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Twelfth Edition

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# Peak Performance

Success in College and Beyond

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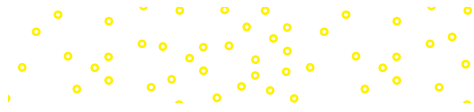
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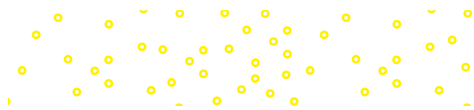


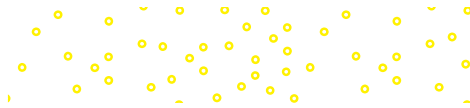
# Peak Performance

Twelfth edition **SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND BEYOND**

**Sharon K. Ferrett, Ph.D.**  
Cal Poly, Humboldt

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Graw  
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**PEAK PERFORMANCE**

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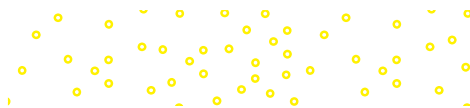
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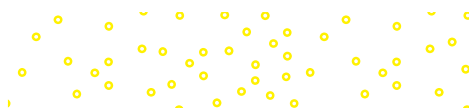
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# The 12th Edition Major Revision Themes

*The 12th edition of Peak Performance continues to provide students with common-sense strategies for excelling in school, career, and life. Peak Performance delivers the essential tools for managing time and resources by showing students how to*

- Empower themselves to feel that they belong in college through the power of grit, perseverance, and resiliency.
- Learn to acknowledge, name, and manage emotions in a positive way.
- Practice a positive, open mindset that focuses on growth, learning, and effort.
- Learn how habits work and how to replace counter-productive habits with positive habits that will help them in college and beyond.
- Learn to integrate all learning styles and critical and creativity for maximum success.
- Learn how to seek out mutual support and resources on campus for challenges new students face, and remain persistent in pursuit of their goals.
- Focus sustained effort to cultivate essential qualities for school, job, and life success.

## Diversity Inclusivity and Equity Updates

Considerable thought went into revising both the textual material and images in the 12th Edition of Peak Performance to support the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The following provides a sampling

of changes that were made to ensure that Peak Performance, 12e, speaks to every student:

- using gender neutral pronouns
- incorporating more representation of neurodiversity
- provide examples that are inclusive for students with a range of physical abilities
- created a wider range of options for students with learning disabilities
- framed conversations around health and nutrition with body positive language
- destigmatizes mental health issues in order to serve students more effectively
- increased diversity in photo content
- updated famous quotes throughout to reflect a gender balance

## Chapter Breakdown

### CHAPTER 1

- Reframed language around stress to account for systemic racism and prejudices
- Removed terms that could be viewed as non-inclusive to the LGBTQ+ community
- Streamlined activities to be inclusive to those with neurodiverse conditions
- Updated images for better representation and diversity
- Revised to be inclusive for on and off campus learners



## CHAPTER 2

- Rewritten with more inclusive examples of how to build healthy habits
- Deleted idioms to remove barriers for ELL students

## CHAPTER 3

- Included more examples beyond just activities for able-bodied students
- Rewritten sections with people-first language
- Shifted focus off personal appearance

## CHAPTER 4

- Updated images for better representation and diversity
- Deleted idioms to remove barriers for ELL students
- Updated content to apply to online and in-class learners

## CHAPTER 5

- Revised text to address students of various financial backgrounds
- Incorporated digital resources for greater access
- Removed language that assumes a student has sight (i.e., “look at,” “see”)

## CHAPTER 6

- Incorporated the use of gender-neutral pronouns
- Expanded content to be inclusive of those with mobility issues
- Included strategies for students with neurodiverse conditions

## CHAPTER 7

- Revised instruction to be inclusive of those with physical mobility issues
- Included instruction around various accessible resources

## CHAPTER 8

- Edited content to accommodate learners with disabilities
- Revised to include a more balanced representation of gender and ethnicities

## CHAPTER 9

- Updated content to reflect online and in-person learners
- Updated images for better representation and diversity

- Edited content to accommodate learners with disabilities

## CHAPTER 10

- Updated with digital resources for great accessibility including audio books, screen readers, etc.
- Revised language to remove barriers for ELL students
- Updated images for better representation and diversity

## CHAPTER 11

- Revised language to remove barriers for ELL students
- Increased gender balance with new examples

## CHAPTER 12

- Provided more positive language around body image and nutrition
- Increased supportive language around mental health awareness
- Revised content around eating disorders to be more inclusive and sensitive
- Reframed approach to discussing addiction

## CHAPTER 13

- Incorporated the use of gender-neutral pronouns
- Increased gender balance with new examples
- Revised to prioritize mental health and wellness
- Updated images for better representation and diversity

## CHAPTER 14

- Updated images for better representation and diversity
- Revised instruction to be inclusive of those with physical mobility issues
- Revised to be inclusive for on and off campus learners

## Major Connect Updates

### APPLICATION-BASED ACTIVITIES

These are self-graded assignments that measure students’ ability to apply what they have learned using their critical thinking skills. In each of the 20 scenarios, the student helps a “friend” who is struggling with an issue related to the topic. By asking questions and making recommendations, the student helps their friend solve

the problem. A virtual instructor provides assistance to the student as needed. Commonly assigned topics include Time Management, Goal Setting, Note Taking, Test Anxiety, and many others.

## Animated Videos Covering Core Topics

Twenty animated videos address key topics from time management, goal setting, to note taking. These animations are two to four minutes in length and include assignable review questions.

## Global Updates and New Features

- **Open Mindset:** Instructors stress the importance of a positive attitude as a foundation for all learning. Woven throughout the book is the concept that talent and abilities are not as important as *effort, grit, and the willingness to learn and grow*. An *open, positive mindset* is focused on growth and resiliency while a *negative, closed mindset* is fixed on being right and resisting change and growth. A positive mindset helps students overcome obstacles.
- **Habits:** From the last edition, instructors told us students want to succeed in college and beyond, but sometimes they need help implementing the skills taught in class. Therefore, **Building Better Habits** was a major focus. This feature will help students implement the skills and concepts they learn in class. The Habit Cycle will teach students how to identify triggers for their habits and how to create a productive behavior routine and a reward that leads to a cycle of success. This feature is based on actual brain science and is threaded throughout the book, with a new habit introduced in every chapter. These topics include health, time management, test taking, and so on. This content supports the strengthening of this editions' theme of resiliency and a positive, open mindset.
- **Personal Evaluation Notebook Activities:** Instructors told us they love these activities because students can easily apply what they learn.
- **Expanded and Updated Research:** We have updated the latest brain research throughout the book to help students see the “why” behind concepts and strategies.
- Based on instructor feedback, we revamped some of our feature boxes to make the book more accessible and less potentially distracting to

students. **Get Involved** and **Leverage Your Success** have been moved to the instructor manual.

- Our **Connect** product includes a chapter-specific video series highlighting time management, goal setting, reading, note taking, and other critical topics as well as assessments based on critical thinking and decision making.
- Instructors told us they liked the **ABC's of Self-Management** so we've expanded and clarified this feature with a focus on mindfulness. A scene opens each chapter and is followed by a journal entry which provides the opportunity to apply the method by completing a worksheet. Learning to acknowledge and manage emotions is critical for school and life success. With practice, students will have: 1. Increased *self-awareness*, 2. Increased *self-acceptance*, and 3. *Improved relationships* that focus on empathy.

## Peak Performance Features

*Every chapter includes the following features. These features were written and designed to help students apply, practice, and better understand the core concepts explored in each chapter.*

## Chapter Features

### HABIT CYCLES

Building Better Habits is a major focus in the 11th edition and is included in every chapter. The Habit Cycle will teach students how to identify the things that trigger their bad (and good) habits, how to create a positive routine behavior, and how to identify a reward that leads to a cycle of success.



