



Why Constant Learning is the Key to Success

Every piece of information you've ever acquired has been learned. Every single one. While learning new pieces of information every day is one thing, consistently choosing to is another.

For many people, the most concentrated time for learning takes place in a school or a university. That's where you go to develop your mind and learn about all manner of things, allowing you to make choices and become the person you are today. That's great, but the education system lets us all go eventually. For the vast majority of your life, learning will be in your hands.

While school teaches you that you must learn something to pass a test, which gives you a qualification to get into university or find a job, it doesn't teach the benefits of long-term learning. Constant learning, whatever form that takes, is the key to success. Not only will it push you toward achieving your goals, but it will also make you a more rounded human being. Learning breeds new perspectives.

Understanding the Forgetting Curve

In 1885, Hermann Ebbinghaus hypothesised the forgetting curve – the decrease in the ability of the brain to retain memory over time. He created a graph which suggests that although you retain 100% of new information in your short-term memory immediately, within two days, retention drops by 60%. Without re-learning the information at hand, the brain can only keep 10% one week after initial retention.

When we don't place enough importance on consistent learning, new information will leak out of our brains and back into the wilderness of lost thoughts. Our short-term memory is usually very good, as Dr Kohn says most of what we remember in the moment is of "*short-term importance*," thus forcing our brains to reshuffle bits of information according to their immediate value.

It is quite literally in our nature to forget things, but it's well within your power to make the transition from short to long-term memory a smooth one.

Why Challenging Yourself Is a Top Priority

In Parks and Recreation, there's a scene where Andy, played by Chris Pratt, is looking to start college classes. He attends various demo lessons, one of which is guitar for beginners. The lead singer and guitarist of a band already, there's no need for him to be there. He knows things a beginner shouldn't and it's a walk in the park. Andy, perhaps the most joyful character in all of television, sees this as a win. After all, the chance to be the best in class isn't something he's accustomed to. Quickly, however, he realises that it's more boring than triumphant. In the end, he leaves and finds something new. **A challenge.**

Challenging yourself must be a top priority if you're trying to be as successful as possible. That means consistently putting yourself around people more intelligent than you and placing yourself in new environments. In other words, being in a position to learn.

When you don't challenge yourself, it's easy to fall into habits. While these habits make us more efficient at doing the same thing, learning is about challenging ourselves and growing by doing things we've not done before. For example, you're an experienced blog writer. You've written about, let's say, finance, for a few years now. Every article you write feels under your control. The words flow with ease and it feels efficient. After a while, the lack of fresh stimulation gets stale. Pretty soon, the repetition of topics and

buzzwords bothers you and leads to dissatisfaction with the work you once felt such pride for. The key? You guessed it, **challenging yourself**. This doesn't mean throwing away everything you know, but it's an invitation to yourself to evolve. You could challenge yourself to become an author or write about finance from perspectives you might not have initially.

Whatever you do, make sure it's from an evolution standpoint. As Pokemon taught us, to level up, you need more XP points. For humans, that means a lifetime of learning.

Learning is an Immeasurable Long-Term Benefit

For millions of families around the world, Christmas time is for connecting with loved ones, gift-giving, and eating piles of food. It's also a chance to play board games with your grandparents and consistently lose due to their continually surprising wealth of knowledge. It's no surprise when you think about the lifetime of information they've learned and gathered.

Anyway, as you can imagine, there is a long-term, perhaps a lifelong benefit to learning, whether you're active about it or not. If you are, though, then the key to success is within your sights.

Let's think back to *Hermann Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve* once again. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the man behind the 'flow state,' has said, on estimate, the brain can take in 120 bits of information a second. The Fast Company reported on research which concluded that your brain can only handle about 60 bits of information when talking to someone. Therefore, it's easy to understand how leaky our brains can be. Information is on a constant merry-go-round, shuffling and reshuffling old and new things to remember. It's also precisely why constant learning is vital for your long-term success.

As you grow older, the information and everything you've learned will grow old with you. Everything you've learned in the day gone will eventually become somewhat outdated. Your brain will desire more. Learning feeds the brain and gives it fuel to run.

The Creative Benefits of Learning Cannot Be Underestimated

Think about any moment of inspiration you've had in the past. It's likely been triggered by something you've learned and stored in your subconscious, or the brain has flagged it as a high priority in the short-term memory bank. Constant learning will eventually bring out creative ideas. These don't need to be books or paintings either. Creative ideas take all shapes and sizes: an accountant may figure out a financial problem quicker with a little nudge from their creativity, or you may have figured out a way to arrange your bedroom perfectly. It doesn't matter. The point is, creativity is all around and affects so much of life.

It doesn't need to be a daunting undertaking, either. Constant learning comes in simple forms – **books, podcasts, films**, but the key to success lies in where you put your attention. It doesn't need to be constantly directed toward your career; success is about trusting where your curiosity takes you and knowing when to cut out all of the noise. Creativity's proximity to learning and its subsequent impact on success cannot be underestimated. Creativity is the most enjoyable side-effect of constant learning.

The Key to Success Lies in Constant Learning

Constant learning will greatly increase your chances of a successful life. But let's make one thing clear, although your brain is learning new bits of information constantly, it can't learn useful things if it isn't stimulated enough.

Every waking hour, your brain is almost constantly ready to receive new memories and forget useless ones. Constant learning requires exposure to challenges, new environments and reimagined feelings. Whether that is opening yourself up to vulnerability in a relationship or simply giving a random, unfamiliar book genre a try, it doesn't matter. Exposure to new information is what your brain thrives on. Without it, life will not flow.

So, while you should acknowledge and remember the rush that comes from mastering something, don't allow it to override the human passion to evolve, innovate and above all, learn.

Learning is at the crux of everything we do. It's the beating heart of this channel and the driving force behind human evolution. We seek new feelings, new adventures, and new understandings of the world we live in. We seek success.