



TEN PRINCIPLES OF MEMORY

A portion of the above information was adapted from Walter Pauk's How to Study in College, Fifth Ed.
2003 – 2006 TRIO Dissemination Partnership – Southeastern Louisiana University
July 2006

1. Pay attention while you are learning.
2. Get the information right the first time. False ideas and misunderstood facts can “hang on” as well as the information you learn correctly.
3. Be sure that you fully understand the material. One good test: Can you explain it to someone else so he or she will understand it?
4. Try to see the significance of what you are learning. See how what you are learning is part of a larger whole, the big picture.
5. Involve your ego, if possible. See how the task relates to you. Does the material please or displease you? Is it important to your self-concept that you know the material?
6. Associate new material with related facts you already know. Even when the new material seems to disagree with previous learning, you will still have a valuable handle for recalling it later.
7. Organize the material so you can file it in its proper place in your memory. If you have organized carefully, remembering part of something will enable you to remember the rest.
8. If there is a basis for doing so, divide and group your material. Information is best taken in as “little bunches.”
9. Reinforce what you have learned through repetition and usage. You will not remember something you don't use.
10. Recite often. In a massive research study by Dr. A.I. Gates, students were divided into different groups. One group used 100 percent of its time in reading an article over and over again, while another group spent 80 percent of its time reading and 20 percent reciting the same article. Other groups read and recited in different proportions. The final group spent only 20 percent of its time reading and 80 percent in reciting, and this group clearly emerged with the highest score.