# Personal Evaluation Notebook

# 2.2

## Overcome Obstacles with Habits

Write out possible obstacles that you might face and think of creative ways to overcome them using the Habit Cycle.

State a concrete, simple goal:

1. Write out one to two specific obstacles to that goal.

---

---

---

2. Write out one to two specific ways to overcome those obstacles.

---

## Personal Evaluation Notebooks

*The PEN exercises are a chance for students to evaluate what they have learned in the chapter up to that point, and apply it so that they are better prepared to move on to the next topic in the chapter. To save space, many of these exercises will be on the Web.*

## Peak Progress

*The Peak Progress exercises in every chapter help students create the results they want by encouraging them to consider and practice key concepts. They will learn new strategies, helpful tips, and how to apply the **Adult Learning Cycle** and the **ABC Method of Self-Management**.*

## Peak Progress

3.3

### Differences between High School and College

Entering college brings a new level of responsibility and expectations as compared to your previous educational experiences, mimicking what is expected on the job as well as managing your personal life. For example, in college, you are expected to

- Have more responsibilities and budget your time and money.
- Express your opinions logically, not just give facts.
- Motivate yourself.
- Handle more freedom and independence.
- Attend larger classes that meet for longer periods but less often.
- Be responsible for knowing procedures and graduation requirements.

- Write and read more than you have before.
- Think critically and logically.
- Receive less feedback and be tested less often but more comprehensively.
- Use several textbooks and supplemental readings.
- Complete more work and turn in higher-quality work.
- Interact with people of different values, cultures, interests, and religions.
- Learn to be tolerant and respectful of diversity.
- Encounter new ideas and critique those ideas in a thoughtful way.
- Get involved in the community, school clubs, volunteer work, and internships related to your major.

## Think Creatively and Critically

*These features provide situations to help students think in creative ways and apply critical thinking skills. Each feature also includes scientific research pertaining to the example.*

Research shows that people who routinely practice mindfulness and meditation activated neurons in the part of the brain (prefrontal cortex) that controls attention and focus.<sup>1</sup>

Chloe is always late because she does several things at once and is scattered. Her family, friends—everyone—continually tell her how frustrating it is that she keeps them waiting. She finally got the message when her best friend texted her that she was tired of her inconsideration and the group was leaving for a party without her. The rush she always felt from doing many things at once and keeping up with texts and e-mails was replaced with the realization that she had let others down.

- What negative characteristics are being demonstrated by someone who is habitually late?
- What problems does this create—in school, on the job, in personal situations?
- Do you think that practicing meditation or mindfulness would help her to be more attentive and focused? What are specific strategies that you would suggest to help her become more focused, attentive, and dependable.

## THINK CREATIVELY AND CRITICALLY

## End-of-Chapter Features

### Taking Charge

*The Taking Charge feature is an opportunity for students to review what they've learned and prepare for assessments.*

### Career in Focus

*In each chapter, these workplace case studies help students understand the practical applications of the chapter by applying what they've learned to a career situation.*

### Peak Performer Profile

*Each Peak Performer Profile highlights people who have demonstrated the qualities, attitudes, and skills of a Peak Performer. Students are asked critical thinking questions that pertain to the Peak Performer and his or her success.*

### Review and Applications

*Practice is a core concept in this book. It is not enough to read about successful strategies. This feature will help students choose one strategy to change. This reinforces the power of taking small changes.*

## Case Studies

*Throughout this book we have tried to highlight the connection between college success and career success. This feature provides a college-based case study and then connects the same strategies to a career-based case study. Students will see that the strategies that make them successful in college will make them successful in their careers.*

## Applying the ABC Method of Self-Management Worksheets

*These worksheets provide the opportunity to apply the opening chapter concepts which involves acknowledging, naming, and managing emotion and making positive choices. Mindfulness helps students take the next step from theoretical concepts to practical application and change self-destructive behaviors to positive, constructive actions that are consistent with goals.*

## Career Development Portfolio

*These activities help the student to connect what they've learned in a chapter to what they may want from a career or what they will need to do as they are building a career.*

## Ancillaries

### Lassi: Learning and Study Strategies Inventory

The LASSI is a 10-scale, 60-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 such as learning and study skills courses.

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

### Instructor Resources

Located in Connect, these extensive resources include chapter goals and outlines, teaching tips, additional activities, and essay exercises. Also included are unique resource guides that give instructors and administrators the tools to retain students and maximize the success of the course, using topics and principles that last a lifetime. Resources include:

- Instructor Manual
- Retention Kit, containing:
  - Facilitator's Guide
  - Tools for Time Management
  - Establishing Peer Support Groups
  - Developing a Career Portfolio
  - Involving the Faculty Strategy
  - Capitalizing on Your School's Graduates
- Course Planning Guide
- Sample Syllabi
- PowerPoints
- Test Bank—includes matching, multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions

### Customize Your Text

Peak Performance can be customized to suit your needs. The text can be abbreviated for shorter courses and can be expanded to include school schedules, campus maps, additional essays, activities, or exercises, along with other materials specific to your curriculum. However you want to customize, we can make it happen, easily. McGraw-Hill

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<b>Pamela Bilton Beard</b>	Houston Community College–Southwest	<b>Kevin Ploeger</b>	University of Cincinnati
<b>Janet Florez</b>	Cuesta College	<b>Keith Bunting</b>	Randolph Community College
<b>Holly Seirup</b>	Hofstra University	<b>Laura Skinner</b>	Wayne Community College
<b>Susan Wilson</b>	Portland Community College	<b>Mary Lee Vance</b>	Purdue University Calumet
<b>James K. Goode</b>	Austin Peay State University	<b>Dr. Hanadi Saleh</b>	Miami-Dade College
<b>Walter Tucker</b>	Miami Dade College–North Campus	<b>Judith Shultz</b>	Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
<b>Andrea Smith</b>	Florida Gateway College	<b>Bertha Barraza</b>	Mt. San Jacinto Community College
<b>Aubrey Moncrieffe Jr.</b>	Housatonic Community College	<b>Patricia Twaddle, M.Ed.</b>	Moberly Area Community College
<b>Susan Bossa</b>	Quincy College	<b>Misty Engelbrecht</b>	Rose State College
<b>Kathy Daily</b>	Tulsa Community College Southeast Campus	<b>Scott Empric</b>	Housatonic Community College
<b>Anita Leibowitz</b>	Suffolk County Community College	<b>Tim Littell</b>	Wright State University
<b>Dr. Steve Holcombe</b>	North Greenville University	<b>Kerry Fitts</b>	Delgado Community College
<b>Stephanie Huskey</b>	Tennessee Wesleyan College	<b>Judith Isonhood</b>	Hinds Community College
<b>Sarah Sherrill</b>	West Kentucky Community & Technical College	<b>Michael Kuryla</b>	State University of New York–Broome
<b>Carol Billing</b>	College of Western Idaho	<b>Bryan Barker</b>	Western Illinois University
<b>Heather Mayernik</b>	Macomb Community College	<b>Jerry Riehl</b>	University of Tennessee
<b>Joanna Reed</b>	Sussex County Community College	<b>Eunice Walker</b>	Southern Arkansas University
<b>Robert Melendez</b>	Irvine Valley College	<b>Therese M. Crary</b>	Highland Community College
<b>Jennifer Garcia</b>	Saint Leo University	<b>Pauline Clark</b>	West Valley College
<b>Jennifer Treadway</b>	Blue Ridge Community College	<b>Christopher Old</b>	Sierra College
<b>Marian Teachey</b>	South Piedmont Community College	<b>Lisa Marie Kerr</b>	Auburn University at Montgomery
<b>Cindy Sledge</b>	San Jacinto College–South	<b>Remona Hammonds</b>	Miami-Dade College–West Campus
<b>Lourdes Rassi, Ph.D.</b>	Miami-Dade College	<b>Sarah Strout</b>	Dominican College
<b>Dr. Arlene Trolman</b>	Adelphi University		
<b>Keri Keckley</b>	Crowder College		
<b>Desiree Fields-Jobling</b>	Brookline College		
<b>Agostine Trevino</b>	Temple College		
<b>MaryJo Slater</b>	Community College of Beaver County		
<b>Beth Shanholtzer</b>	Lord Fairfax Community College		
<b>Cheryl Ziehl</b>	Cuesta College		

