

Taking Ownership of One's Learning

Name

Course

Institution

Date

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### Introduction

From the time we are born, we begin learning. We learn informally in all situations, under all conditions, whether we are or are not aware of it. However, we also learn purposely. We can think of purposeful learning in terms of formal learning, which usually occurs in a school setting. However, an individual should not expect to be a passive learner, simply absorbing the skills and knowledge the teacher is offering. Rather, one must take control over one's own learning. This involves understanding and accepting the objectives, the tasks that are to be performed, and the evaluation process. Taking ownership of one's learning also means understanding how one absorbs best and the most effective means of expressing one's knowledge or expertise. Furthermore, it is very helpful for an individual to understand what motivates him or her to learn the subject matter being taught.

### Developing Strategies for Learning

Part of taking ownership of one's learning is to determine what strategies are most effective for one's personal style. It is helpful to understand that different strategies work with different kinds of learning tasks. For instance, is the learner expected to memorize factual information or is he or she to demonstrate a skill or apply a concept to a seemingly new situation? Another part of ownership is in understanding what the overall goal is, as well as the learning objectives. Becoming familiar with the course syllabus is a good start. Making certain that one has access to the reading materials and other sources is also important. In addition, one should be aware of due dates for various assignments. He or she might utilize a calendar to map out what tasks will be completed and on what time line (Novak, 2010). This will help the learner to stay on track and to complete assignments and to study for a test in a timely manner. Waiting

until the due date or the night before a test will cause extreme anxiety, resulting in the learner shutting down mentally and making mistakes. For this reason, the learner should give himself plenty of time to complete assignments.

A popular strategy in completing assignments is to break a task into manageable chunks. This is especially helpful in doing major projects or reading lots of material. If the student estimates that a project will take 10 hours of continuous work, then the student might consider starting the project at least two weeks before the due date and plan an hour session each night for 10 nights. That leaves 4 days where the student can allow for scheduling conflicts in working on the project. However, the student should try to complete the project prior to the day before it is due so that the student does not feel anxiety about finishing the project on time. Strategies for reading should include highlighting important details and marking the reading material with notes, questions, and connections to previous learning. Graphic organizers are useful, also, for note-taking as well as for planning written responses. Moreover, the student can develop a deeper understanding of the material to be learned through identifying essential questions, determining why the information is important in life, and relating the information to other ideas or areas of study (Novak, 2010). The more connections the learner can make between what is being learned and how it relates to life, the easier it will be for the learner to comprehend and retain the information or concepts learned.

#### How Learning Leads to Performance

An individual learns concepts and skills, as well as factual information. Of course, the main purpose for learning something is to enable one to complete a task or job. Part of being successful in one's learning endeavors is its usefulness in life. If the student does not plan to use his or her learning in some kind of endeavor, such as completing a task or satisfying some other

kind of need, then one has to question the purpose for learning that information. Motivation is a key element in that learning and performance are both affected by motivation. One typically must feel motivated to learn as well as to perform.

Reference

Novak, J. (2010). *Learning, creating, and using knowledge: Concept maps as facilitative tools in schools and corporations*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis