

# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

---

Thuy Copeland ~ @mindgraffiti

---

A how-to guide on learning well

So what?

What makes a quick study?

# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

1. Measuring where you are
2. Setting up a plan
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

# Gauging where you are

- What's Grok?
- The 4 levels of competence
- Finding your level of mastery

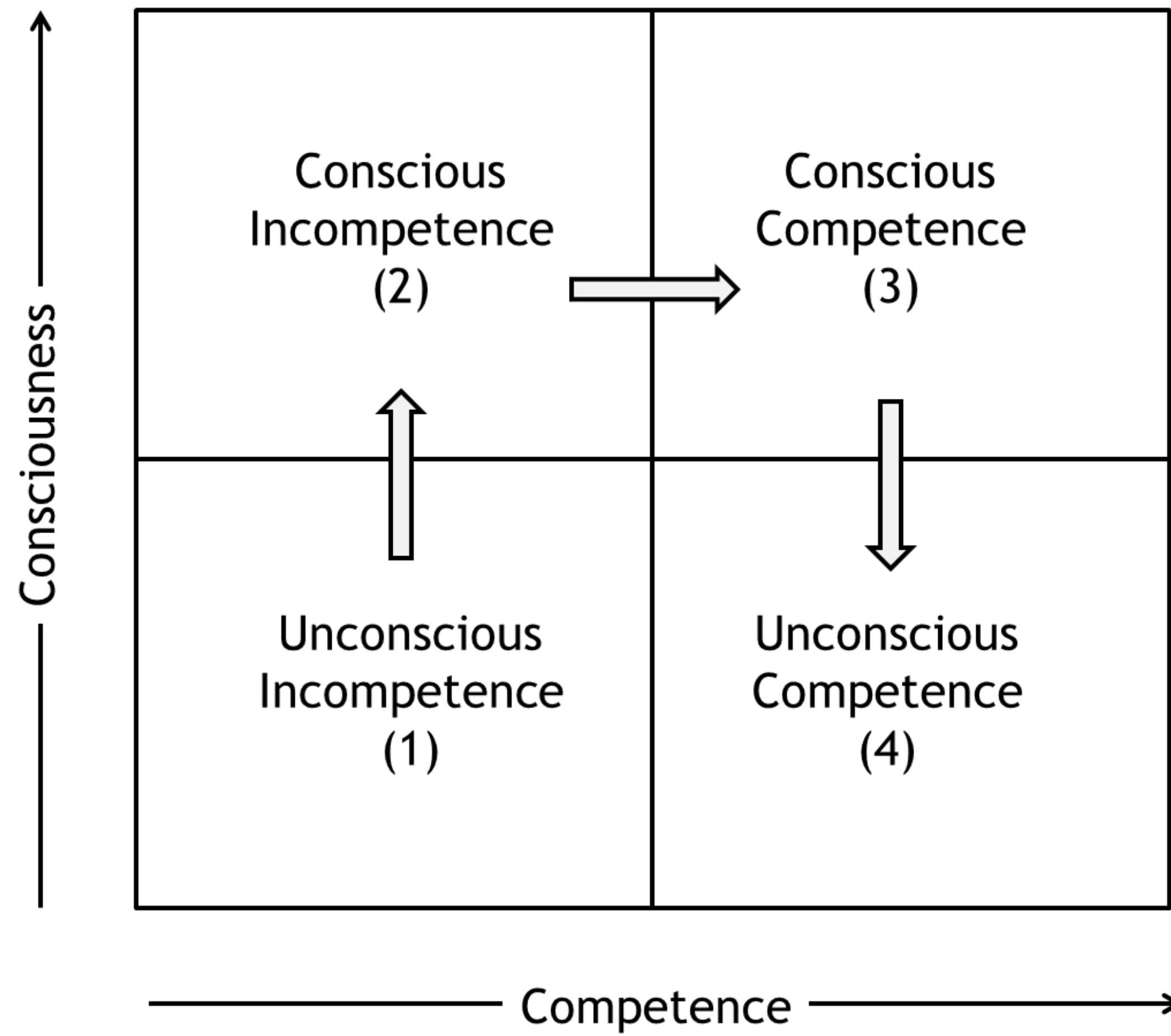
To comprehend so well that  
it feels intuitive, as if it  
has always been a part of  
you.



Grok

# Gauging where you are

- What's Grok?
- The 4 levels of competence
- Finding your level of mastery



A female tennis player is captured in the middle of a forehand swing on a light-colored court. She is wearing a white visor, a white tank top, and white shorts. Her shadow is cast onto the court surface below her. The background is a dark, textured wall.

How long does it take to get here?

# Gauging where you are

- What's Grok?
- The 4 levels of competence
- Finding your level of mastery

# Finding your level of mastery<sup>1</sup>

0 - Novice

300 - Apprentice

1,000 - Journeyman

3,000 - Master

10,000 - Expert

30,000 - Genius

---

<sup>1</sup> Hours of Mastery, Early Retirement Extreme by Jacob Lund Fisker.

Questions: Levels of  
competence and hours of  
mastery

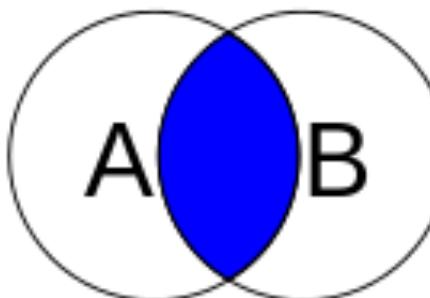
# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

1. Measuring where you are
2. Setting up a plan
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

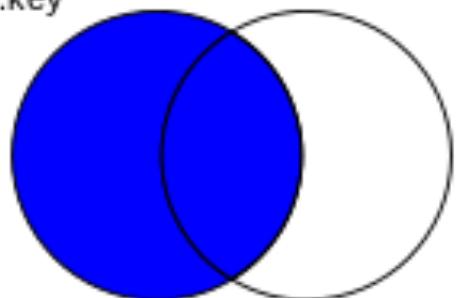
# Setting up a plan

- Build a mental model
- Map out what you want to learn

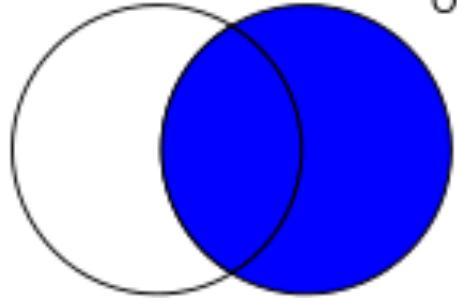
SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
INNER JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key



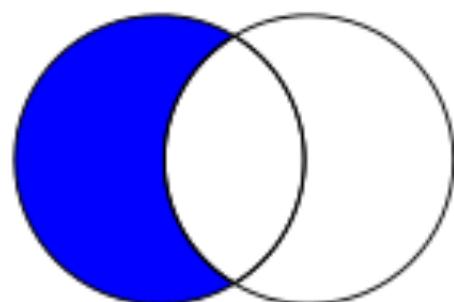
SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
LEFT JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key



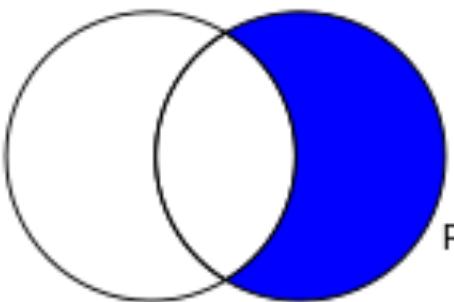
SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
RIGHT JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key



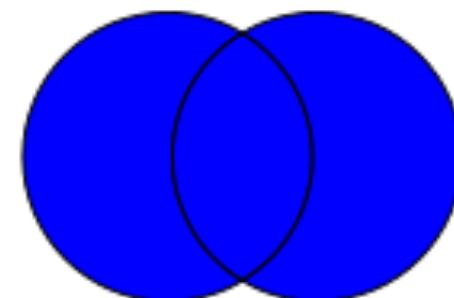
SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
LEFT JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key  
WHERE B.key IS NULL



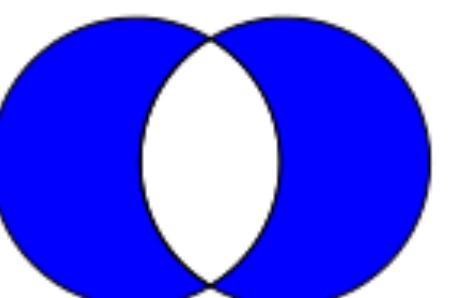
SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
RIGHT JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key  
WHERE A.key IS NULL



SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
FULL OUTER JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key



SELECT <fields>  
FROM TableA A  
FULL OUTER JOIN TableB B  
ON A.key = B.key  
WHERE A.key IS NULL  
OR B.key IS NULL



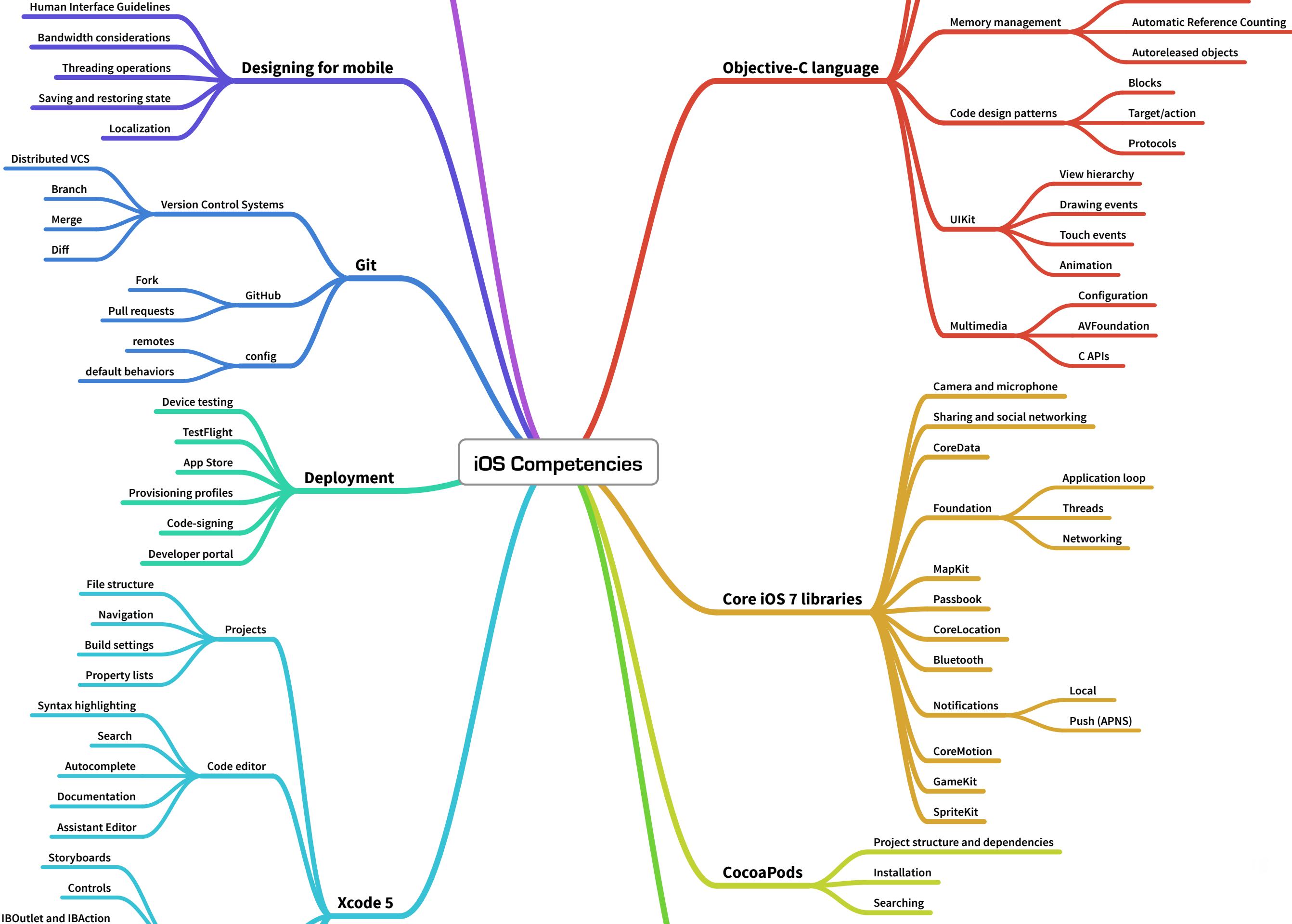
# Setting up a plan

- Build a mental model
- Map out what you want to learn
  - Identify the key elements in your mental model
  - Break it down into the single smallest part

# Setting up a plan

- Build a mental model
- Map out what you want to learn
  - Identify the key elements in your mental model
  - Break it down into the single smallest part

## iOS Competencies



# Setting up a plan

- Build a mental model
- Map out what you want to learn
  - Identify the key elements in your mental model
  - Break it down into the single smallest part



# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

1. Measuring where you are
2. Setting up a plan
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

# Rules for learning a new skill quickly<sup>2</sup>

- Understand.
- Apply.
- Test.

---

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Coyle, *The Little Book of Talent: 52 Tips for Improving Your Skills*

The famous  
theoretical physicist  
Richard Feynman gets it.



