



## **Exam/Study Tip # 15: The Most Effective Learning Technique Known to Man**

*Does it take you longer than it should to learn something new?*

*Do you forget a lot of what you've learned within a few days?*

*Do you obtain test/exam marks that don't reflect the effort you put in?*

*Do you get struck by mind blanks in tests and exams?*

*Would you like to find a technique that lets you memorise more information and at a faster rate?*

If you answered **YES** to one or more of the above questions, then it's more than likely that you use ineffective and time-consuming learning techniques!

### **So how do you commit information to memory?**

*Do you quietly read your notes and/or textbooks underlining or highlighting key points as you come across them?*

*Do you re-write materials until you know them "off by heart"?*

If you're employing either of these techniques, you're using the most ineffective and time-consuming learning techniques known to man!

Writing and/or reading silently are relatively simple tasks that don't use many parts of the brain, making it easy to lose focus or think about unrelated matters, reducing how much information can be processed by the brain. This is why we sometimes get to the bottom of a page in a book only to ask ourselves:

***"What did I just read?"***

Writing, re-writing and silent reading are only effective (and even then only moderately so) when materials are of great interest, which usually isn't the case when preparing for tests and exams.

### **So how should you commit information to memory?**

**PTO**

**It is better to  
KNOW HOW TO LEARN  
than to know.**  
-Dr. Seuss

Research shows that we remember more of what we learn when we involve more parts of the brain. And there's no technique that uses more of the brain than **DOING**. Doing things like:

- (a) Working through exam-style questions (80-85% retention rate)
- (b) **TEACHING** (90-95% retention rate)

When teaching or explaining what you're learning in your own words (and out loud), we're engaging in a technique known as **elaborative rehearsal**.

This technique has been **scientifically proven** to be instrumental in transferring information from short-term memory to the higher levels of long-term memory, as it enables the brain to draw strong connections between what you're trying to remember and what you already know.

Learning  
is more effective  
when it is  
an active  
rather than  
a passive  
process.

Not only will **TEACHING** improve how much you understand and remember, this learning technique improves how effectively you're able to apply learned concepts; which is highly important in answering worded or application-style questions. In addition, when trying to rephrase concepts in your own words, you'll very quickly find out what you do and don't know, and therefore, which topics or concepts require more time and attention.

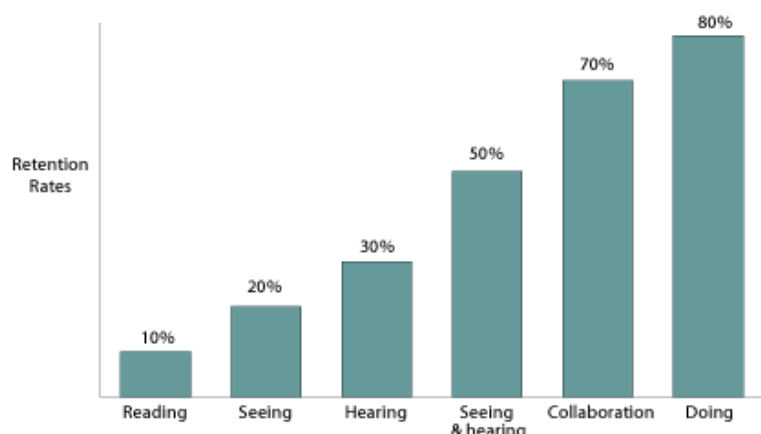
Learning in this manner will also **decrease study time by at least 5-fold**. This means that you will **learn 5 times more** in any set period of time!

**In general, after 48 hours, people retain:**

- 10 percent of what they read or re-write (typical learning techniques adopted by students)
- 20 percent of what they hear (audiotapes)
- 30 percent of what they see (flip-charts)
- 50 percent of what they hear and see (as in the case of school classes and revision lectures!)
- 70 percent of what they say and discuss
- 80 percent of what they say and do (i.e. questions & teaching)

Unless you have a photographic memory, 100% knowledge retention can only be achieved with regular, structured reviews.

Regards,  
The Team at TSFX.



Source: M. Chi, M. Bassok, M. Lewis, P. Reimann, & R. Glasser, "Self-explanations: How to Study and Use Examples in Problem Solving." *Cognitive Science*, 1989, 13, pp. 145-182.