

TYUMEN CHARACTER

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ROYTBLAT

EPOCH AND PERSONALITY

Once a reporter asked her a question: "What does it mean to be successful?" And she replied: "I should have time to do everything successfully!" This is Olga Roytblat's life motto. And Olga Roytblat is indeed a highly successful person, a People's Teacher of the Russian Federation, a Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, a winner of the N.K. Krupskaya award, a winner of the international competition for teachers of English and American Studies.

And she is a holder of the "Star of Russian economy" order, a holder of the "National recognition for pedagogical work" medal...

We all understand that awards and titles do not fall from the sky, but they are earned by persistent and purposeful work.

Olga Vladimirovna Roytblat's vocation is pedagogy, to which she has devoted her entire life.

Many people want to pursue this career and get everything at once - prestige, money, comfort. But since early childhood little Olga has developed a different attitude to life: she believes that she should always achieve everything herself.

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OLYA NIKOLAYENKO was born in a family of moderate means, or as Soviet papers would write, in a family of workers and peasants. Her father, Vladimir Antonovich, went to the front at the age of 14; such cases did take place during World War II. First, he was a helper in the regiment, then a soldier. When the war was over, Olga's father settled down in Tyumen and became a truck driver. Her mother also worked as a car and truck driver. Often she had to repair a truck in a snowstorm. In

those times it was difficult to find a kindergarten for small children, that is why little Olya spent most of her childhood with her parents: they tied her to the back seat of the car, and she travelled all day with them.

A nice variety in Olya's life brought her grandfather Anton. In Tyumen he had a carpenter's workshop. Little Olya spent her time there carving something. Maybe she was carving her future? It is just a joke, of course, but many a true word is spoken in jest...

When his job was done, grandfather Anton put aside his instruments and took up a book and started reading. Chekhov, Dostoevsky, Gogol ... Olya remembers him exactly like this: smelling of wood shavings, sometimes carving, sometimes quietly sitting in a corner with a volume in his hands.

And in her life was also music. Music of her parents' voices when they sang songs while travelling together. They sang in two-part harmony, and they sang beautifully. Little did Olya know about music back then, but the first impression of its beauty touched her heart...

In their house there were no carpets or any other pieces of luxury. You can say that after the war they were difficult to find anyway. But in the Nikolaenkos' house nobody wanted them. They only had a piano, a radiogramophone and long-playing records ... and no other "pieces of luxury". "Luxury" was not even part of their everyday vocabulary.

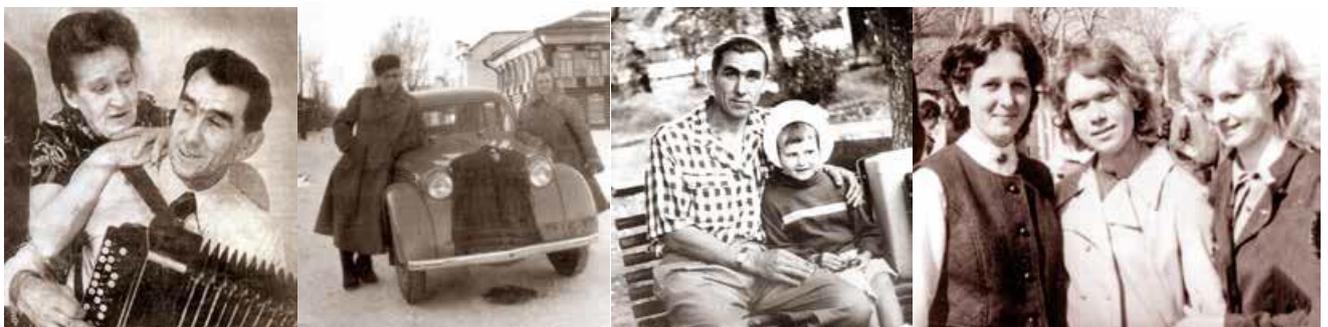
The piano in the Nikolaenkos' family was occupied all day. Olya's sister Tanya, her brother Sasha - they all played the piano, all were deeply interested in music. And Olya's father, Vladimir Antonovich, could excellently play the accordion.

Listening to music, Olya, Sasha and Tanya chopped wood, hauled water for the house, planted and weeded potatoes, then dug them, thus helping their parents while they were at work.

All the children in the Nikolaenkos' family finished music school, but Olga ... She saw her future only in music. She was the best student of music school № 1 in Tyumen. While still in the seventh grade of the music school, at the opening of the Tyumen Philharmonic she won the contest of pianists and violinists and was given the honour of accompanying the ensemble of Tyumen violinists. A seventh-grade girl was given preference over graduates of conservatories! That was something Olga was deeply proud of!

Olga studied at school № 34, which had been recently built. A slim girl with a folder with notes under her arm, she was probably the only one who went to the music school from the suburbs to the centre. There she taught her peers to sing. She was a conductor of a choir of boys who sang in four-part harmony!

Those were interesting years in Olga's life. Imagine a serious production facility – a helicopter repair plant. On the stage of the local club are grown-up men who are singing in chorus. And a young schoolgirl is conducting this choir, a girl already familiar to us. This girl also plays in the local Beatles-style band called “The Argonauts” at the Plekhanov Airport. She conducts the whole band and at the same time plays the piano. Music was an indispensable part of her life! But the heavens decided otherwise.



Olya Nikolayenko was born in a working family and grew up in a troubled, but distinctive district

ONCE OLGA AND HER FRIEND TOOK BUS № 41 with the aim to enter a music college. Her future would be filled with concerts, ovations, fans.. But all of a sudden she gets off at the Pedagogical Institute bus stop, passes the entrance exams, is accepted to the faculty of foreign languages and her future is determined. Full stop.

From then on and for the rest of her life she was to be a teacher. Looking back on those times, one cannot help asking: why did she not give up the Pedagogical Institute and enter a music college to study music instead? She loved music with all her heart and could play the piano even in her sleep, sensing the chill of piano keys. But you need to know today's Olga Roytblat to understand that even in those early years she was stubborn. Once she decided on something, she would never change it.

Already in the second year at college Olga managed to find time to work as an English teacher at her school № 34. Lessons in the afternoon, extracurricular activities and remedial classes in the evening, obligatory in the Soviet times scrap metal collecting, and all kinds of excursions and hiking tours. So, did it mean that she said goodbye to music? Of course, not. All school musical evenings, concerts were her responsibility! Olga recalls today: "I did not say lofty words to children that they should love and admire music. They lived with it. And now I see that many of my former students have sent their children to music schools, colleges, some of them have entered the conservatory. I now recall that back then I was only seven years older than my kids. They sometimes were difficult to manage, like all children. But they all grew into intelligent, musically gifted adults. That musical seed did sprout..."

"THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK OF ALL IN BRINGING UP CHILDREN (at home or at school)", says Olga Vladimirovna, "is to monitor individual characteristics of every child, to pay attention to the strengths and weaknesses of children in order to successfully develop them. Ideally, it should be like this, shouldn't it?"

Now we are all talking about the quality of competences in various school subjects. Since I taught the English language, I can give you an example. According to the curriculum, in the first semester, for example, children are to learn the whole

alphabet. Someone learns the alphabet within a month and begins to read, while someone else needs a whole academic year. A wise teacher should give their children an opportunity to learn everything without stressing the fact that some children are not very quick learners. It should be done this way because in elementary school, according to classical psychologists, the dynamics of the child are absolutely unpredictable: someone will be a quick learner and will outstrip most of their peers, while someone else will remain silent for three years. Neither in Russian, nor in English will they speak until their time comes. The teacher must know the characteristics of each student and be able to work with all types of children.

Teacher should not give such slow children low marks but they should wait until such a child starts showing results. Nowadays everyone can cope with the school program, but some pupils require a month, whereas others – eight months. And my experience allows me to hold this opinion".

Olga Vladimirovna taught for several years. School was part of her life and her life was a school for her too. Soon the bright and original teacher started to attract the attention of authorities of all ranks. She was offered the post of Deputy Principal and then Principal. The authorities even tried to transfer her to school № 49, but Olga remained faithful to school № 34; it was her school which she knew and loved.

Not all the authorities were happy that Olga Vladimirovna refused to be transferred to another school and demanded that she should be expelled from the Communist Party. And Olga Roytblat gave in.

But then her husband Boris started protesting. He said that if Olga agreed to become School Principal, he would take their children and go to his native city Kuybishev. He knew that when she was an ordinary teacher, she spent long hours at school. So what would it be like when she became Principal? He feared that he would see her at home only on holidays.

Olga's father, Vladimir Antonovich, sorted everything out. He said to Boris: "Are you afraid that she will have a lot of difficulties at school? And do you think it was

easy during the war? Back then people were not afraid..." It was a decisive argument and Boris gave his consent.

THUS OLGA ROYTBLAT BECAME THE "CAPTAIN" OF SCHOOL № 34. Now she recalls it with nostalgia. She was young, full of energy, was brimming with enthusiasm, had many new ideas and believed in her ability to realize them all. Hope and enthusiasm were absolutely necessary, because without them Olga would not have been able to solve all the problems of the school. She looked at the miserable inheritance that was handed over to her and did not know what to start with, and started with ... the sewage system, as the school did not have any functioning sewage system at all, taking into account the fact that there studied 2,000 students and worked 200 teachers.

And Olga Vladimirovna invited plumbers to have the restrooms repaired and redecorated. She herself rolled up her sleeves and single-handedly fought with vandalism of schoolchildren who wrote obscene words on the walls. She scraped them off the walls, but those words appeared again, and she scraped them off again and again. On the modest sums of money that were allocated to the school, Olga Vladimirovna tried to have the leaking school roof repaired, but when she was short of money, she had to place buckets everywhere; those buckets later became the "hallmark" of the school.

When eventually the roof and the sewage system were repaired and vandalism was eliminated, Olga decided to go even further. She set a goal to make the surroundings of the school a beautiful place. In those times the Mayak district was a miserable place: dirt and litter were everywhere. What would you do in her place? Turn to the local authorities, write letters to the local council? But Olga Vladimirovna did it her own way. She simply planted roses around the school. The local population met her decision with enthusiasm, although many times the roses were uprooted and stolen and the flowerbeds were destroyed. But Olga Vladimirovna was insistent and planted new roses again and again until local hooligans stopped stealing them. And if you come to school № 34 today, you will see how beautiful it is around it!

Olga Vladimirovna is grateful to many teachers who she had the honour of meeting and working with. She remembers with warmth and gratitude such talented teachers as Nadezhda Vasilievna Fomintseva, Maria Sergeevna Bitutskikh, Vadim Alexandrovich Petelin and many others.

Having become Principal, Olga Vladimirovna started attacking worn-out standards and waited with apprehension that the authorities would tell her to stop experimenting. But nobody stopped her. On the contrary, the authorities accepted her innovations with understanding. One of her innovations, for instance, was the introduction of the subject "foreign languages" not from the fifth grade, but from the second grade, which in those times was revolutionary. Time showed how right she was. The information which fifth graders found difficult to remember was memorized almost instantaneously in the second grade.

Another important moment was the realization of the fact that nobody explained teachers that approximately 85 % of children have a visual memory. And what do our teachers do? They think that the more they speak during a class, the more information a child will remember, which of course is not the case. A good teacher should draw the material, structure it in the form of schemes, graphs, pictures to make it more accessible. How many teachers knew about it then? Not many. And Olga Vladimirovna started paying close attention to it.