# Rules for learning a new skill quickly

1. Understand.
2. Apply.
3. Test.



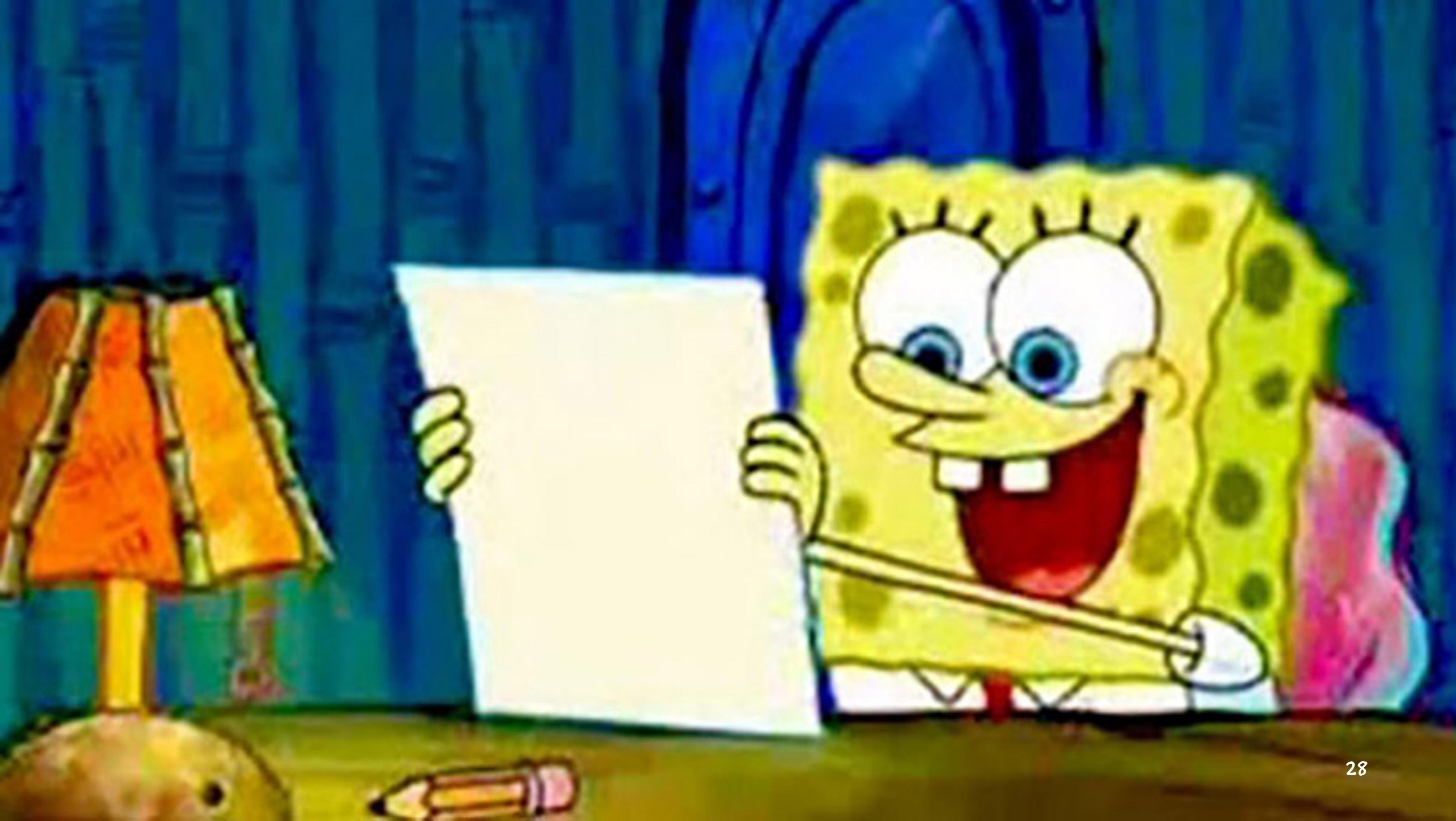
{placeholder}

you didn't come here

to see my kid's picture

# Rules for learning a new skill quickly

1. Understand.
2. Apply.
3. Test.



# Rules for learning a new skill quickly

1. Review.
2. No spinning wheels.
3. Recall.



# Rules for learning a new skill quickly

1. Review.
2. No spinning wheels.
3. Recall.



# Rules for learning a new skill quickly

1. Review.
2. No spinning wheels.
3. Recall.



Now's a good time

# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

1. Measuring where you are
2. Setting up a plan
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

# Practicing: more effort, less time

- Find a mentor - watch others first
- Focus on fundamentals - do deep practice
- Hit the Sweet Spot - not The Zone
- Think in imagery
- Invent mini-games
- Stop when tired

# How to Learn: Grok it Faster

1. Measuring where you are
2. Setting up a plan
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

# Tactics for getting the most out of your media

- take notes
- podcasts + audio books
- reading non-fiction //tech manuals
- video lectures & demos
- tutorials / walkthroughs

# Today I Learned

1. 2 tools for measuring progress
2. How to map out what you want to learn
3. Rules for learning fast
4. How to practice
5. Tactics and takeaways

He who knows, and knows he knows,

He is a wise man, seek him.

He who knows and knows not he knows,

He is asleep, wake him.