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—Sharon K. Ferrett



# SCANS: Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills

## Competency Chart

Competencies and Foundations	Peak Performance Chapters That Address SCANS Competencies
	Chapters 6, 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitors and Corrects Performance systems</li> <li>• Improves or Designs Systems</li> </ul>	<p>Chapters 4, 6, 7, 12</p> <p>Chapters 4, 5, 6, 11</p>
<b>Interpersonal Skills: Works with Others</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates as Member of a Team-contributes to group effort</li> <li>• Teaches Others New Skills</li> <li>• Serves Clients/Customers-works to satisfy customers' expectations</li> <li>• Exercises Leadership-communicates ideas to justify position, persuade and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies</li> <li>• Negotiates-works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests</li> <li>• Values diversity and works inclusively and welcomes input and collaboration from people with diverse backgrounds.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapters 2, 3, 13</p> <p>Chapters 2, 3, 13</p> <p>Chapters 1, 3, 43</p> <p>Chapters 2, 3, 13</p> <p>Chapters 2, 3, 13</p> <p>Chapter 12</p>
<b>Technology: Works with a Variety of Technologies</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting technology</li> <li>• Applying technology</li> <li>• Maintaining technology</li> <li>• Solving problems</li> <li>• Staying current in technology</li> </ul>	<p>Chapters 10, 14, Tech for Success</p> <p>Chapters 5, 10, 14, Tech for Success</p> <p>Chapters 10, 14</p> <p>Chapters 10, 11</p> <p>Chapters 5, 10, 14</p>
<b>Personal Qualities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility, character, integrity, positive habits, self-management, self-esteem, sociability</li> </ul>	Chapters 2, 3, 13
<b>Basic Skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading—locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents, such as manuals, graphs, and schedules</li> <li>• Writing—communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing and creates documents, such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flowcharts</li> </ul>	<p>Chapters 7, 10</p> <p>Chapter 10</p>

Source: United States Department of Labor, 2018.

*(continued)*

## SCANS: Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills *(concluded)*

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Competencies and Foundations	Peak Performance Chapters That Address SCANS Competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arithmetic/mathematics—performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques</li><li>• Listening—receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues</li></ul>	Chapter 11 Chapters 6, 13
<hr/> <b>Thinking Skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creative thinking—generates new ideas</li><li>• Decision making—specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternative</li><li>• Listening—receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues</li><li>• Seeing things in the mind’s eye—organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information</li><li>• Knowing how to learn—uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills</li><li>• Reasoning—discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it when solving a problem</li></ul>	Chapter 11, Personal Evaluation Notebooks, Think Creatively and Critically Chapter 11, Case Study, Personal Evaluation Notebooks, Think Creatively and Critically Chapters 6, 13 All chapters, with a strong emphasis in Chapter 11 Chapter 1 Chapter 11

## Do I Belong in College?

Many of my students have told me I'm like a cheerleader, rooting them on to success. I know they all have what it takes to succeed, even when they have their own doubts. Why? Because I've been there, too. As I stepped onto the beautiful University of Michigan campus, I questioned whether I belonged. My small farming community seemed far away, and I felt out of place. Many students had come from fancy prep schools and wealthy families. I had gone to a one-room schoolhouse and then to a tiny high school in the thumb of Michigan. I was putting myself through college with part-time jobs and baby-sitting in exchange for room and board.

