

Zig Memorial Comments
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I appreciate the opportunity today to help celebrate and honor the legacy of Zig Engelmann. The words that follow will not begin to do him justice nor will they capture the many dimensions of his character and contributions. Our heartfelt sympathies extend to his family in this difficult time.

Zig was a remarkable person, a true genius and a humanitarian of the highest order. I'd like to mention just a few of the many roles he has played in our lives.

He was a master of the teaching-learning process and understood instruction in a way that few ever have. Zig was always generous in sharing his wisdom and discoveries with others. The book that he and Doug Carnine wrote on instruction is a landmark classic in our field.

He was an enabler of others both by example and through his direct actions. There are so many of us here today whose work and careers have been enhanced by his contributions.

Zig was a pioneering influence in our field and refused to settle for that which was merely sufficient or just good enough. Much like Steve Jobs, he pushed the limits of excellence hard and constantly. Direct instruction was quite an invention and will be a huge mark of his enduring legacy.

Direct Instruction is arguably the most powerful instructional method ever invented. Its power was demonstrated to my wife, Jan, who was a reading and language arts teacher at Willamette High School, and an early adopter and advocate for direct instruction. She had a student from a migrant family who was assigned to her reading lab, who was a poor-reader and who responded well to her instruction. His family announced that they would have to move to follow the work. He put his foot down and said he wasn't moving because he liked his school so much. His mother

stormed into the school and demanded to know what was going on. It turns out that he was actually learning to read well through the direct instruction program Jan was using and he loved it.

I first heard of Zig through Bob Mattson, the U of O chair of special education, who was recruiting Wes Becker and Zig to the U of O in 1970. His success in doing so remains as one of his greatest career achievements. Project Follow Through, which Wes and Zig designed and directed, was a very effective national model and produced enormous benefits for the U of O.

I knew Wes from the behavioral literature and a conference but did not know his partner who had a Bachelor's in Philosophy and had created a model preschool at Illinois with Bereiter and Osborn. Just a few things about Zig that I came to know.

He was an excellent athlete and was very competitive. It took me less than 5 min. on the handball court with him to realize both.

He was an adventurous spirit and would take on many challenges with gusto such as having a motorcycle drag race with Herb Severson.

Zig was extremely generous and was one of the kindest people I've ever known.

In conclusion, if there were a Nobel Prize in the field of education, Zig Engelmann would be richly deserving of it. Zig's shining legacy will burn brightly for many years into the future. We will all greatly miss his presence in our lives. He was truly one of a kind.