He who knows not, and knows he knows not,

He is a child, teach him.

He who knows not, and knows not he knows not,

He is a fool, shun him.

-- Old Arab Proverb

Questions?

[thuy.copeland@gmail.com](mailto:thuy.copeland@gmail.com)  
[github.com/mindgraffiti](https://github.com/mindgraffiti)  
[@mindgraffiti](https://twitter.com/mindgraffiti)

# Bonus Round

What type of learner am I?

- Step Learner
- Talk Learner
- Research Learner
- Create Learner

# What type of learner am I?

- Step Learner
- Talk Learner
- Research Learner
- Create Learner

# What type of learner am I?

## Step Learner

- Follow steps
- Hear expectations
- See practical use

# What type of learner am I?

## Talk Learner

- Talk with other people to synthesize ideas

# What type of learner am I?

## Research Learner

- Read to learn
- Debate / Discuss
- See big picture

# What type of learner am I?

## Create Learner

- Create new ideas to understand concepts

# What type of learner am I?

- Step Learner
- Talk Learner
- Research Learner
- Create Learner

# Resources

*5 Elements of Effective Thinking*, Burger & Starbird

*Early Retirement Extreme*, Jacob Lund Fisker

*Learning How to Learn: Powerful mental tools to help you master tough subjects*, Coursera class

*Brain Rules*, John Medina

*The Little Book of Talent: 52 Tips for Improving Your Skills*, Daniel Coyle

# Resources continued

<http://www.supermemo.com/articles/programming.htm> (Piotr Wozniak, the author of first computer algorithms for spaced repetition)