I was asking myself questions you might be asking no matter your background or family history. *Would I be able to make it here? Did I belong?* I thought back to a time in high school when I also questioned whether I belonged. I learned to overcome an intense fear of public speaking by sticking with it, practicing, and developing grit and perseverance. I ended up on the debate team and winning a state speaking contest. How had I made this transformation from shy and fearful to feeling confident in front of people? *The secret was shifting to a positive, open mindset where change is a given.* I knew that I could accept and love myself at the present moment and with effort grow and learn and achieve my goals.

I felt that same fear when I entered a Ph.D. program at Michigan State University. I was surrounded by smart, confident scholars who had graduated from excellent schools. *Did I belong here?* I looked at my habits and personal qualities and realized that my experiences as a farm kid made me a hard worker and persistent, I knew that no amount of effort was too great to achieve the goal of graduating. I was incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be admitted to a competitive graduate program. I wanted to make my parents proud because they never had the choices that I had. *I chose a positive, open mindset that focused on effort and growth. I worked hard, developed grit and determination, and bounced back after setbacks—qualities I learned growing up on a farm.* I visualized myself as a successful college graduate and held that image firmly in my mind whenever I was discouraged.

I returned to our farming community and taught for a year in the same one-room schoolhouse that I (and my father) had attended. It was my mission to encourage the students to develop their full potential and set high goals.

I believed in them and told them that they could succeed in college. *"You belong,"* I said often. They all had the same work ethic that I had and that discipline would serve them well. From there I went on to teach in college. Over the years, I have had many students who wondered if they belonged in college. I assured them that they did indeed belong and cheered them on to graduate.

I would have never dreamed of being a college professor and an administrator when I was in high school, but, at only 24 years old, I accepted a dean position at Delta College, a large community college in Michigan. A few years later, I moved to California as Dean of Continuing Education at Humboldt State University (now Cal Poly, Humboldt). I developed a new program in student success. That project launched this book and became my life's work. Over the years, I have had several students who wondered if they belonged in college. I helped them replace negative thoughts and behavior with positive habits. I watched them become confident and engaged students. I felt I was on the brink of something important. I was. Over the years I have seen the power of habits and how they change lives. *With awareness and practice, students can learn to manage their emotions and choose positive behaviors.*

Throughout this book, we talk about the attributes of a "peak performer" and attempt to define success—in school, career, and life. However, in the end, *you* have to define success for yourself. Only you can determine what drives you, what makes you happy, and what will become your own life's work. What I know for sure is



that an open, positive mindset that focuses on growth, grit, and resiliency will support your goals.

If I could give you only three pieces of advice as you journey to find your passion in life, they would be

**1. Develop perseverance, resilience, GRIT.** How do you respond to setbacks? Do you throw up your hands, get angry, blame others, and quit when the going gets rough? Do you believe that your intelligence and qualities are fixed and that you can't change? Or do you take a deep breath, acknowledge the situation, name your emotions, and make choices that help you learn, stretch, and bounce back. *A positive mindset focuses on growth and effort. You can cultivate resiliency, grit, and perseverance through effort, learning, and practice. Learning to manage your emotions is key to success!*

**2. Create positive HABITS.** *Positive habits flow out of a positive, open mindset. They support your goals and use the whole of your intelligence to help you stretch and grow. Keep it simple and focus on one change*

at a time. For example, exercise every day and you will find that this one habit spills over into other areas of your life. You will be healthier and more positive when you learn to identify and manage your emotions. Be your own best friend!

**3. ENGAGE and connect with people.** You will feel that you belong in school and at work when you relate well and build connections with other students, faculty, and staff. Join clubs, music, theater, athletics, and other events and connect with others who are positive and supportive. Getting involved and making connections helps create a sense of belonging and well-being and often results in life-long friendships. We are a community of beings. *Everything and everyone are interconnected and interdependent. Everyone belongs!*

And when you need a little help developing your own “cheer” along the way, please drop me an e-mail at [sharonferrett@gmail.com](mailto:sharonferrett@gmail.com). *I believe in you!*

—Sharon K. