

Your Learning Guide to Success

GREAT THINGS HAPPEN HERE





Your Learning Guide to Success

Welcome to Canadore College

Learning is a life-long pursuit and your Canadore experience is an important step in your journey of greater personal development and growth.

As you begin this exciting time in your life, it is important to consider some points which will have an influence on your enjoyment of learning and ensure your success. You will need to be self-motivated, disciplined, able to set goals, manage your time effectively, and be open to working with others.

The key to your success will be your motivation for study and a positive attitude towards the different tasks required of you. This approach will need to be reinforced by practical organizational skills to make the most of your time and the resources available to you. Naturally, your learning style and particular talents will have a bearing on how you tackle your work. You can save yourself unnecessary effort by learning some simple techniques and strategies for dealing with and managing the information which will be presented to you throughout your course of study.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with information and strategies to assist you as you embark on your career path.





Your Learning Style

To better understand yourself as a learner, you need to evaluate the way you prefer to learn or process information. No studies have validated this inventory. Its main benefit is to get you to think about yourself, to consider learning alternatives not to rigidly classify you.

Answer each question as honestly as you can.

Answer with a Y (for Yes) or an N (for No); what type of learning do the questions represent?

	I can remember more about a subject through the lecture method, which provides information, explanations and discussion.
	I like to write things down or take notes for visual review.
	I play with coins or keys in my pockets.
	I remember best by writing things down several times.
	I learn spelling by tracing the letters with my fingers.
	I prefer to make posters or physical models.
	I like to practice some activities in class.
	I prefer information to be presented with the use of visual aids.
	I do better at academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes as opposed to reading a textbook.
	I learn best when physical activity is involved.
	I would rather have written directions than oral directions.
	I enjoy working with my hands or making things.
	I learn better by “doing” rather than observing.
	When taking a test, I can “see” the answer in my head as it appeared in my notes or textbook when I studied.
	I can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds.
	I like “hands-on” learning better than learning from a lecture or textbook.



Visual Learners

- take numerous detailed notes
- tend to sit in the front
- are usually neat and clean
- often close their eyes to visualize or remember something
- find something to watch if they are bored
- like to see what they are learning
- benefit from illustrations and presentations that use color
- are attracted to written or spoken language rich in imagery
- prefer stimuli to be isolated from auditory and kinaesthetic distraction
- find passive surroundings ideal

Auditory Learners

- sit where they can hear but don't need to pay attention to what is happening in front
- may not coordinate colors or clothes, but can explain why they are wearing what they are wearing and why
- hum or talk to themselves or others when bored
- acquire knowledge by reading aloud
- remember by verbalizing lessons to themselves (if they don't, they have difficulty reading maps or diagrams, or handling conceptual assignments like mathematics)

Kinaesthetic Learners

- need to be active and take frequent breaks
- speak with their hands and with gestures
- remember what was done, but have difficulty recalling what was said or seen
- find reasons to tinker or move when bored
- rely on what they can directly experience or perform
- activities such as cooking, construction, engineering and art help them perceive and learn
- enjoy field trips and tasks that involve manipulating materials
- sit near the door or someplace else where they can easily get up and move around
- are uncomfortable in classrooms where they lack opportunities for hands-on experience
- communicate by touching and appreciate physically-expressed encouragement, such as a pat on the back

Tactual learners are not included on this list because people often group them in with kinaesthetic learners. To learn by feeling or touching helps almost everyone. Combine the tactile with your other methods of learning. **Come up with your own unique ways of learning.**





Have You Ever Asked Yourself Whether You Have Good Study Skills?

Answer the following questions as honestly as possible to assess your approach to studying.

1) **As I begin to review, I have a clear study plan established.**

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |

2) **I make sure my notes are complete.**

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |

3) **I break up the material I need to review into related chunks of material.**

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |

4) **I actively make connections while reviewing.**

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |

5) **If I do not understand material, I go back and try to identify relationships/connections within the material to material I understand.**

- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |

6) **I stick to my plan and do not put off studying to the last minute.**

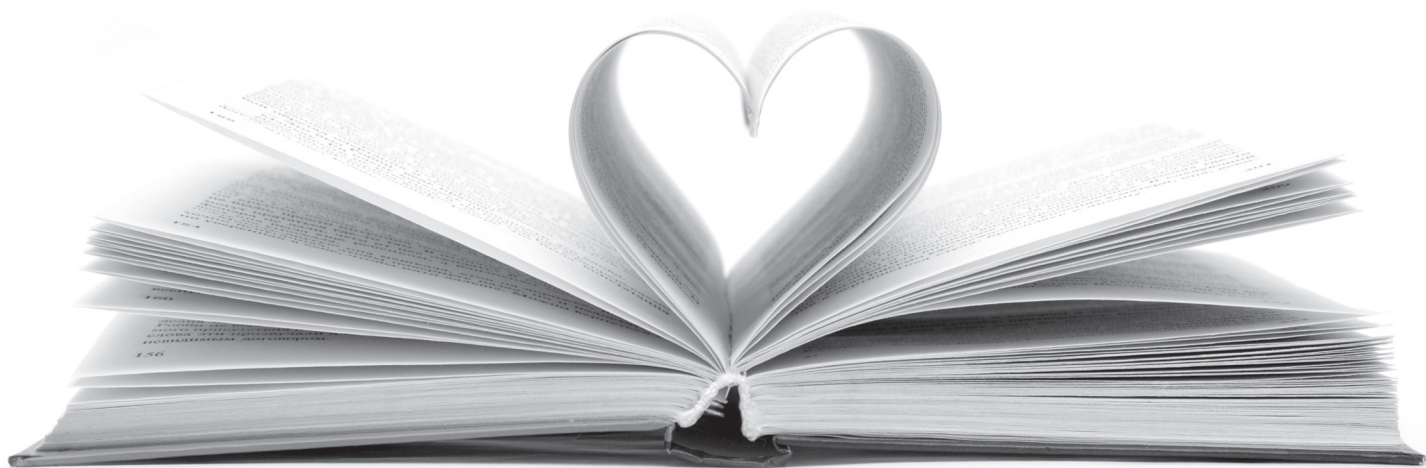
- | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | |



What Kind of Student Are You?

To find out what kind of student you are, read the following 10 questions and select the answer that best describes you.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I complete homework on time			
I have all the necessary materials when I go to class			
I use the time my professors give me in class to start homework			
I take good notes			
I ask and answer questions			
I use strategies to memorize			
After reading, I can recall what I have read			
I attend classes regularly			
I am good at taking tests			
I am satisfied with my grades			





Strategies To Help You Improve Your Grades



Step 1: Believe in Yourself

In order to succeed in school, you have to believe in yourself and in your abilities.

Step 2: Be Organized

If you are organized, you have what you need, when you need it. Use an assignment planner/calendar. Use three-ring binders for notes, assignments, and quizzes. Use one pocket folder for each class. Keep your materials and study area neat. Get organized before you go to bed.

Step 3: Manage Your Time Well

With good time management you have time to do the things you have to do and you still have time for the things you want to do. Establish a regular study time and location.

Step 4: Be Successful in the Classroom

Learn how to adapt to different professors. Be in class on time, every day. Be prepared for each class. Complete homework regularly and participate in class. Involve your parents - yes, your parents.

Step 5: Take Good Notes

Be an active listener. When you are actively listening in class, you don't just hear the words the professor is speaking, you are also thinking about and trying to understand the information that is being presented. Recognize important information by listening for a change in your professor's voice. Take notes that are easy to read. Review your notes as soon as possible and leave a margin on the left side of each page to identify key words and main topics. Get class/lecture notes if you are absent.

Step 6: Know How to Read a Textbook

When you know how to read a textbook, you comprehend and remember what you read. Use the **SQ3R** technique.

- **Survey:** Quickly look over a reading assignment and become aware of what it's about.
- **Question:** Think of questions about the material.
- **Read:** Find answers to your questions by reading the assignment.
- **Restate:** Summarize what you read. Ask yourself questions about the material.
- **Review:** Look over the assignment again, right away or at a later time.



Strategies To Help You Improve Your Grades

Step 7: Study Smart

Students who “study smart” find that they spend less time studying, and yet they get better grades. Find a good place to study. Get started at an established time. Know your learning style (visual, auditory, or kinesthetic). Organize your study time and prioritize your work; least favourite subjects should be first. Break down large assignments into smaller parts. Know when to take breaks. Know how to study for tests and what the test is going to cover. Pay close attention in class the day before the test. Review study guides. Have all reading done ahead of time. Review often.

