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# LEARNING AND YOUR LIFE

Essentials of Student Success



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Robert S. Feldman

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Essentials  
of Student  
Success

THIRD EDITION

Robert S. Feldman  
*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

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Graw  
Hill  
Education



P.O.W.E.R. LEARNING AND YOUR LIFE: ESSENTIALS OF STUDENT SUCCESS, THIRD EDITION

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# Dedication

To my students, who make teaching a joy.

# About the Author

## ROBERT S. FELDMAN



Bob Feldman still remembers those moments of being overwhelmed when he started college at Wesleyan University. “I wondered whether I was up to the challenges that faced me,” he recalls, “and—although I never would have admitted it at the time—I really had no idea what it took to be successful at college.”

That experience, along with his encounters with many students during his own teaching career, led to a life-long interest in helping students navigate the critical transition that they face at the start of their own college careers. Professor Feldman, who went on to receive a doctorate in psychology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, is now Deputy Chancellor and Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is founding director of *POWER Up for Student Success*, the first-year experience course for incoming students.

Professor Feldman’s proudest professional accomplishment is winning the College Outstanding Teaching Award at UMass. He also has been named a Hewlett Teaching Fellow and was Senior Online Instruction Fellow. He has taught courses at Mount

Holyoke College, Wesleyan University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Professor Feldman is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is a winner of a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar and Lecturer award and has written over 200 scientific articles, book chapters, and books. His books, some of which have been translated into Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese, include *Improving the First Year of College: Research and Practice*; *Understanding Psychology*, 12/e; and *Development Across the Life Span*, 7/e. His research interests encompass the study of honesty and truthfulness in everyday life, development of nonverbal behavior in children, and the social psychology of education. His research has been supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute on Disabilities and Rehabilitation Research.

With the last of his three children completing college, Professor Feldman occupies his spare time with pretty decent cooking and earnest, but admittedly unpolished, piano playing. He also loves to travel. He lives with his wife, who is an educational psychologist, in a home overlooking the Holyoke mountain range in western Massachusetts.

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# Preface

In the first edition of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*—the book on which this text is based—I wrote about Mark Johnson, a student whom I encountered early in my teaching career. Smart, articulate, and likable, he certainly wanted to succeed in college, and he seemed every bit as capable as those students who were doing quite well. Yet Mark was a marginal student, someone who allowed multiple opportunities to succeed to pass him by. Although he clearly had the talent necessary to be successful in college—and ultimately in life—he lacked the skills to make use of his talents.

Over the years, I encountered other students like Mark. I began to wonder: Was there a way to teach *every* student how to succeed, both academically and beyond the classroom? *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* embodies the answer to this question.

Targeted toward students with a strong career orientation, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* is based on the conviction that *good students are made, not born*. The central message is that students can be successful in college and later in their careers if they follow the basic principles and strategies presented in this book.

This text is designed to be used by students in courses that promote student success. For many students, the first-year experience course is a literal lifeline. It provides the means to learn what it takes to achieve academic success and to make a positive social adjustment to the campus community. If students learn how to do well in their first term of college, they are building a foundation that will last a lifetime.

I wrote *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* because no existing text provided a systematic framework that could be applied in a variety of topical areas and that would help students to develop learning and problem-solving strategies that would work effectively both in and out of the classroom. The book is an outgrowth of my experience as a college instructor, most of it involving first-year students, combined with my research on the factors that influence learning.

Judging from the response to the earlier versions of this book—now in use at hundreds of colleges and universities around the world, and translated into languages ranging from Chinese to Spanish—the approach embodied in the book resonates with the philosophy and experience of many educators. Specifically, the text provides a framework that students can begin to use immediately to become more effective students. That framework is designed to be

- ▶ Clear, easy to grasp, logical, and compelling, so that students can readily see its merits.
- ▶ Effective for a variety of student learning styles—as well as a variety of teaching styles.
- ▶ Workable within a variety of course formats and for supplemental instruction.
- ▶ Valuable for use in learning communities.
- ▶ Transferable to settings ranging from the classroom to the dorm room to the board room.
- ▶ Effective in addressing both the mind *and* the spirit, presenting cognitive strategies and skills, while engaging the natural enthusiasm, motivation, and inclination to succeed that students carry within them.

Based on comprehensive, detailed feedback obtained from both instructors and students, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* meets these aims. The book will help students confront and master the numerous challenges of the college experience through use of the P.O.W.E.R. learning approach, embodied in the five steps of the acronym *P.O.W.E.R.* (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink). Using simple—yet effective—principles, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* teaches the skills needed to succeed in college and careers beyond.

## The Goals of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life*, 3/e

*P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* addresses five major goals:

- ▶ **To provide a systematic framework for organizing the strategies that lead to success in the classroom and careers:** First and foremost, the book provides a systematic, balanced presentation of the skills required to achieve student and career success. Using the *P.O.W.E.R.* framework and relying on proven strategies, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* provides specific, hands-on techniques for achieving success as a student.
- ▶ **To offer a wide range of skill-building opportunities:** *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* provides a wealth of specific exercises, diagnostic questionnaires, case studies, and journal writing activities to help students to develop and master the skills and techniques they need to become effective learners and problem solvers. *Readers learn by doing.*
- ▶ **To demonstrate the connection between academic success and career success:** Stressing the importance of *self-reliance* and *self-accountability*, the book demonstrates that the skills required to be a successful student are tied to career and personal success as well.
- ▶ **To develop critical thinking skills:** Whether to evaluate the quality of information found on the Internet or in other types of media, or to judge the merits of a position taken by a friend, colleague, or politician, the ability to think critically is more important than ever in this age of information. Through frequent questionnaires, exercises, journal activities, and guided group work, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* helps students to develop their capacity to think critically.
- ▶ **To provide an engaging, accessible, and meaningful presentation:** The fifth goal of this book underlies the first four: to write a student-friendly book that is relevant to the needs and interests of its readers and that will promote enthusiasm and interest in the process of becoming a successful student. Learning the strategies needed to become a more effective student should be a stimulating and fulfilling experience. Realizing that these strategies are valuable outside the classroom as well will provide students with an added incentive to master them.

In short, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* gives students a sense of mastery and success as they read the book and work through its exercises. It is meant to engage and nurture students' minds and spirits, stimulating their intellectual curiosity about the world and planting a seed that will grow throughout their lifetime.



# New to the Third Edition

The valuable input we have received from the reviewers of the third edition of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success*, along with the feedback from the tens of thousands of students, the hundreds of instructors who used prior versions, and classroom testing, have resulted in the addition of new and updated information, reflecting advances in our understanding of what makes students successful and changes in college instruction. The following sample of new and revised topics provides a good indication of the book's currency:

## CHAPTER 1—P.O.W.E.R. LEARNING: BECOMING AN EXPERT STUDENT

- ▶ New material on “Growth Mindset”
- ▶ Activities optimized for Connect

## CHAPTER 2—MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME

- ▶ Material reorganized to balance section length
- ▶ Revised material on Procrastination and Balancing School and Life, including Childcare Demands and Eldercare Demands

## CHAPTER 3—TAKING NOTES

- ▶ Material reorganized to balance section length
- ▶ New material on Strategies for Using Your Notes

## CHAPTER 4—TAKING TESTS

- ▶ Material reorganized to balance section length and increase clarity
- ▶ New material covering digital study groups and online classes
- ▶ Activities optimized for Connect

## CHAPTER 5—READING AND REMEMBERING

- ▶ Content on Reading and Memory updated and combined into a single chapter, strengthening coverage of both topics
- ▶ Activities optimized for Connect

## CHAPTER 6—CAREERS

- ▶ Data on occupations updated
- ▶ Coverage of Resumes and Cover Letters updated

## CHAPTER 7—TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION COMPETENCY

- ▶ Material reorganized to balance section length and clarity
- ▶ Section on Evaluating the Information You Find on the Web expanded
- ▶ New and revised material on Distance Learning and Online Classes
- ▶ New material on Social Media Etiquette and Personal Brand Management
- ▶ Updates for current technology and security

## CHAPTER 8—MAKING DECISIONS AND PROBLEM SOLVING

- ▶ New material on Cognitive Biases
- ▶ Activities optimized for Connect

## CHAPTER 9—DIVERSITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- ▶ Material reorganized to balance section length and clarity
- ▶ Material on Diversity expanded

## CHAPTER 10—JUGGLING: STRESS, MONEY, FAMILY, AND WORK

- ▶ Reorganized to create sections on Physical Health and Mental Health
- ▶ Activities optimized for Connect
- ▶ Material in Keeping Well expanded

# The P.O.W.E.R. to Evolve



More than ever before, the concept of “student” is changing. The idea that a student encompasses a cross-section of 18-year-olds attending a four-year university no longer applies as universally as it once did.

Students are also

- Employees
- Employers
- Co-workers
- Parents
- Friends
- Siblings
- Little League coaches
- Taxi drivers
- Overworked
- Overcommitted
- Overwhelmed

The list can probably go on from there. What else are you?

The purpose of this text is to take the P.O.W.E.R. framework, which has been proven effective, and apply it to a different type of student. While understanding your own study habits is important, how to study in a dorm is not information that every student needs. Just as our ideas of students are evolving, so can the texts that serve them.

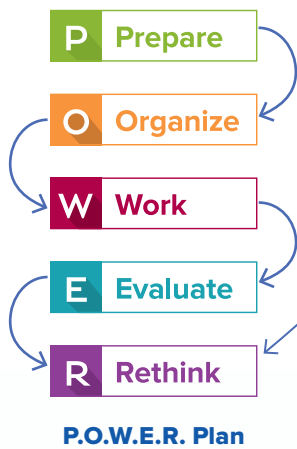
We want all students to understand what it takes to be successful in school, life, and career. By providing a context that applies to students in a variety of educational models, we can better foster connections between the classroom and the professional arena. The educational conversation this text facilitates should speak to students who are more than just . . . students.

## Succeed Now

School + Career + Life

# Text Features: Achieving the Goals of Learning

*P.O.W.E.R. Learning* provides a systematic framework for organizing the strategies that lead to success



Each chapter utilizes the principles of the **P.O.W.E.R. system (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink)**, so students can clearly see how easy it is to incorporate this effective process into their everyday routine. The P.O.W.E.R. plan illustration highlights the key steps for the corresponding chapter material.

figure 2.3  
Weekly Timetable

Week of:	Weekly Timetable							Week #
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	
6-7 a.m.								
7-8 a.m.								
8-9 a.m.								
9-10 a.m.								
10-11 a.m.								
11-12 noon								
12 noon-1 p.m.								
1-2 p.m.								
2-3 p.m.								
3-4 p.m.								
4-5 p.m.								
5-6 p.m.								
6-7 p.m.								
7-8 p.m.								
8-9 p.m.								
9-10 p.m.								
10-11 p.m.								
11 p.m.-12 noon								
12 noon-1 a.m.								
1-2 a.m.								
2-3 a.m.								
3-4 a.m.								
4-5 a.m.								
5-6 a.m.								

table 4.3 Action Words for Essays
These words are commonly used in essay questions. Learning the distinctions among them will help you answer essay questions effectively.
<b>Analyze:</b> Examine and break into component parts.
<b>Clarify:</b> Explain with significant detail.
<b>Compare:</b> Describe and explain similarities.
<b>Compare and contrast:</b> Describe and explain similarities and differences.
<b>Contrast:</b> Describe and explain differences.
<b>Critique:</b> Judge and analyze, explaining what is wrong—and right—about a concept.
<b>Define:</b> Provide the meaning.
<b>Discuss:</b> Explain, review, and consider.
<b>Enumerate:</b> Provide a listing of ideas, concepts, reasons, items, etc.
<b>Evaluate:</b> Provide pros and cons of something; provide an opinion and justify it.
<b>Explain:</b> Give reasons why or how; clarify, justify, and illustrate.
<b>Illustrate:</b> Provide examples; show instances.
<b>Interpret:</b> Explain the meaning of something.
<b>Justify:</b> Explain why a concept can be supported, typically by using examples and other types of support.
<b>Outline:</b> Provide an overarching framework or explanation—usually in narrative form—of a concept, idea, event, or phenomenon.
<b>Prove:</b> Using evidence and arguments, convince the reader of a particular point.
<b>Relate:</b> Show how things fit together; provide analogies.
<b>Review:</b> Describe or summarize, often with an evaluation.
<b>State:</b> Assert or explain.
<b>Summarize:</b> Provide a condensed, precise list or narrative.
<b>Trace:</b> Track or sketch out how events or circumstances have evolved; provide a history or timeline.

Handy, updated **reference charts** appear throughout the text for quickly accessing and organizing important material.

You may have a good idea of what the next few weeks have in store for you. You can identify just by looking at your master calendar the periods when you are going to be especially busy. You can also note the periods when you will have less to do.

*Use the off-peak periods to get a head start on future assignments!*

In this way, your master schedule can help you head off disaster before it occurs.

- Now move to the weekly timetable provided in Figure 2.3. Fill in the times of all your fixed, prescheduled activities—the times that your classes meet, when you have to be at work, the times you have to pick up your child at

having received the majority of the popular vote" is incorrect due to the presence of the word "never." On the other hand, less-absolute words, such as "generally," "usually," "often," "rarely," "seldom," and "typically," may indicate a correct response.

Be especially on guard for the word "not," which negates the sentence ("The one key concept that is not embodied in the U.S. Constitution is . . ."). It's easy to gloss over "not," and if you have the misfortune of doing so, it will be nearly impossible to answer the item correctly.

# P.O.W.E.R. Learning offers a wide range of skill-building opportunities

Every chapter offers numerous **Try It!** activities for gaining hands-on experience with the material covered in the chapter. These include questionnaires, self-assessments, and group exercises to do with classmates. The **Try It!** activities, along with other assessment opportunities, are also available on the text's website at [www.mhhe.com/power](http://www.mhhe.com/power).

## Determine the Diversity of Your Community

Try to assess the degree of diversity that exists in your community. *Community* can be a loosely defined term, but for this **Try It!** think of it as the group of people you encounter and interact with on a regular basis. When thinking of diversity, remember to include the many different ways in which people can be different from one another, including race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, physical challenges, and so on.

Overall, how diverse would you say your community is?

Are there organizations in your community that promote diversity? Are there organizations that work to raise the visibility and understanding of particular groups within your community?

What is the nature of your college's *student* diversity in terms of statistics regarding membership in different racial, ethnic, or cultural groups? (You may be able to find these statistics on your college's website.)

Is your college community more or less diverse than your community at large? Why do you think this might be?

How does the diversity on your community compare to the following statistics on diversity in the United States as of the 2010 census: white, 72 percent; Hispanic or Latino, 16 percent; Black or African American, 13 percent; Asian, 5 percent; two or more races, 3 percent; American Indian and Alaska Native, .9 percent; Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, .2 percent; other race, 6 percent? (Note: Percentages add up to more than 100 percent because Hispanics may be of any race and are therefore counted under more than one category.)

Every chapter includes an updated list of the three types of **resources** that are useful in finding and utilizing information relevant to the chapter: on-campus resources, books, and websites. This material helps students study and retain important concepts presented in the chapter, as well as guides future inquiry.

## RESOURCES

### ON CAMPUS

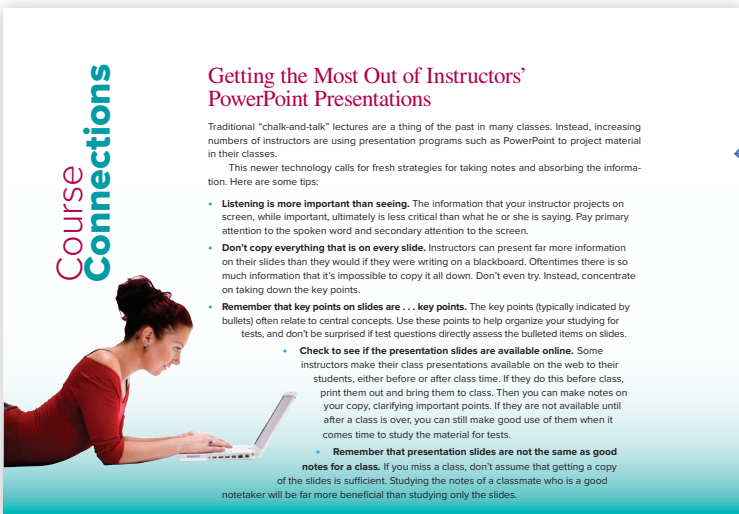
If you are having difficulty connecting to or surfing the web, the first place to turn is your college's computer center. Most campuses have consultants who can help you with the technical aspects of computer usage.

If you need access to computers, most colleges have computer labs. Typically, these labs provide computers with web access, as well as printers. It's important to check their hours, as they usually are not open 24/7. In addition, you may have to wait in line for a computer, so it is a good idea to bring some other work to the lab so you have something to do while waiting. You may also need to provide printer paper if you want to print something out.

The librarians at your college library are the people to whom you should turn first if you need help in locating information. In recent years, librarians—most of whom hold advanced degrees—have undergone a significant change in what they do, and most are equally at

Every chapter includes a **Course Connections** box that shows students how to use the chapter's content to maximize their success in particular classes.

The goals of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* are achieved through a consistent, carefully devised set of features common to every chapter. Students and faculty endorsed each of these elements.



**Course Connections**

### Getting the Most Out of Instructors' PowerPoint Presentations

Traditional "chalk-and-talk" lectures are a thing of the past in many classes. Instead, increasing numbers of instructors are using presentation programs such as PowerPoint to project material in their classes.

This newer technology calls for fresh strategies for taking notes and absorbing the information. Here are some tips:

- **Listening is more important than seeing.** The information that your instructor projects on screen, while important, ultimately is less critical than what he or she is saying. Pay primary attention to the spoken word and secondary attention to the screen.
- **Don't copy everything that is on every slide.** Instructors can present far more information on their slides than they would if they were writing on a blackboard. Oftentimes there is so much information that it's impossible to copy it all down. Don't even try. Instead, concentrate on taking down the key points.
- **Remember that key points on slides are . . . key points.** The key points (typically indicated by bullets) often relate to central concepts. Use these points to help organize your studying for tests, and don't be surprised if test questions directly assess the bulleted items on slides.
  - **Check to see if the presentation slides are available online.** Some instructors make their class presentations available on the web to their students, either before or after class time. If they do this before class, print them out and bring them to class. Then you can make notes on your copy, clarifying important points. If they are not available until after a class is over, you can still make good use of them when it comes time to study the material for tests.
  - **Remember that presentation slides are not the same as good notes for a class.** If you miss a class, don't assume that getting a copy of the slides is sufficient. Studying the notes of a classmate who is a good notetaker will be far more beneficial than studying only the slides.

# P.O.W.E.R. Learning demonstrates the connection between academic success and success beyond the classroom

The **Career Connections** feature links the material in the chapter to the world of work, demonstrating how the strategies discussed in the chapter are related to career choices and success in the workplace.



### The Job of Reading

Memos, Annual reports, Instructions, Continuing education assignments, Professional journals.

Each of these items illustrates the importance of developing critical reading skills for on-the-job success. Virtually every job requires good reading expertise, and for some professions, reading is a central component. Polishing your reading skills now will pay big dividends when you enter the world of work. The better you are at absorbing and remembering written information, the better you'll be at carrying out your job.

For instance, in many corporations, vital information is transmitted through the written word, via e-mails, hard-copy memos, technical reports, or web-based material. The job of repairing broken appliances or automobiles requires reading numerous service manuals to master the complex computer diagnostic systems that are now standard equipment. Nurses and others in the healthcare field must read journals and reports to keep up with the newest medical technologies.

Furthermore, because not all supervisors are effective writers, you'll sometimes need to read between the lines and draw inferences and conclusions about what you need to do. You should also keep in mind that there are significant cultural differences in the ways in which people write and the type of language they use. Being sensitive to the cultural background of colleagues will permit you to more accurately interpret and understand what you are reading.

In short, reading is a skill that's required in virtually every profession. Developing the habit of reading critically while you are in college will pave the road for future career success.

## Speaking of Success



Source: Courtesy of Sarah J. Wilson

NAME: **Sarah J. Wilson**  
 EDUCATION: **National American University**  
 DEGREE: **Business Administration with emphasis on tourism and hospitality**

For Sarah Wilson, going to college not only gave her the chance to get an education—it also provided her the opportunity to promote her Native American heritage.

While pursuing a degree in Business Administration at National American University, Wilson is working at the Dahl Art Center to support local Native American artists.

"I recently worked at a cultural event that helped Native artists get their work evaluated so they could get into major art festivals," says Wilson, an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux. "Another one of our biggest projects is developing a website for Native artists on the Pine Ridge Reservation."

Wilson's work is also tied to promoting tourism and small business development for the reservation. "Our culture is one of the most positive things we have," she explains. "My work allows me to see and interact with it every day, and to make it an even greater support for the community."

Wilson is already thinking about her next moves following graduation.

"I would like to get a nonprofit organization going and am also interested in microloans," she says. "I'd especially like to focus on helping artists get the financial support they need. I've seen 19-year-olds with fully developed business plans who could use the help. I would like to create something that doesn't exist yet, to develop something positive and sustainable."

By admission a poor student in high school, Wilson says that her time in college has been different from anything else she had experienced before. Through hard work and determination, she's made the honor roll every quarter with straight A's.

"The thing I do on the first day of class is glue myself mentally to the teacher," Wilson describes. "I'm extremely focused on what he or she is saying. I also take really good notes."

When preparing for tests, Wilson also stays motivated by keeping in mind the work she has done before. "I consider everything I've done during the quarter and through all of college," she explains. "I think about how much I'm paying for college and the sacrifices of time I've made. That helps me make the final push to ensure I'm ready on test day."

### RETHINK

- What do you think Wilson means when she says she "glues herself mentally to the teacher"?
- Why does thinking about the sacrifices she's made lead Wilson to be motivated when she prepares for tests?

Many new **Speaking of Success** articles have been added that profile real-life success stories. Some of these people are well-known individuals, whereas others are current students or recent graduates who have overcome academic difficulties to achieve success. In addition, **critical thinking questions** end each **Speaking of Success** profile.

**From the Perspective of . . .** This feature highlights how the lessons learned in this course impact you both now and in your future career. Created to show the correlation between academic and professional life, these features answer the question of why this course matters and how it will impact student growth long after graduation.

- **Record.** Write in your textbook, make notes, or create flash cards.
- **Review.** Review the material, looking it over, reading end-of-chapter summaries, and answering the in-text review questions.

