mistakes. You can copy them in a way and learn much, much faster.

So, for example, when I started my own business, in the beginning I knew nothing, zero, I had no idea what to do. I was just an English teacher. Now I had two choices, I could have just tried something, tried something else, kept trying things, trying things, making mistakes, failing, try again. And I did do that somewhat. But I wanted to succeed faster. That would be a very slow method if I only experimented, if I only tried and failed, tried and failed, and tried to find everything by myself. So, of course, I wanted to succeed faster, so what did I do? I went and I found role models. I found other people who were already successful business people. I read their books. I went to their seminars and their workshops. I learned everything possible from them. And then I used what I learned with my own business. And in this way I was able to succeed much, much faster. I could take all the great strategies that they were using, that they discovered in their life, maybe with many, many years. I could take all those great strategies and I could use them in months or in weeks.

Well you can do the same thing with your English learning or with anything. You can find role models, people who are total masters, and you can steal their ideas. You can steal the best ideas, the best strategies, the best methods that they have used, and you can copy those so that you will learn much, much faster. You will make fewer mistakes. So that's why role models are so important. They speed up the learning process, they boost it up. They also, of course, give you an emotional boost because you can see, hey, they did it. Somebody already did what I want to do. It proves it's not impossible, it can be done. And I also had that a little bit with my business. I was a little bit scared. I was an English teacher. I didn't know much about business. But the more I read about all these other people who started, like me, with no knowledge of business, with no money, but they did certain things and those certain actions led to success. Those certain strategies led to success and I realized if I used the same strategies I will get the

same result, the same success. It's the same with English learning. If you follow the strategies of people who are masters, you also will become a master, quite simple.

So let's talk about this a little bit. In fact, this is how I developed my teaching system. As a beginning teacher of English, I knew nothing, zero. I went to Korea and I got a job teaching small children, and I didn't know anything about English teaching. I had a degree in social work. I had studied social work in school and suddenly I needed to teach small children. And I did what most English teachers do, I just grabbed some textbooks and followed the textbooks. And I followed what my boss told me to do. And the result was not so good. And I did this for a few years and later I changed to teaching adults. And the same thing, I just used some textbooks, oh this textbook, this textbook, the school would give me some books to use and I just kind of randomly used different activities from these books. And the results were quite poor.

But I began to notice something. I began to notice that a few students in my classes were learning much faster than everybody else. They were doing much better than everybody else. So I was curious, I wanted to be a better teacher and I thought "I need to learn what are these guys doing differently? Why are they different than the other students?" So I talked to them. I interviewed them. I constantly asked questions. I was very, very focused on my best students. What were they doing? And I focused on the other students, what were they doing? What was the difference? And over time I began to realize there were patterns. The best students were always doing similar things and they were different than what most students were doing.

Later, a few years later, I went and got a Masters Degree in teaching English as a foreign language. And during my studies, during my Masters Degree program, I began to look for other models. This time I looked for researchers, for scientists who were studying English learning or, in general, language learning. And I wanted to find out again what were the results, the scientific results that showed which methods were fastest, which methods were best for learning English or for teaching English.

My focus, of course, was teaching. And again I began to find patterns and the very interesting thing to me, the patterns were the same as what was happening with my best students. So the research was showing the same thing that my students were showing. They were doing exactly the same thing. So from these two models, these role models, these academic role models, these scientists, and then my actual students, my best students, also role models, I learned a totally new way to teach English. And that is what you have now, the Effortless English system, the Effortless English approach.

So let me talk about some of these examples and then I will talk in more detail about the importance of finding role models and finding a peer group. So peer means...it's a person who's equal to you. But a peer, really it means, it's the people you have contact with every day. Your coworkers, your friends, business partners, all of those people are your peers, so people you have contact with constantly, every day, the people you see again and again and again, every day, those are your peers. And it's important to have

a very good peer group. You need to have a good peer group and you need to have good role models.

So first let's talk about role models. I just want to talk about a few success stories, a few of my best students that I've had over the years. So one of my best students, her name was Jeannie, she was Korean and she was a student of mine in San Francisco. And she learned so much faster than my other students, it was amazing. I couldn't believe it. So I began to ask Jeannie questions all the time about what she was doing. How did she study English? And I asked my other students the same questions. And I found out number one, Jeannie was focused on listening.

Jeannie did a lot of listening after school. She had an iPod and she was listening to my lessons all the time. She was listening to podcasts, she was listening to television, very focused on listening, an auditory method, learning with her ears. Another thing Jeannie liked to do was read English, but not textbooks. She read novels. Now in the beginning she was reading children's novels, very easy novels, but they were storybooks not textbooks. And she read a lot of these every day, she just read for fun, in English. So she was reading a lot of storybooks and she was listening, listening, listening a lot.

Another key thing that Jeannie focused on was meaning and interest. In other words, she always chose English materials that were interesting to her that had meaning for her. Textbooks usually don't have much personal meaning. So she chose a story "Oh, this story is very interesting, I want to read this book." She was focused on the meaning. She was focused on the story. She was not focused on grammar points or vocabulary. And the same in her listening, she chose listening that was interesting and fun and meaningful to her. So that's interesting.

Well, later I talked to a guy named Steve Kaufman. Steve Kaufman is a linguist. He speaks, I think he speaks 12 languages now. He keeps adding languages so I forget how many he speaks. But the last time I talked to him he was speaking 12 languages. Not bad. He's a Canadian, a native English speaker, but he speaks French, he speaks Japanese, Cantonese and Mandarin. He's learning Russian now, he's learning Korean. He's an amazing guy and, of course, I was very curious about Steve, another great language learning role model. And I asked Steve about his methods, "How do you do it?" And he writes a lot about his methods on his website in his blog.

So Steve, guess what, same as Jeannie. Number one, he has a listening approach. He focuses mostly on listening, probably 80% of his time he spends listening. He learns with his ears. Another thing Steve does, he reads for pleasure. He reads storybooks, he reads articles, he reads magazines. His reading is always for pleasure, it's always focused on something that's interesting to him or meaningful to him. He does not read textbooks. He does not focus on grammar, this is another interesting thing. Steve does not study grammar. He might learn a little grammar sometimes but, in general, he focuses on listening and reading for fun, reading for interest. Just like Jeannie, interesting.

Well I began to see these patterns again and again and again. The superstar learners, the superstar students have these same exact patterns. They're great role models and they're doing the same things. They seem to always be focused on listening...listening, listening, listening. They like to read for pleasure. They focus their listening and their reading on interesting content, meaningful content, articles, stories, novels, newspapers. Another interesting thing, they never focus on grammar. They may learn a little bit of grammar, or not. Some of them will study grammar a little bit, some never study grammar. But they all focus totally on listening to interesting content, reading interesting content...input, input, input is their focus.

Another interesting thing that you find with these superstar students, these superstar learners, is that they do a lot of deep learning, in other words, a lot of repetition. My favorite example of this is Jerry Dye, a man named Jerry Dye. Now Jerry was a native Chinese speaker and he moved to Canada. And he wanted to have perfect pronunciation. He wanted to sound like a North American. So number one, what did he do? Well, he focused on listening again...listening, listening, listening. Every day he listened to English.

Something else he did very interesting. He learned deeply. It means he took the same article, for example, or the same conversation, he listened to it 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 times. Amazing. The same conversation. Why did he do that? I mean it sounds crazy. It's very different from what normal students do. Well, because he realized he needed that massive repetition so that he could really learn and absorb all the sounds of English, the patterns of English. He realized that deep learning was more important than going fast and trying to learn a lot of words and a lot of grammar.

Now you don't need to do quite so much like Jerry Dye, 500 times with one thing is a little bit much. It's kind of hard to stay motivated. It can become quite boring. But the general principle is important, deep learning. It's something that all my superstar students do, that the superstar learners do. They learn a lot very deeply first so they go deep, deep, deep, a lot of repetitions, and then later they add more.

Another guy who does a lot of deep learning, one of my favorite examples in my mini-stories, Tiger Woods, we've heard a lot about Tiger Woods. Well, think about Tiger Woods for a minute. Tiger Woods started to practice golf when he was a child. His father taught him golf and he learned how to putt. He would practice putting, right, the little short, little short strokes. And he practiced big, long strokes, driving in golf, it's called driving it means hitting it far, the same swing. Tiger Woods has been practicing the exact same swing for years, since he was a small child until now.

He's a mater but he still practices his swing. I mean this is super deep learning. He's doing the same simple thing again and again and again, each time trying to make a tiny little improvement, right? Tiger didn't decide "Oh, well, I'm sick of this, I already know this. I don't need to practice anymore." That's what a lot of English learners do. They say "I already know the past tense. I can take a test, I can pass it, no problem." But when they speak they make constant mistakes with the past tense. It's because they

did not learn it deeply. They know it at a shallow level, they can take a test, but they don't know it deeply, deeply, deeply, the way Tiger Woods knows his swing because he's done it, I don't know, 50,000 times, 100,000 times, maybe more. So deep learning is something else we can learn from our role models.

So what you need to do then is find role models. And you can get them from a peer group. Peer group means it's the people you associate with, the people you're around, the people you connect to every day. How do you find a peer group of super great English learners, of superstar students? Well there are different ways to do it but I think the easiest way to do it is online. I mean the internet is amazing because you can communicate with people all over the world. So you can find super English learners in England, in Europe, in South America, in Asia, all over. And you can come together as a group and communicate, learn from each other. And that's going to increase your learning speed so much.

That's one reason we call ourselves the Effortless English Club. The Club part is equally important to the lessons. The Club part consists of forums and also a new member site we're developing. And the purpose is to create a peer group, a group of superstar learners so that you can connect with people in different parts of the world who are using these same patterns, these same methods, these same systems. And you can learn from them and so you can learn faster yourself. And another important thing about a peer group is it gives you support, emotional support. When you have other superstars to help you, you learn faster and you feel better.

Sometimes maybe you feel tired. Sometimes you have a problem. Well, you can go to these people, go to your peer group. Tell them "Help me, I feel tired." They will help you. They will encourage you. They'll bring your energy back up. It's very important to do this. Doing something alone is much tougher than doing it with a positive, superstar peer group. So you need to find a peer group, a powerful peer group of role models. People who are great English learners, you need to connect with them. Learn from them, do what they are doing. If you do that, I promise you, you will be so much more successful than you have in the past.

Okay, that is the end of this talk number 6, "Models and Peer Group." I will see *[cuts off]*