Step 8: Use Test-Taking Strategies

In order to do well on any test, you must study hard and be prepared. Having done that, you can further improve your test performance by using these test-taking strategies:

- Get off to a good start. Have everything you need.
- Develop a plan. Before you begin answering questions, look over the entire test.
- Mark questions that you want to return to if you are unsure of the answer.
- Increase your odds on multiple-choice questions. Eliminate the choices you know are incorrect. If two of the choices are similar or opposite, probably one of them is the correct answer.
- Look for key words in True/False questions. Statements with always, never, every, all and none in them are usually false.

- Know how to approach essay questions. Read each essay and then start with the easiest one. Before you do any writing, brainstorm. Write legibly and in complete sentences. Begin by stating the question and tell the reader what she/he can expect. In the middle paragraphs, present examples, details and evidence to support the points you are making. In the final paragraph, restate your position along with a quick summary. Finally, reread your answer and make corrections.
- Improve your math test scores by trying to estimate what the answer will be. Try drawing a diagram. Don't spend too much time on one problem and show all of your work.
- Be prepared for open book tests. Be able to locate information quickly by highlighting your notes.
- Check your answers and review all returned tests.





Strategies To Help You Improve Your Grades



Step 9: Reduce Test Anxiety

A little anxiety before a test improves your concentration and alertness. Excessive worry, or test anxiety, will lower your test scores. To reduce test anxiety, study enough to feel confident that you know the material. Try to replace worry and negative thinking with thoughts that are positive and relaxing. Start studying early seeing as cramming increases test anxiety. Mentally practice going through the testing experience. How you act can affect how you feel. Walk into the test with your head up and shoulders back. Relaxation techniques include:

1. Take a deep breath, hold it, and then slowly release your breath.
2. Start at the top of your head, flexing and then relaxing each part of your body.
3. Close your eyes and visualize warm sunshine washing over you, melting away the tension, and relaxing your muscles.
4. Close your eyes and let your arms hang down at your sides, and as you relax, visualize the tension from your head, neck and shoulders flowing down your arms and out through your fingertips.
5. Think of a place where you feel very relaxed and calm. Visualize being in that place.

Step 10: Get Help When You Need It

When you have a problem, do something to resolve it. Talk with your professor when you need academic assistance. Students dealing with issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, learning disabilities, health issues, abusive relationships, home problems, and mental health concerns often have difficulty with academics and need to address these issues if they are to attain academic success. Visit Canadore's Student Success Services for assistance with these concerns.

Peer Tutoring Services can provide learning assistance to students needing help to understand course materials.





Time Management

Think about these questions as you evaluate your time management techniques:

Please circle the answer that most closely describes your time management situation.

1. **Which of the following is not a huge time waster?**
 - a. Procrastination
 - b. Leaving tasks unfinished
 - c. Inability to say no
 - d. Delegation of tasks
2. **Which of the following is not a huge time waster?**
 - a. Management by crisis
 - b. Telephone interruptions
 - c. Sticking to prioritized "To Do Lists"
 - d. Inadequate planning
3. **Which of the following will not help you organize your time better?**
 - a. Prioritizing
 - b. Organizing
 - c. Economizing
 - d. Socializing
4. **Which of the following will help you organize your time better?**
 - a. Procrastinating
 - b. Streamlining
 - c. Holding many meetings
 - d. Relaxing
5. **Which of the following can help you save time in regard to email?**
 - a. Allot specific times of the day to check and respond to email
 - b. Make sure a chime or alarm beeps when you receive an email message
 - c. Don't get a junk mail filter
 - d. Check your email as soon as you receive it
6. **Which of the following can help you save time when it comes to holding meetings?**
 - a. Hold as many meetings as possible
 - b. Make sure everybody is allowed to speak at meetings
 - c. Hold only necessary meetings and keep them on schedule
 - d. Make meetings a gripe session



Time Management

Think about these questions as you evaluate your time management techniques:

Please circle the answer that most closely describes your time management situation.