In addition to *SQR*, you can also make up your own system. The truth is that it doesn't matter what system you use, as long as you use a system. What does matter is that you're systematic in the work of reading.



### From the perspective of . . .

**A STUDENT** To truly retain what you are reading, you must give your reading your undivided attention. Make a list of your biggest distractions and consider strategies for avoiding those distractions when you read.

Source: © CMCD/Photodisc/Getty Images

# P.O.W.E.R. Learning helps you develop critical thinking skills

Chapter 1 features a **P.O.W.E.R. Profile Assessment** tool that gives students a sense of where they stand—both numerically and graphically—in relation to the key topics addressed in the book. The **“P.O.W.E.R. Profile”** helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and determine how they want to improve. Students can return to the **P.O.W.E.R. Profile** at the end of the course to assess and chart their progress.

**4 PERSONAL STYLES Try It!**

### What's Your Receptive Learning Style?

Read each of the following statements and rank them in terms of their usefulness to you as learning approaches. Base your ratings on your personal experiences and preferences, using the following scale:

1 = Not at all useful  
2 = Not very useful  
3 = Neutral  
4 = Somewhat useful  
5 = Very useful

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Studying alone					
2. Studying pictures and diagrams to understand complex ideas					
3. Listening to class lectures					
4. Performing a process myself rather than reading or hearing about it					
5. Learning a complex procedure by reading written directions					
6. Watching and listening to film, computer, or video presentations					
7. Listening to a book or lecture on tape					
8. Doing lab work					
9. Studying teachers' handouts and lecture notes					
10. Studying in a quiet room					
11. Taking part in group discussions					
12. Taking part in hands-on demonstrations					
13. Taking notes and studying them later					
14. Creating flash cards and using them as a study and review tool					
15. Memorizing and recalling how words are spelled by spelling them "out loud" in my head					
16. Writing down key facts and important points as a tool for remembering them					
17. Recalling how to spell a word by seeing it in my head					
18. Underlining or highlighting important facts or passages in my reading					
19. Saying things out loud when I'm studying					
20. Recalling how to spell a word by "hearing" it invisibly in the air or on a surface					
21. Learning new information by reading about it in a book					
22. Using a map to find an unknown place					

(continued)

**4 continued Try It!**

23. Working in a study group

24. Finding a place I've been to once by just going there without directions

**Scoring:** The statements cycle through the four receptive learning styles in this order: (R) read/write; (V) visual/graphic; (A) auditory/verbal; and (T) tactile/kinesthetic.

To find your primary learning style, disregard your 1, 2, and 3 ratings. Add up your 4 and 5 ratings for each learning style (i.e., a "4" equals 4 points and a "5" equals 5 points). Use the following chart to link the statements to the learning styles and to write down your summed ratings:

Learning Style	Statements	Total (Sum of Rating Points)
Read/write	1, 5, 8, 13, 17, and 21	
Visual/graphic	2, 6, 10, 14, 18, and 22	
Auditory/verbal	3, 7, 11, 15, 19, and 23	
Tactile/kinesthetic	4, 8, 12, 16, 20, and 24	

The total of your rating points for any given style will range from a low of 0 to a high of 30. The highest total indicates your main receptive learning style. Don't be surprised if you have a mixed style, in which two or more styles receive similar ratings.

## Journal Reflections

### My Reading Preferences

Think about what you like and don't like to read by answering these questions.

1. Do you read for pleasure? If so, what do you read (e.g., magazines, newspapers, novels, humor, short stories, nonfiction, illustrated books)?
2. What makes a book enjoyable? Have you ever read a book that you "couldn't put down"? If so, what made it so good?
3. What is the most difficult book you are reading this semester? Why is it difficult? Are you enjoying it?
4. Think about when you read for pleasure compared with when you read material for a class. How does the way you read differ between the two types of material?
5. How well do you remember the last book or magazine you read for pleasure? Do you remember it better than your last college reading assignment? Why do you think this might be?

The **Journal Reflections** feature provides students with the opportunity to keep an ongoing journal, making entries relevant to the chapter content. Students are asked to reflect and think critically about related prior experiences. These conclude with questions designed to elicit critical thinking and exploration.

## The Case of . . .

### The Five-Hundred-Pound Reading Packet

The instructor dropped the thick packet of course readings on Delila Meade's desk. It landed with a loud *thud*.  
"We'll be reading this packet over the next four weeks," the instructor announced.  
But staring at the packet, all Delila could think was, *I don't think I could even lift that. Let alone read it in just a month!*  
Sure, Delila thought, she was interested in the topics of the readings. They all dealt with the history of computer programming, and Delila was in college to get her

degree in that same field. She told herself a lot of the information in the readings would probably be very useful, both in college and throughout her programming career.  
But still—all Delila could focus on as she stared at the packet were nagging questions. How could she possibly read all of it in four weeks? How would she remember all that material for tests or on the job? And perhaps most urgent of all, how would she even get the massive packet home?

1. How would you advise Delila to prepare for her course reading?
2. How would you suggest Delila organize her time so she can finish the readings in the allotted four weeks?
3. How might Delila stay focused on her reading? How might she most effectively use writing as a way to accomplish her task?
4. What techniques might Delila use to memorize long lists or other key material from her reading?
5. In what ways can Delila use rethinking techniques to improve her understanding of the readings in the packet?

Each chapter ends with a **case study (The Case of . . .)** to which the principles described in the chapter can be applied. Case studies are based on situations that students might themselves encounter. Each case provides a series of questions that encourage students to consider what they've learned and to use critical thinking skills in responding to these questions.

# P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides an engaging, accessible, and meaningful presentation

An appealing design and visual presentation highlight large, clear photos carefully selected to show the diversity of students as well as the latest in technological aids and devices.

Chapter-opening scenarios describe an individual grappling with a situation that is relevant to the subject matter of the chapter. Readers will be able to relate to these vignettes, which feature students running behind schedule, figuring out a way to keep up with reading assignments, or facing a long list of vocabulary words to memorize.

Months of study and classes and reading and commuting to and from his college . . . and now it all came down to a test.

That was the thought that ran through Eddie Penn's head as he sat down to take the final exam in his computer programming course. Eddie knew the test would end up counting for 65 percent of his final grade. If he passed, he would have enough credits to get the graphic design degree he'd been working toward for years. If he failed . . . Eddie tried not to think about that.

He'd taken tests before, but the stakes had never seemed so high for a single exam. Although he was fairly confident—he had studied hard—he couldn't relax altogether. He told himself that he had always done well on tests in the past; he wasn't going to fail now. But still—Eddie couldn't help but feel like his entire career, maybe his entire future, was on the line.

**Looking Ahead** Although many tests are not as critical as Eddie Penn's computer programming final, tests do play a significant role in everyone's academic life. Students typically experience more anxiety over tests than over anything else in their college careers. If you're returning to college after a long break, or perhaps struggled with tests earlier in your academic career, you may find the prospect of taking a test especially intimidating.

But tests don't have to be so anxiety producing. There are strategies and techniques you can learn to reduce your fear of test taking. In fact, learning how to take tests is in some ways as important as learning the content that they cover. Taking tests effectively does not just involve mastering information; it also requires mastering specific test-taking skills.

One of the most important goals of this chapter is to take the mystery out of the whole process of taking tests. To do that, you'll learn about the different types of tests and strategies you can start using even before you take a test. You'll gain insight into how different kinds of tests work and how best to approach them, and you'll also learn about the various types of test questions and strategies for responding most effectively to each type.

This chapter also explores two aspects of test taking that may affect your performance: test anxiety and cramming. You will learn ways to deal with your anxiety and keep cramming to a minimum—but you will also learn how to make the most of cramming, if you do have to resort to it.

