Exam/Study Tip # 38: The Day Before Each Exam

- Try not to study too much on the day before the exam. If you need to study, tackle concepts that are difficult or those you still need to learn **first thing** in the morning, and only review materials you know well from say 5pm on each pre-exam day.

- You should not be learning new theory the night before the examination. Use this time to re-read summaries, review challenging concepts and to practise difficult questions (that you have fully worked solutions for).

  Why?

  Because you want to build confidence by reinforcing what you do know rather than running the risk of scaring yourself by discovering something you do not know.

- Check which examination(s) are being held the next day (including the times and venues) and ask someone else to verify the information so that you can have some peace of mind.

- Assemble and pack the necessary supplies such as sharpened pencils, eraser, pens, ruler, calculator, dictionary, watch, student ID card, water bottle, energy snacks, lunch etc.

  Sample Checklist:

  - Student card/number
  - Examination timetable
  - 2 or more ball point pens
  - 2 or more pencils (sharpened)
  - Highlighters or coloured pens
  - 2 sharpeners
  - 2 rulers
  - Calculator(s)
  - Spare batteries for calculators
  - Mathematical equipment (where allowed) eg. Compass, protractor, set square
  - A drink (and lunch)
  - Power snacks (high protein, high complex carbohydrates, low in processed sugars)
  - Your brain

- Organise any notes or cheat sheets that may be used during the exam.

PTO

- Do something you enjoy, like listening to music or watching TV before you go to bed. This will help you relax.
- Avoid caffeine in the evening. Caffeine early in the day can improve focus and productivity but just one cup of coffee in the evening can make it harder for you to fall asleep, reduce the total time spent sleeping, and affect your ability to reach deep stages of sleep.
- Get in a quick workout before 7pm. Aerobic exercise that gets your blood circulating is stimulating to the hippocampus, an area of the brain involved in memory and learning. Exercise also decreases pre-exam stress and anxiety, and improves quality of sleep. Just don't do it too late in the evening, or it may keep you up.
- Do not pull an all-nighter.
- Drink enough water throughout the day. Dehydration decreases alertness and impairs concentration so you do not want to be going into the exam room with a dry mouth and/or lips. Taper off the amount you drink as you approach bedtime so you don't need to get up in the middle of the night.
- Try to get as much sleep as possible. If you can't fall sleep, don't be too concerned as the adrenalin that will be coursing through your system on the next day will be more than enough to get you through the exam. Just make sure that you catch up on any missed sleep as soon as you get home.

- If you can't fall asleep, eat a high carbohydrate, high tryptophan meal. Examples of tryptophan rich foods include eggs, cheese, salmon, nuts, seeds (especially pumpkin and squash), tofu, lentils, turkey, red meat.

Regards,
TSFX