7. **Which statement is true?**
 - a. Travelling is not a time waster
 - b. Finish tasks to completion before moving on to the next
 - c. Leave as many tasks undone as possible
 - d. An open door policy is usually best
8. **Which of the following is a detriment to effective time management?**
 - a. A day timer
 - b. Lots of paper work
 - c. An email junk filter
 - d. None of the above
9. **What's a good rule of thumb to follow for effective time management?**
 - a. Don't be a perfectionist
 - b. Take personal phone calls immediately
 - c. Don't waste time writing lists
 - d. None of the above
10. **Which of the following can be huge time wasters if not handled effectively?**
 - a. The telephone
 - b. Email
 - c. Both a and b
 - d. Neither a or b
11. **Establishing goals is an important step for effective time management.**
 - a. True
 - b. False
12. **Communication isn't a factor in managing your time.**
 - a. True
 - b. False
13. **Is making a checklist a waste of time?**
 - a. True
 - b. False
 - c. Both a and b
 - d. None of the above
14. **What would be a great tool to utilize when trying to manage time effectively?**
 - a. Book
 - b. Timer
 - c. Patience
 - d. Pencil



Time Management - Answers

1. Which of the following is not a huge time waster? (d)
 - a. Procrastination
 - b. Leaving tasks unfinished
 - c. Inability to say no
 - d. Delegation of tasks**

2. Which of the following is not a huge time waster? (c)
 - a. Management by crisis
 - b. Telephone interruptions
 - c. Sticking to prioritized "To Do Lists"**
 - d. Inadequate planning

3. Which of the following will not help you organize your time better? (d)
 - a. Prioritizing
 - b. Organizing
 - c. Economizing
 - d. Socializing**

4. Which of the following will help you organize your time better? (b)
 - a. Procrastinating
 - b. Streamlining**
 - c. Holding many meetings
 - d. Relaxing

5. Which of the following can help you save time in regard to email? (a)
 - a. Allot specific times of the day to check and respond to email**
 - b. Make sure a chime or alarm beeps when you receive an email message
 - c. Don't get a junk mail filter
 - d. Check your email as soon as you receive it

6. Which of the following can help you save time when it comes to holding meetings? (c)
 - a. Hold as many meetings as possible
 - b. Make sure everybody is allowed to speak at meetings
 - c. Hold only necessary meetings and keep them on schedule**
 - d. Make meetings a gripe session





Time Management - Answers

7. Which statement is true? (b)
- a. Travelling is not a time waster
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 - c. Leave as many tasks undone as possible
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 - b. Email
 - c. Both a and b**
 - d. Neither a or b
11. Establishing goals is an important step for effective time management. (a)
- a. True**
 - b. False
12. Communication isn't a factor in managing your time. (b)
- a. True
 - b. False**
13. Is making a checklist a waste of time? (b)
- a. True
 - b. False**
 - c. Both a and b
 - d. None of the above
14. What would be a great tool to utilize when trying to manage time effectively? (b)
- a. Book
 - b. Timer**
 - c. Patience
 - d. Pencil





Common Myths in the Postsecondary Setting

Myth #1

“If I leave early, I’ll get a jump on the weekend.”
“I need the extra sleep much more than the class.”

Reality #1

You must attend all classes.

Woody Allen once said, “Showing up is 88% of life.” Let’s adapt that for college: Attendance is 95% of college academic life. If you skip class for one of a hundred excuses you may fabricate, you lose... every time. Example: a student approaches a teacher with a partial assignment saying that he did not know about the additional requirement that had been announced in class for the past two weeks straight. Faculty response: “Whose fault is that?” No more discussion. You simply cannot get the information or assignments straight if you’re off playing touch football, catching a movie, or just sleeping in.

What happens when you miss a class? Several things:

You miss assignments and amendments to assignments. Teachers must amend projects by the very nature of academics: information changes, equipment is not available, or stuff happens. In any case, you have to be there to get the scoop.

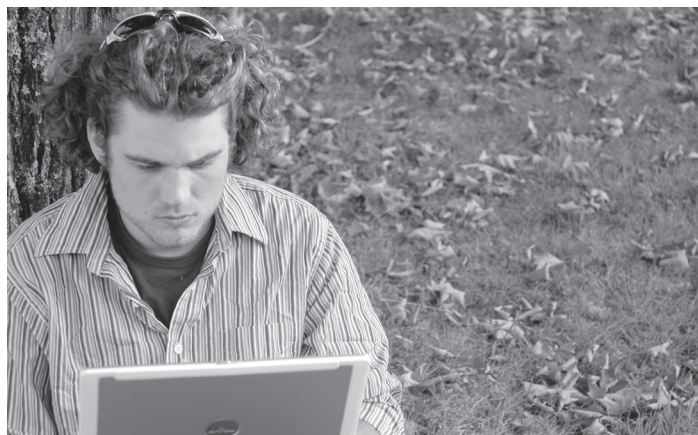
You get behind. Even if someone takes notes for you, you fall behind. It’s tough enough to understand your own notes two or three days after you’ve taken them - unless you review them soon after you take them. After a while you slowly but surely slip so far behind that you’ll never catch up. It’s a slippery slope and it’s hard to climb back up once you’ve slid down.

Survival Tips:

Set a 100/100% show-up goal. Make it your goal to show up to 100% of your classes 100% of the time. Start off with that fixed in your mind. Put everything else in second place, right from the first day on campus. School is your primary job. If you were to miss work every time you thought it was a nice day or whenever you had a headache, or - you fill in the excuse - think about how long it would take your boss to fire you. Go for perfect attendance. It sounds like an elementary school concept, but it’s critical.

Communicate with your professor. Call, email, or send a note with a friend if you’re sick. Sounds kind of goofy? Maybe, but it makes an impression. Again, it sends an important message: “I care enough to let you know I am on the injured list, but I’m still on the team.” Again, use email, phone, fax or personal note, but make sure you try.

Double-check about assignments or handouts. Be absolutely sure that you check with the professor about any handouts given out in the class you missed. Also, check on whether any new assignments were given, or if modifications/clarifications were made. Ask for handouts or special instructions given.





Common Myths in the Postsecondary Setting

Myth #2

“I’ll study when I get the assignment.”

“I’ll look like a real nerd if I start studying before we even get assignments.”

“Get serious, I have no idea what the professor is going to cover.”

Reality #2

Establish regular study habits from the start.

The first semester at any college is one of the most exciting and potentially one of the most dangerous times in your academic career, for several reasons.

You’re away from home, in many cases, for the first time. Free at last to make your own decisions. That’s both the good and bad news. Good news: You can do anything you want, whenever you want. Bad news: You can do anything you want, whenever you want. Granted, there are no nagging parental questions: “Did you get your homework done?”, or even worse, “Let me see it.” But while the nagging’s gone, so is the pressure and help of oversight.

There’s a ton of pressure to get to know everyone right away. Many roommates and classmates succumb to this pressure. Eventually, most recognize that this will not work unless they have nothing else to do.

You may not have anything specific that’s due right away. You don’t have a paper or research due for a month or two. So, it’s tempting to sit back and enjoy the extended summer.

In fact, you’d be hard-pressed to find a single thing about the early part of your first semester of first year that makes studying attractive. But the **reality** is that **not** starting early may mean failing later.

Stuff just has a way of piling up on you. Here’s a typical scenario: You let a few reading assignments slide and then you put a short paper or two on hold. Multiply the procrastination by five or six other “minor” assignments you also let slide and you’re talking some serious pileup problems. And it all sneaks up on you very innocently.

Survival Tips:

Find the time of day that you learn best - AM or PM.

Most people are either morning or night people. Determine which one you are and use that time to do the most important job you have while in school... surviving. To test whether you’re a day or night person, ask yourself these questions: “Do I like waking up early and getting a start on the day?” If you answer this “yes,” you’re likely a morning person. So, set an hour or two every day to hit the books in the AM. Schedule it ahead of time. If you answer “yes” to the question “Do I get going later in the afternoon or evening?” then you’re most likely a night person; so set aside time in the evening to study. This gives information the best shot at sticking in your brain.

Let your friends know that your study time is sacred. While you may get some grief early on from people, as soon as they know you’re serious, you’ll get few, if any, invasions of your study time. People will actually respect that you say what you mean and mean what you say.

Find a place to study. Residences, especially first year residences, can be notoriously bad places to study. Understand that and deal with it. Places like the library, study carrels in the College, student lounges, coffee shops, anywhere that is away from friends will do. They may hassle you to see a movie,



Common Myths in the Postsecondary Setting

party, or just hang out. You can do that later. Hit the books first.