The best student in the music school, Olga envisaged her future only in music; however, her destiny was to enter a pedagogical institute and to become a teacher

LONG TIME BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SINGLE STATE STANDARD OF EDUCATION, Olga Roytblat started developing the program of individual teaching. What was necessary to make this program work? To find a teaching staff where every teacher was not just a teacher, but also a tutor and a psychologist. Was it difficult? Yes, but feasible. And Olga Vladimirovna proved it.

We also remember the times when it was a Soviet tradition to go to the fields and farms to harvest potatoes and carrots. From the economic viewpoint it is nonsense: everyone should do their own job: teachers – teach, farmers – gather crops, and students – study. But in school № 34 this time was also used as a time of bonding between pupils and teachers. All the teachers rolled up their sleeves and went to work together with their students. While working, they had a chance to get to know each other better, to share their problems. The autumn semester was jokingly called the "school of rural labour". Even after finishing school, many students still keep in touch with their teachers, partly due to this "school of rural labour".

Having read this, one can get an impression that school № 34 was an ideal school. But in reality, before the school became a leading school in the Tyumen region, much work had to be done. And not only in terms of curriculum improvement, but also in terms of ... teacher behaviour improvement. Olga Vladimirovna spent several years to break the habit of some teachers' calling pupils lazy or stupid. The young principal had to explain it to senior teachers with years of experience. She kept saying: "You are professionals, which is why you should set an example for them and behave with dignity". Olga's determination to achieve any goal she set brought its results. The school became a second home to many pupils and teachers. The author of this article was a witness to a scene in which an American guest burst into tears when she was at a farewell dinner devoted to a teacher who was going to retire. "You have such a warm and touching atmosphere! We don't have anything like that. You are like one big loving family!" she exclaimed.

Like a family... School № 34 accepted everyone who applied: local children, children from the centre and from other districts. Roytblat could not reject anyone.

Later on some children left the school anyway, those who felt that they were not able to keep up with the high demands of the school. But those who adapted to them, all entered universities and academies. And it definitely means something.

"In preschool years", says Olga Vladimirovna, "the most important for parents is to love and to develop their child, to go to theatres, exhibitions, concerts with them, to walk a lot. Parents should always find time to study with their children, to learn poems and songs, to teach them to be observant, to love nature, animals and birds, which are part of it. If you learn at least one poem a week with your child, he/she will cope with the school program without difficulties.

If over a three-month period in a kindergarten your child did not learn a single poem, the teacher should be given an unsatisfactory mark for professional incompetence. You should listen to your child to understand what he/she likes, you should support their interests. And more importantly, a child should want to go to school. Parents should not put their children off this desire".

FOR OLGA ROYTBLAT ALL THESE IDEAS ARE PART OF DAILY PRACTICE, however she remembers such cases when children transferred from other schools were surprised that no one insulted them, that all pupils had their own viewpoints which they could openly express. They could disagree with a teacher if they were able to present their own solid arguments. It was in those years that Olga Vladimirovna formed her opinion: if you do not like children, if they irritate you when they run and make noise during breaks, you should quit working at school, even if you are an experienced teacher with numerous awards.

In this connection I would like to mention an interesting fact: even cleaners missed the children when the school was closed for holidays. Think about it.

The 1990s in Russia are known as criminal years. But for Olga Vladimirovna those were the most productive years. She established many useful contacts with talented teachers and principals from Moscow and other leading cities. What did she

need it for? To make her Tyumen school more prestigious? The answer is simple. She wanted to give her pupils the best education. And she did it.

She also managed to "build an educational bridge" between the USA and Russia. Russian children went to the USA, lived there with American families, studied at American schools and, in their turn, American schoolchildren did the same in Tyumen. One of the exchange students from the USA, Nick, stayed with me. On his first day in Russia I decided to take him to a Russian sauna. He got scared, poor thing... He heard that people were beaten there with birch twigs!

When American boys and girls were leaving Tyumen, they all cried...

Olga Vladimirovna's career developed rapidly and successfully. Although she does not refer the word "career" and the expression "to climb the career ladder" to her professional life. She says, "If I were a street cleaner, all the streets would be spick and span. I would even think of a thousand different ways of how to decorate the streets!" Her life credo is whatever you do, you should do your best to make it perfect".

And eventually her effort was noticed by the regional authorities. The governor of the Tyumen region (who now holds the post of Mayor of Moscow) Sergey Sobyenin offered Olga Roytblat the post of Head of the Department of Education of the Tyumen region. Olga hesitated because first she wanted to complete the construction of a new building of her school, for the old building could no longer house all the pupils. And Sobyenin said: "Ok, let us first finish building the school and then you will get the regional education in order". And she agreed.

Those who are not familiar with the peculiarities of the educational system might think: what exactly did she want to reform there? Throughout her pedagogical career she always wanted one thing: to educate a thinking, critical individual who knows languages, who is able to join adult life and change it for the better. In order to make her dream come true, it was necessary to change the whole pedagogical paradigm. And Olga was intent on changing it and was sure of success of her plan.

BUT THE BESLAN SCHOOL SIEGE AND MASSACRE CHANGED HER PLANS... The siege started on the first of September 2004, lasted three days and involved the capture of over 1,100 people as hostages (including 777 children), ending with the death of 334 people.

How short is human memory... Five years ago I asked my students what historical event took place in October 1993. No one answered, no one knew. And it was the constitutional crisis of 1993, a political stand-off between the Russian president and the Russian parliament that was resolved by using military force.

And who remembers Beslan today? In Ossetia people most likely remember, but schoolchildren in the rest of Russia? History textbooks do not mention this event...

Her whole life Olga Roytblat devoted to children, she always believed that children were a primary value in life. And the events in Beslan nearly killed her... Deaths of hundreds of innocent children, hundreds of grief-stricken mothers... She was diagnosed with malignant hypertension... Two weeks she spent in hospital on the verge of death. And when she eventually felt better, to her rescue came the governor of the Tyumen region. "Olga Vladimirovna, you are a very precious worker, we can't put your life and health at risk. I would like to give you an easier job: to chair Tyumen Institute of Regional Education Development. This job is not so nerve-wrecking and it will give you time to recover from the stress".

Little did the governor know Olga Vladimirovna. Even if she were given the job of a post office worker, she would revolutionize the workplace... Regional education? Fine, let's develop regional education.

And Roytblat set a goal: we should become the best among all Russian regions. We should organize the most effective refresher courses for teachers.

TEACHERS SHOULD ALSO BE TAUGHT! And who is going to do it? The workers of the Institute of Regional Education Development (TOGIRRO), whose Director became Olga Vladimirovna. And she started hiring professionals, establishing

contacts with the leading Russian universities, subcontracting leading teachers of the country.

If you ever find yourself in Olga Vladimirovna's office, you will see Mont Blancs and Everests of documents, books, and magazines strewn all over her desk. "Do you find time to read all these books?" I asked her. "I don't read everything" she said. "I choose only relevant information, select what is important for me, analyse and try to apply it to my daily work".

I was also interested in how refresher courses were organized and why they were so important. Here is a quotation: "The systematic work of the Institute of Regional Education Development (TOGIRRO) on professional competence of the teaching staff of the Tyumen region contributes to the personal development of teachers and directors of educational establishments and improves both teachers' and pupils' performance. The main idea and function of refresher courses is continuous pedagogical self-development".

Despite the specificity and loftiness of the language of official documents, the essence is clear: teachers should constantly study and should never stop their professional and personal development.

"If a teacher or a director comes to our refresher courses and sees that the courses are directly related to their job, they attend them willingly", says Roytblat. "Moreover, we give our students a chance to choose modules that interest them, since a teacher or a director can identify their own weaknesses. All kinds of teachers – experienced ones and beginners, knowledgeable and those who forgot everything – can find modules which will help them in their professional development".

Another point in favour of our refresher courses is that one does not have to take 72-hour breaks from work, for teachers can tailor and schedule the courses at their own convenience. One can attend courses over several months or even years. We have such statistics. We monitor every teacher in our institute, we even created a database which contains all the information needed about our "students" and the progress they make.

The database contains all the programs, textbooks, manuals which a teacher uses in his/her work".

We all know that teachers are overloaded with all sorts of work, and in order to help them find their way in numerous educational documents which Moscow prepares and sends to different regions, TOGIRRO "gives them a lifesaving rope in the Arctic snowstorm" in the form of clear-cut instructions and explanations as to how they should teach and what competences they should develop in their pupils.

Many people saw a beautiful old wooden house on the corner of Vodoprovodnaya and Sovetskaya streets. It used to be the headquarters of TOGIRRO, it was a place where a new model of contemporary education was developed.

HAVING SET A GOAL TO TEACH A TEACHER, the institute started to decide what to teach, who to teach and when to teach. It was agreed to teach all categories of teachers of all ages and ranks all year round. And what to teach? New approaches to teaching traditional school subjects and new subjects which were added to the curriculum by the Ministry of Education. Thus, in TOGIRRO was formed a scientific base which can be easily accessed by teachers of elite schools and by teachers from remote rural areas.



Tyumen school № 34 is Olga Vladimirovna's favourite "child". She remembers and loves it and is deeply interested in its life

The implementation of the new educational standard turned out to be a daunting assignment. A standard presupposes something unified. And can a teacher use creative approaches to teaching within the framework of this standard? How to reveal a pupil's strengths and weaknesses, how to strengthen strengths and to weaken weaknesses? That was the most important question.

Olga Roytblat understood that these questions could not be solved by Tyumen teachers only, and she started inviting leading teachers from other Russian cities, including Moscow and St. Petersburg. Olga Roytblat invited all kinds of teachers: eminent school teachers, leading university scholars in all branches of sciences, doctors and professors, asking them to share their knowledge and experience with Tyumen teachers and to explain how to arrange classes in order to comply with the required standards and to leave some time for creative work.

I would like to notice that nowhere in Russia (apart from Moscow and St. Petersburg) has anyone promoted the idea of the importance of experience exchange between universities and schools, between leading professors and ordinary school teachers. And professors usually accept Olga Vladimirovna's invitations willingly, since it is always a pleasure for someone who teaches, does research, publishes articles and monographs to share their experience, thoughts and ideas with other teachers. And here comes such a wonderful opportunity!

HOW MUCH TIME, EFFORT AND MONEY IT TAKES to invite dozens of scholars , to make a convenient schedule, to invite teachers from remote areas of the Tyumen region... Many teachers started applying for such refresher courses and also for seminars and conferences which were held in TOGIRRO. Special thanks should be given to the government of the Tyumen region and the Department of Education and Science, for without their financial support nothing would have been possible.

And thus experience exchange was set in motion: a village teacher got a chance to communicate with a professor and study the latest trends in science development, and a professor in his turn learned how to put theoretical science into everyday school life.

For the last five-ten years representatives of different spheres of education came to conferences held in Tyumen: teachers, directors, economists, lawyers, psychologists from more than 30 regions of the Russian Federation, from Kamchatka to Kaliningrad. And why did they all come to Tyumen? Because tireless and enthusiastic Olga Roytblat organized such seminars, conferences and classes where standardized programs were combined with creativity.

“Today a teacher’s role is changing” states Olga Vladimirovna. “He is not just a teacher who teaches a particular subject. He should also be an inspirer and an erudite person who can answer any question. A teacher should set an example. You know perfectly well that very often a pupil does not need a career counselor if he has a good teacher in a particular subject. That is why a teacher today is an intermediary between a pupil, his/her parents and society. ”

We all understand that children are the foundation of our future society. And first and foremost, it should be a healthy and inquisitive child, sometimes “difficult and uncomfortable” for teachers, but understood and accepted by a professional teacher. Any child is good if he is interested in something and has a goal he wants to achieve. This is my ideal of a pupil”.

ON TYUMEN TEACHERS’ REQUEST AND ON OLGA ROYTBLAT’S INITIATIVE was created a school of a modern director. Nadezhda Surtaeva, a Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor of Herzen State Pedagogical University, highly estimated this school describing it as the most successful one in the Tyumen region. “It is a unique project having no analogues in Russia. This form of refresher courses has become very popular among all kinds of teachers, from school principals to teachers who work in remote villages. All of them can find answers to all sorts of questions in the sphere of pedagogy, economics, health care and other spheres related to the system of education” said Nadezhda Surtaeva.

TOGIRRO prepares teachers for such contests as “A Teacher of the Year”, organizes seminars and workshops in which the best teachers of the year from different

Russian regions take part. And we all know that best Tyumen teachers are also the winners of "The Best Russian Teacher" award.

We have already said many good words about Tyumen teachers. And what is the situation like with Tyumen pupils? Every year Tyumen pupils take part in national contests in different subjects, the most gifted ones are gathered under the auspices of the education cycle "The Academy of Success". One can endlessly speak about the merits of TOGIRRO in the sphere of secondary education... But let us return to our persona grata.

What is Olga Vladimirovna today? For many years she has been a member of the jury of the national contest "The Teacher of the Year". In 2013 she was awarded an honorary title of the International Academy of Pedagogy and Education Development called "The Best Russian Teacher". She is also a holder of the Ushinsky medal. And she is Head of the regional department of the "Russian Education" organization. And she also represents the Tyumen department of people's front movement. And also.. And she is also a wife, mother and grandmother.

Olga Vladimirovna's current post is Director of the Institute of Regional Education Development. But actually she still remains a school principal, and she feels that she is in her element in this post.

IN CONCLUSION, I would like to include an extract from an interview with Olga Vladimirovna, conducted by one of the leading regional papers:

- What is your main principle in life?

-For many years there has been one rule that helped me in my work: do everything well and do not expect gratitude. Now I would probably change it into: do everything well in order not to be ashamed of it in the future.

-What do you appreciate in people?

-I value a person's intelligence. Actually, I like every person because everyone is unique. And I also value decency, integrity and honesty. I think even more than

uniqueness. If a person is not very intelligent and not unique, but he is honest, all these drawbacks can be forgiven.

-What are you proud of?

-Now I can say that I am proud of my students. I have many of them. They live in all corners of the world: in the Tyumen region, in Russia, and abroad. And when they happen to be in Tyumen, they always find some spare time to call me and to drop by. It is such a great pleasure to talk to my graduates.

-What is more important for you – work or family?

- I'll answer this question in the form of a maxim: happiness is in the family, the essence of life is in work. It is who I am. Both spheres are important to me. I think that without a family, without someone to back me up, I would not be able to fully realize myself at work.



Working in TOGIRRO, a school for teachers, Olga Vladimirovna had a chance to communicate with the leading Russian and foreign teachers and reached the height of her professional development and recognition in her profession.

-Would you like to write a book?

-I have started thinking about it. In my book I would like to recollect and express my gratitude to all my teachers who helped me to become who I am now. It is all due to my great teachers. First, I met many good teachers at school and university, then I became a teacher myself and learned from the experience of my colleagues, then I

represented all teachers of the Tyumen region on the administrative level. One of my greatest Teachers, Nadezhda Vasilievna Fomintseva, advises me to start writing a book and I no longer say "no". If earlier I put it off till some later time, now I am seriously thinking of starting writing it.

- What is your dream?

- As far as my work is concerned, I have a global dream: all my knowledge and experience I want to pass on to other teachers, I want to see my ideas implemented. As for my family, it is not a dream, it is a prayer. I pray that my nearest and dearest will live long and happy lives. If everything is fine with them, I will be fine too.