The chapter ends with suggestions for evaluating your performance toward the end of a test and for using what you learn to improve your performance the next time around.

» **LO 4.1 Getting Ready**

Tests may be the most unpopular part of college life. Students hate them because they produce fear, anxiety, apprehension about being evaluated, and a focus on grades instead of learning for learning's sake. Instructors often don't like them very much either, because they produce fear, anxiety, apprehension about being evaluated, and a focus on grades instead of learning for learning's sake. That's right. Students and instructors dislike tests for the very same reasons.

But tests are also valuable. A well-constructed test identifies what you know and what you still need to learn. Tests help you see how your performance compares with that of others. And knowing that you'll be tested on a body of material is certainly likely to motivate you to learn material more thoroughly.

However, there's another reason you might dislike tests: You may assume that tests have the power to define your worth as a person. If you do badly on a test, you may be tempted to believe that you've received some fundamental information about yourself from the instructor and the college, information that says you're a failure in some significant way.

CHAPTER FOUR Taking Tests 83

CHAPTER **4**

**Learning Outcomes**  
By the time you finish this chapter you will be able to

- » **LO 4-1** Identify the kinds of tests you will encounter in college.
- » **LO 4-2** Explain the best ways to prepare for and take various kinds of tests.
- » **LO 4-3** Analyze the best strategies for answering specific kinds of test questions.

**Taking Tests**

Key terms appear in boldface in the text and are linked to definitions in the end-of-book glossary. In addition, they are listed in a *Key Terms and Concepts* section at the end of the chapter.

**[ KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS ]**

Acronym (p. 125)	Frontmatter (p. 113)	Rehearsal (p. 124)
Acrostic (p. 125)	Learning disabilities (p. 129)	Visualization (p. 127)
Advance organizers (p. 112)	Mnemonics (p. 125)	
Attention span (p. 115)	Overlearning (p. 127)	

All of these reviewed and tested features are designed not only to help students understand, practice, and master the core concepts presented in this text, but also to collectively support the main goals and vision of this text, as demonstrated on the following pages.



## The P.O.W.E.R. Resources

The same philosophy and goals that guided the writing of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* led to the development of a comprehensive teaching package. Through a series of focus groups, questionnaires, and surveys, we asked instructors what they needed to optimize their courses. We also analyzed what other publishers provided to make sure that the ancillary materials accompanying *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* would surpass the level of support to which instructors are accustomed. As a result of the extensive research that went into devising the teaching resources, we are confident that whether you are an instructor with years of experience or are teaching the course for the first time, this book's instructional package will enhance classroom instruction and provide guidance as you prepare for and teach the course.

## Print Resources

### **ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION**

The Annotated Instructor's Edition (AIE), prepared by Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace of Appalachian State University, contains the full text of the student edition of the book with the addition of notes that provide a rich variety of teaching strategies, discussion prompts, and helpful cross-references to the Instructor's Resource Manual. The AIE has been completely redesigned in an effort to provide more frontline teaching assistance.

### **INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL**

Written by Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace of Appalachian State University with additional contributions from experienced instructors across the country, this manual provides specific suggestions for teaching each topic, tips on implementing a first-year experience program, handouts to generate creative classroom activities, audiovisual resources, sample syllabi, and tips on incorporating the Internet into the course.

### **CUSTOMIZE YOUR TEXT**

*P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* can be customized to suit your needs. The text can be abbreviated for shorter courses and can be expanded to include semester schedules, campus maps, additional essays, activities, or exercises, along with other materials specific to your curriculum or situation. Chapters designed for student athletes, transferring students, and career preparation are also available.

## Human Resources

### **WORKSHOPS WITH AUTHOR AND AUTHOR TEAM**

Are you faced with the challenge of launching a first-year experience course on your campus? Would you like to invigorate your college success program, incorporating the most recent pedagogical and technological innovations? Is faculty recruitment an obstacle to the success of your program? Are you interested in learning more about the P.O.W.E.R. system?

Workshops are available on these and many other subjects for anyone conducting or even just considering a first-year experience program. Led by author Robert

Feldman, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life* Instructor’s Resource Manual authors Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace, or one of the McGraw-Hill P.O.W.E.R. Learning consultants, each workshop is tailored to the needs of individual campuses or programs. For more information, contact your local representative, or e-mail us at [student.success@mheducation.com](mailto:student.success@mheducation.com).

## Digital Resources

### LASSI: LEARNING AND STUDY STRATEGIES INVENTORY

The LASSI is a 10-scale, 80-item assessment of students’ awareness about and use of learning and study strategies related to skill, will, and self-regulation components of strategic learning. The focus is on both covert and overt thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that relate to successful learning and that can be altered through educational interventions. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that these factors contribute significantly to success in college and that they can be learned or enhanced through educational interventions.

The LASSI is available in print or online at [www.hhpublishing.com](http://www.hhpublishing.com). Ask your McGraw-Hill sales representative for more details.

### IMPLEMENTING A STUDENT SUCCESS COURSE

This innovative web content (available on the OLC) assists you in developing and sustaining your Student Success course. Features include a “how to” guide for designing and proposing a new course, with easy-to-use templates for determining budget needs and resources.

### MCGRAW-HILL CONNECT®

*CONNECT*® offers a number of powerful tools and features to make managing assignments easier, so faculty can spend more time teaching. With *Connect*, students can engage with their coursework anytime and anywhere, making the learning process more accessible and efficient.

### LEARNSMART

**LearnSmart** is an adaptive study tool proven to strengthen memory recall, increase class retention, and boost grades. Students are able to study more efficiently because they are made aware of what they know and don’t know. Real-time reports quickly identify the concepts that require more attention from individual students—or the entire class.

### SMARTBOOK

**SmartBook** is the first and only adaptive reading experience designed to change the way students read and learn. It creates a personalized reading experience by highlighting the most impactful concepts a student needs to learn at that moment in time. As a student engages with SmartBook, the reading experience continuously adapts by highlighting content based on what the student knows and doesn’t know. This ensures that the focus is on the content he or she needs to learn, while simultaneously promoting long-term retention of material. Use SmartBook’s real-time reports to quickly identify the concepts that require more attention from individual students—or the entire class. The end result? Students are more engaged with course content, can better prioritize their time, and come to class ready to participate.

## **MCGRAW-HILL CAMPUS™**

McGraw-Hill Campus™ is a new one-stop teaching and learning experience available to users of any learning management system. This institutional service allows faculty and students to enjoy single-sign-on (SSO) access to all McGraw-Hill Higher Education materials, including the award-winning McGraw-Hill *Connect* platform, from directly within the institution's website. McGraw-Hill Campus provides faculty with instant access to teaching materials (e.g., eTextbooks, test banks, PowerPoint slides, animations, and learning objectives), allowing them to browse, search, and use any ancillary content in our vast library. Students enjoy SSO access to a variety of free products (e.g., quizzes, flash cards, narrated presentations) and subscription-based products (e.g., McGraw-Hill *Connect*). With McGraw-Hill Campus, faculty and students will never need to create another account to access McGraw-Hill products.

# The POWER to Succeed!

## The POWER of Support!

Let the McGraw-Hill Student Success Team support your course with our workshop program.

- ▶ Planning to develop a first-year experience course from scratch?
- ▶ Reenergizing your first-year experience course?
- ▶ Trying to integrate technology in your class?
- ▶ Exploring the concept of learning communities?

We offer a range of author- and consultant-led workshops that can be tailored to meet the needs of your institution.