Give yourself a break. Just as scheduling regular study time contributes to success, so does taking a 5-10 minute break every hour. Rest your eyes, wash your face and turn off your brain for a few minutes. Then get back to it. If you find yourself dozing off, stop where you are. Allow yourself to doze off sitting up, not lying down. You'll find this "sitting doze" a form of meditation that increases alertness and concentration.

Just do it. The Nike commercial says: "Just Do It." This is a good slogan to adapt to academic studies: "Just study it." Establishing the habit right away is key. The first day you have classes, find a place to study, and keep going there at your best study time, even when you think you're wasting your time. The routine of having a regular time and place to review your notes and read the required material will be more beneficial than you can imagine.

Myth #3

"I don't need any help."

"If I keep studying, I'll get it."

"I'm smart, I'll figure it out."

"What will others think if they know I'm being tutored?"

"I never needed to ask for help in the past."

Reality #3

Asking for help is smart, not stupid.

Most people are hung up on the idea of asking for help. From the time we're born, we are told to pull our own weight, row our own boat, pull ourselves up by our

bootstraps, and a host of other similar sayings that pervade our culture.

Let's use the fictitious example of "Ashley" in a statistics course in college. She's a bright young woman but her statistics course is causing her a great deal of anxiety. She begins to have self-doubt and her confidence slips. After consulting with her teacher, she decides that she needs extra help and she signs up for peer tutoring. She meets with him quite regularly and salvages her grades through hard work and determination.

If you still have doubts about the normalcy of tutors, think about Olympic and professional athletes. Can you possibly imagine any high-calibre athlete not having a private coach, at least periodically?

What about the top level musicians? Could you imagine them not having private, ongoing tutoring or teaching? They must have help to keep them sharp in an increasingly competitive world.

So, if tutors (coaches and private instructors) are good enough for the very best competitors in our country, don't you think we all should give them a try?

Myth #4

"I don't have to like a course to do well."

"This course sucks."

"I'd rather have a dental filling than go to this class."

Reality #4

Attitude, not ability, will determine your success in college.

Some people will disagree on the notion that you must like something to do well. Our experience in a



Common Myths in the Postsecondary Setting

classroom is that students who have an “attitude” (a negative disposition) toward either the subject or the teacher do not perform as well as they should.

It is human nature to rebel when someone says you must do something. In contrast, in elective courses students have more of an interest and the results are dramatically different. They participate more in class, read the assignments, turn in higher-quality materials, talk to the teacher more, and generally are more fun.

Intelligence (ability) will not substitute for a poor attitude. Being bright is a gift that many people squander because of a bad attitude. The world is chock-full of potential Olympic athletes, and superstar talents that never made it. Why? Because attitude, not ability, will determine your success.

Think about your own experiences. How many great potential athletes, students, workers have you seen come down the pike brimming with the required ability but whose attitude was impoverished?

The results are always the same: excuses. “I would have, could have, should have.” You’ve heard it over and over by those who fail to reach their altitude... usually because of their attitude.

Survival Tips:

Think like an advertiser. In advertising, the first thing the ad must do is tell the customer how the product or service will benefit them. Otherwise, it’s nearly impossible to sell anything. Therefore, find the benefit to you by looking at the syllabus and discovering two or three issues that you find interesting. Focus on those for starters. Other benefits will follow.

Look for long-term, not short-term, benefits.

As you begin to look for benefits, beware of shortsightedness. Take the long view to learning. Ask yourself, “What can this course teach me?” “Will understanding the why’s help me understand the what’s?” The answer is absolutely...YES. What you learn in college helps prepare you to think through important issues and apply them to your daily life.

Remember the Tortoise and the Hare. This is a corny story that you no doubt have heard since you were a child. But it is right on the money. The two, as you recall, were in a race. The hare should have won hands down, no sweat. But he took his talent (aptitude) for granted and underestimated a competitor with great attitude. Attitude beats aptitude every time.

Avoid making negative comments about the course or the professor. A philosopher once heard a man speaking poorly about another man in public. The philosopher stopped the speaker and admonished him not to say such damaging things about another. The speaker asked the philosopher if he was trying to protect the man who was subject of the negative comments. “No,” said the philosopher calmly, “I was trying to protect you from yourself.” Negative comments about people can become self-destructive. Take this to the bank. Making and repeating comments begins to program your thinking for good or bad. Keep your comments positive - they foster a positive attitude.