Our team of experts, led by *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* author Robert Feldman, can address issues of course management, assessment, organization, and implementation. How do you get students to commit to your program? How do you achieve support from your institution? How can you evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of your first-year experience course? These are questions that every program faces. Let us help you to find an answer that works for you.

Other workshop topics may include

- ▶ Classroom Strategies for Enhancing Cultural Competence: The P.O.W.E.R. of Diversity
- ▶ Using Learning Styles in the Classroom
- ▶ Creating Student Success Courses Online
- ▶ Motivating Your Students

To schedule a workshop, please contact your local McGraw-Hill representative. Alternately, contact us directly at [student.success@mheducation.com](mailto:student.success@mheducation.com) to begin the process of bringing a P.O.W.E.R. Learning workshop to you.

## The POWER to Create Your Own Text!

Do you want to

- ▶ Cover only select chapters?
- ▶ Personalize your book with campus information (maps, schedules, registration materials, etc.)?
- ▶ Add your own materials, including exercises or assignments?
- ▶ Address specific student populations, such as student athletes and transferring students?

*P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* can be customized to suit your needs.\*

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\*Orders must meet our minimum sales unit requirements.

## WHY CUSTOMIZE?

Perhaps your course focuses on study skills and you prefer that your text not cover life issues such as money matters, health and wellness, or information on choosing a major. Whatever the reason, we can make it happen, easily. McGraw-Hill Custom Publishing can deliver a book that perfectly meets your needs.

## WHAT WILL MY CUSTOM BOOK LOOK LIKE?

Any chapters from the *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* book that you include will be in full color. Additional materials can be added between chapters or at the beginning or end of the book in black and white. Binding (paperback, three-hole punch, you name it) is up to you. You can even add your own custom cover to reflect your school image.

## WHAT CAN I ADD?

Anything! Here are some ideas to get you started:

- ▶ **Campus map** or anything specific to your school: academic regulations or requirements, syllabi, important phone numbers or dates, library hours.
- ▶ **Calendars** for the school year, for local theater groups, for a concert series.
- ▶ **Interviews** with local businesspeople or your school's graduates in which they describe their own challenges and successes.
- ▶ **Your course syllabus or homework assignments** so your students have everything they need for your course under one cover and you don't have to make copies to hand out.

## SPECIAL CHAPTERS DESIGNED FOR THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF YOUR STUDENTS!

Several additional chapters are available for your customized text and have been designed to address the needs of specific student populations.

- ▶ *Strategies for Success for Student Athletes*. This chapter discusses the unique challenges of student athletes, such as managing school and team pressures, using resources and understanding eligibility, and knowing when and how to ask for help. It also addresses special concerns such as burnout, dealing with injury, and hazing.
- ▶ *Taking Charge of Your Career*. This chapter helps students determine the best career choices that fit personal goals. It provides important tips on how to develop a career portfolio, prepare a resume and cover letters, and have a successful interview, including follow-up strategies.
- ▶ *Transfer Strategies: Making the Leap from Community College to a Four-Year School*. Designed for the potential transfer student, this chapter looks at the pros and cons of moving beyond a two-year degree and what personal decisions to make. It guides students through the transfer process, including applications, credit transfer, financial assistance, and transfer shock.

## HOW DO I CREATE A CUSTOM BOOK?

The secret to custom publishing is this: Custom Publishing Is Simple!

### HERE ARE THE BASIC STEPS:

- ▶ You select the chapters you would like to use from *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials for Student Success* with your McGraw-Hill sales representative.
- ▶ Together, we discuss your preferences for the binding, the cover, etc., and provide you with information on costs.
- ▶ We assign your customized text an ISBN and your project goes into production. A custom text will typically publish within 6–8 weeks of the order.
- ▶ Your book is manufactured and it is put into inventory in the McGraw-Hill distribution center.
- ▶ You are sent a free desk copy of your custom publication.
- ▶ Your bookstore calls McGraw-Hill's customer service department and orders the text.

### **You select what you want—we handle the details!**

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Canada: 1-905-430-5034

United States: 1-800-446-8979

E-mail: [student.success@mheducation.com](mailto:student.success@mheducation.com)

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***P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success*** author Bob Feldman and some of his first-year experience program participants

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**Robert S. Feldman**

Congratulations! You are at the beginning of an academic journey that will impact your future in ways you can only imagine. This text and this course are designed to help make that journey as meaningful and enriching as possible. As you begin this chapter of your life, remember that you are not alone.

Every first-year student (like many returning students) encounters challenges. Whether it be juggling family, work, and school or preparing for a test, the challenges you face are daunting.

This is where *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* comes in. It is designed to help you to master the challenges you'll face in school as well as in life after graduation. The P.O.W.E.R. Learning system—which is based on five key steps embodied in the word P.O.W.E.R. (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink)—teaches strategies that will help you become a more successful student and that will give you an edge in attaining what you want to accomplish in life.

But it's up to you to make use of the book. Familiarize yourself with the features of the book (described above) and use the built-in learning aids within the book, on the accompanying website, and in Connect. By doing so, you'll maximize the book's usefulness and get the most out of it.

Finally, I welcome your comments and suggestions about *P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success*, as well as about the website that accompanies the book. You can write me at the Chancellor's Office at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003. Even easier, send me an e-mail message at [feldman@chancellor.umass.edu](mailto:feldman@chancellor.umass.edu). I will write back!

*P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success* presents the tools that can maximize your chances for academic and life success. But remember that they're only tools, and their effectiveness depends on the way in which they are used. Ultimately, you are the one who is in charge of your future. Make the journey a rewarding, exciting, and enlightening one!

**Robert S. Feldman**



## Learning Outcomes

By the time you finish this chapter, you will be able to

- » **LO1-1** Explain the benefits of a college education.
- » **LO1-2** Identify the basic principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning.
- » **LO1-3** Identify your learning styles and how they affect your academic success.

# P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Becoming an Expert Student



The day has started off with a bang. Literally. As Abbie Suarez struggles sleepily to turn off her clock radio's continual buzzing at 6:35 a.m., she knocks it off the table next to her bed. The loud bang it makes as it hits the floor not only wakes her fully but also rouses her daughters, sleeping in the next room, who grumble resentfully.

Struggling out of bed, Abbie reflects on the day ahead. It's one of her most intense days—two shifts at two different part-time jobs on different sides of town. She also must get her children ready for school and then take them to swimming lessons in the afternoon. And

on top of all that, she has an exam that morning at the college she attends.

After a quick shower, Abbie manages to get her daughters off to school, and then joins her fellow paralegal students on campus. She glances at her paralegal textbook and feels a wave of anxiety flood over her: Will I do well enough on my exam? How will I manage to hold down two jobs, take care of my family, and have enough time to study? Will I find a job as a paralegal after graduation? Will I make my children proud? . . . *And underlying all these questions is a single challenge: Will I be successful in college and in my career?*

## Looking Ahead

Whether academic pursuits are a struggle or come easily to you . . . whether you are returning to college or attending for the first time . . . whether you are gaining new skills for your current job or are starting on a whole new career path, college is a challenge. Every one of us has concerns about our capabilities and motivation, and new situations—like starting college—make us wonder how well we'll succeed.

That's where this book comes in. It is designed to help you learn the most effective ways to approach the challenges you encounter, not just in college but in your career, too. It will teach you practical strategies, hints, and tips that can lead you to success, all centered around an approach to achieving classroom and career success: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

This book is designed to be useful in a way that is different from other college texts. It presents information in a hands-on format. It's meant to be used—not just read. Write on it, underline words and sentences, use a highlighter, circle key points, and complete the questionnaires right in the book. The more exercises you do, the more you'll get from the book. Remember, this is a book to help you throughout college and throughout your career, so it's a good idea to invest your time here and now. If the learning techniques you master here become second nature, the payoff will be enormous.

This first chapter lays out the basics of P.O.W.E.R. Learning. It will also help you determine the way in which you learn best and how you can use your personal learning style to study more effectively.

## » LO 1-1 Why Go to College?

Congratulations. You're in college.

But why? Although it seems as if it should be easy to answer why you're continuing your education, for most people it's not so simple. The reasons that people go to college vary from the practical (“I need new skills for my job”), to the lofty (“I want to build a better life for my family”), to the vague (“Why not?—I don't have anything better to do”). Consider your own reasons for attending college, as you complete **Try It! 1**.

Surveys of first-year college students at all types of institutions show that the vast majority say they want to learn about things that interest them, get training for a specific career, land a better job, and make more money (see **Figure 1.1**). Statistics clearly demonstrate that a college education helps people find better

## Why Am I Going to College?

Place 1, 2, and 3 by the three most important reasons that you have for attending college:

- I want to get a good job when I graduate.
- I want to make my family proud.
- I couldn't find a decent job.
- I want to try something different.
- I want to get ahead at my current job.
- I want to pursue my dream job.
- I want to improve my reading and thinking skills.
- I want to become a more cultured person.
- I want to meet new people from different backgrounds.
- I want to make more money.
- I want to learn more about things that interest me.
- A mentor or role model encouraged me to go.
- I want to prove to others that I can succeed.

Now consider the following:

- What do your answers tell you about yourself?
- What reasons besides these did you think about when you were applying to college?
- How do you think your reasons compare with those of other students who are starting college with you?



**figure 1.1**  
**Choosing College**

These are the most frequently cited reasons that first-year college students gave for why they enrolled in college when asked in a national survey.

Source: © 2008 The Regents of the University of California.



# Journal Reflections

## My School Experiences

Throughout this book, you will be given opportunities to write out your thoughts. These opportunities—called Journal Reflections—offer a chance to think critically about the chapter topics and record your personal reactions to them. As you create your reflections, be honest—to yourself and to your instructor.

Completing these Journal Reflections provides a variety of benefits. Not only will you be able to mull over your past and present academic experiences, you'll also begin to see patterns in the kind of difficulties—and successes!—you encounter. You'll be able to apply solutions that worked in one situation to others. And one added benefit: You'll get practice in writing.

If you save these entries and return to them later, you may be surprised at the changes they record over the course of the term. You can either write them out or keep an actual journal.

1. Think of one of the successful experiences you've had during your previous years in school or on the job. What was it?
2. What made the experience successful? What did you learn from your success?
3. Think of an experience you had in school that did not go as you had hoped, and briefly describe it. Why did it occur?
4. What could you have done differently to make it successful? What did you learn from it?
5. Based on these experiences of success and failure, what general lessons did you learn that could help you be more successful in the future, in the classroom and in your career?

jobs. On average, college graduates earn about 75 percent more than high school graduates over their working lifetime. That difference adds up: Over the course of their working lifetimes, college graduates earn close to a million dollars more than those with only a high school degree. Furthermore, as jobs become increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated, college will become more and more of a necessity.

But even if you feel the only reason you're in college is to help your career prospects, remember that the value of college extends far beyond dollars and cents. Consider these added reasons for pursuing a college education:

- ▶ **You'll learn to think critically and communicate better.** Here's what one student said about his college experience after he graduated: "It's not about

what you major in or which classes you take. . . . It's really about learning to think and to communicate. Wherever you end up, you'll need to be able to analyze and solve problems—to figure out what needs to be done and do it.”<sup>1</sup>

Education improves your ability to understand the world—to understand it as it is now, and to prepare to understand it as it will be.

- ▶ **You'll be able to better deal with advances in knowledge and technology that are changing the world.** Genetic engineering . . . drugs to reduce forgetfulness . . . computers that respond to our thoughts. No one knows what the future will hold, but you can prepare for it through a college education. Education can provide you with the intellectual tools that you can apply regardless of the specific situation in which you find yourself.
- ▶ **You'll acquire skills and perspectives that will shape how you deal with new situations and challenges.** The only certainty about how your life will unfold is that you will be surprised at what is in store for you. College prepares you to deal with the unexpected that characterizes all our lives.
- ▶ **You'll be better prepared to live in a world of diversity.** The racial and ethnic composition of the United States is changing rapidly. Whatever your ethnicity, chances are you'll be working and living with people whose backgrounds, lifestyles, and ways of thinking may be entirely different from your own.  
You won't be prepared for the future unless you understand others and their cultural backgrounds—as well as how your own cultural background affects you.
- ▶ **You'll make learning a lifelong habit.** College isn't the end of your education. There's no job you'll have that won't change over time, and you'll be required to learn new skills. College starts you down the path to lifelong learning.

To help you attain these benefits, it's time to introduce you to a process that will help you achieve success, both in college and in life beyond: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

## » LO1-2 P.O.W.E.R. Learning: The Five Key Steps to Achieving Success

**P.O.W.E.R. Learning** itself is merely an acronym—a word formed from the first letters of a series of steps—that will help you take in, process, and make use of the information you'll acquire in college. It will help you achieve your goals, both while you are in college and after you graduate.

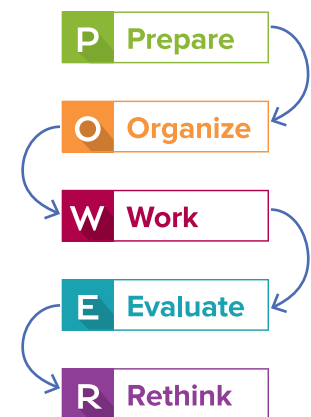
Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink. That's it. It's a simple framework, but an effective one. Using the systematic framework that P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides (and that is illustrated in the P.O.W.E.R. Plan diagram) will increase your chances of success at any task, from writing a college paper to buying your weekly groceries to filling out a purchase order.

Keep this in mind: P.O.W.E.R. Learning isn't a product that you can simply pull down off the bookshelf and use without thinking. P.O.W.E.R. Learning is a process, and you are the only one who can make it succeed. Without your personal investment in the process, P.O.W.E.R. Learning consists of just words on paper.

Relax, though. You already know each of the elements of P.O.W.E.R. Learning, and you may discover that you are already putting this process, or parts of it, to work for you. You've applied and been accepted into college. You may also have held down a job, started a family, and paid your monthly bills. Each of these

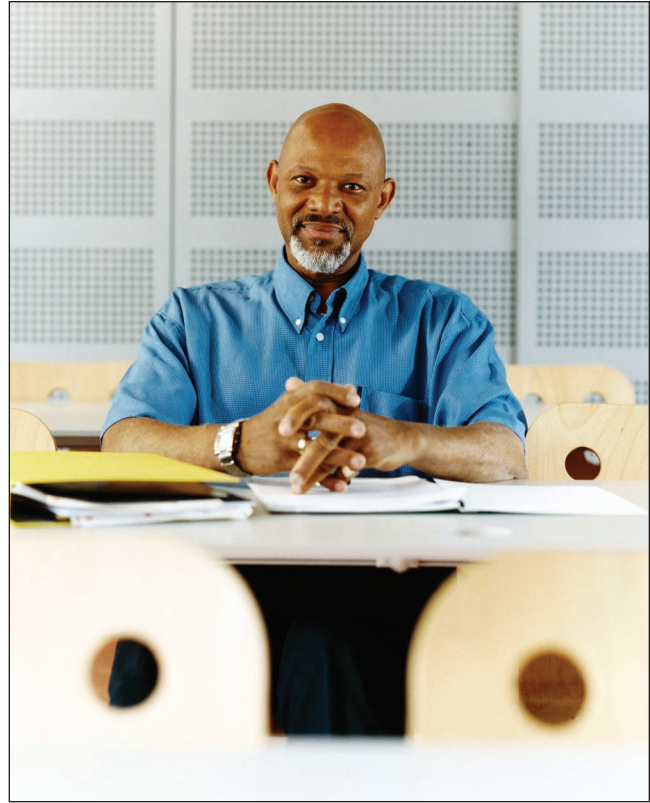
### P.O.W.E.R. Learning

A system designed to help people achieve their goals, based on five steps: Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink.



**P.O.W.E.R. Plan**





Sources: (L) © Commercial Eye/The Image Bank/Getty Images, (R) © Digital Vision/Getty Images

Everyone goes to school for their own reasons. Gwen recently visited a friend in the hospital and was struck by how much she wanted to be a part of the health-care community. John has survived several rounds of layoffs at his job and wants to make himself more marketable.

accomplishments required that you use P.O.W.E.R. Learning. What you'll be doing throughout this book is becoming more aware of these methods and how they can be used to help you in situations you will encounter in college and your career.

## **P** Prepare

Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that travelers taking a long journey must begin with a single step.

But before they even take that first step, travelers need to know several things: what their destination is, how they're going to get there, how they'll know when they reach the destination, and what they'll do if they have trouble along the way. In the same way, you need to know where you're headed as you embark on the academic journeys involved in college. Whether it be a major, long-term task, such as landing a new and better job, or a more limited activity, such as getting ready to complete a paper due in the near future, you'll need to prepare for the journey.

## Setting Goals

Before we seek to accomplish any task, all of us do some form of planning. The trouble is that most of the time such planning is done without conscious thinking, as if we are on autopilot. However, the key to success is to make sure that planning is systematic.

The best way to plan systematically is to use goal-setting strategies. In many cases, goals are clear and direct. It's obvious that our goal in washing dishes is to have the dishes end up clean. We know that our goal at the gas station is to fill the car's tank with gas. We go to the post office to buy stamps and mail letters.

Other goals are not so clear-cut. In fact, the more important the task—such as going to college—the more complicated our goals may be.



Source: © Cathy Yeulet/Hemera/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images

## From the perspective of . . .

**A STUDENT** What goals did you set when you decided to go to school? What can you do to ensure that you meet these goals?

What's the best way to set appropriate goals? Here are some guidelines:

- ▶ **Set both long-term and short-term goals.** **Long-term goals** are aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve. **Short-term goals** are relatively limited steps you would take on the road to accomplishing your long-term goals. For example, one of the primary reasons you're in college is to achieve the long-term goal of helping your career. But to reach that goal, you have to accomplish a series of short-term goals, such as completing a set of required courses and earning your degree. Even these short-term goals can be broken down into shorter-term goals. In order to complete a required course, for instance, you have to accomplish short-term goals, such as completing a paper, taking several tests, and so on. For practice in setting long- and short-term goals, complete **Try It! 2**, "What Are Your Goals?"
- ▶ **Make goals realistic and attainable.** Someone once said, "A goal without a plan is but a dream." We'd all like to win gold medals at the Olympics or be the CEO of Nike or write best-selling novels. Few of us are likely to achieve such goals.  
Be honest with yourself. There is nothing wrong with having big dreams. But it is important to be realistically aware of all that it takes to achieve them. If our long-term goals are unrealistic and we don't achieve them, the big danger is that we may wrongly reason that we are inept and lack ability, then use this as an excuse for giving up. If goals are realistic, we can develop a plan to attain them, spurring us on to attain more.
- ▶ **State goals in terms of behavior that can be measured against current accomplishments.** Goals should represent some measurable change from a current set of circumstances. We want our behavior to change in some way that can usually be expressed in terms of numbers—to show an increase ("raise my grade point average 10 percent") or a decrease ("reduce wasted time by two hours each week"); or to be maintained ("keep in touch with my out-of-town

"Goal setting, as far as I can see it, is simply a state of mind, a way of thinking about things. A goal setter makes sure he accomplishes what he needs to accomplish."

Greg Gottesman, Stanford University, *College Survival* (New York: Macmillan, 1994), p. 70.

### long-term goals

Aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve.

### short-term goals

Relatively limited steps toward the accomplishment of long-term goals.

## What Are Your Goals?

Before you begin any journey, you need to know where you are going. To plan your academic journey—and your later career—you first need to set goals. *Short-term goals* are relatively limited objectives that bring you closer to your ultimate goal. *Long-term goals* are aims relating to major accomplishments that take more time to achieve.

In this Try It!, think about your short- and long-term academic and career goals for a few minutes, and then list them. Because short-term goals are based on what you want to accomplish in the long term, first identify your long-term goals. Then list the short-term goals that will help you reach your long-term goals. An example is provided for the first goal:

**Long-Term Goal #1** Get a college degree

**Related Short-Term Goals:**

- Complete four courses with a grade of B or above each term
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Long-Term Goal #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related Short-Term Goals:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Long-Term Goal #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related Short-Term Goals:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Long-Term Goal #4:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related Short-Term Goals:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Long-Term Goal #5:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Related Short-Term Goals:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

After you complete the chart, consider how easy or difficult it was to identify your long-term goals. How many of your long-term goals relate to college, and how many to your future career? Do any of your short-term goals relate to more than one long-term goal?

friends by sending four e-mail messages each month”), developed (“participate in one workshop on job interview skills”), or restricted (“reduce my cellphone expenses 10 percent by texting less”).

- ▶ **Choose goals that involve behavior over which you have control.** We all want world peace and an end to poverty. Few of us have the resources or capabilities to bring either about. In contrast, it is realistic to want to work in small ways to help others, such as by volunteering at a local food bank.
- ▶ **Identify how your short-term goals fit with your long-term goals.** Your goals should not be independent of one another. Instead, they should fit together into a larger dream of who you want to be. Every once in a while, step back and consider how what you’re doing today relates to the kind of career that you ultimately want to have.

## Organize

By determining where you want to go and expressing your goals in terms that can be measured, you have already made a lot of progress. But there’s another step you must take on the road to success.

The second step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning is to organize the tools you’ll need to accomplish your goals. Building on the goal-setting work you’ve undertaken in the preparation stage, it’s time to determine the best way to accomplish the goals you’ve identified.

How do you do this? Suppose you’ve decided to paint a room in your house. Let’s say that you’ve already determined the color you want and the kind of paint you need (the preparation step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning). The next stage involves buying the paint and brushes and preparing the room for being painted—all aspects of organizing for the task.

Similarly, your academic success will hinge to a large degree on the thoroughness of your organization for each academic task that you face. In fact, one of the biggest mistakes that students make in college is plunging into an academic project—studying for a test, writing a paper, completing an in-class assignment—without being organized.

## The Two Kinds of Organization: Physical and Mental

On a basic level is *physical organization*, involving the mechanical aspects of task completion. For instance, you need to ask yourself if you have the appropriate tools, such as pens, paper, and a calculator. If you’re using a computer, do you have access to a printer? Do you have a way to back up your files? Do you have the books and other materials you’ll need to complete the assignment? Will the library be open when you need it? Do you have a comfortable place to work?

*Mental organization* is even more critical. Mental organization is accomplished by considering and reviewing the academic skills that you’ll need to successfully complete the task at hand. You are an academic general in command of considerable forces; you will need to make sure your forces—the basic skills you have at your command—are at their peak of readiness.

For example, if you’re working on a math assignment, you’ll want to consider the basic math skills that you’ll need and brush up on them. Just actively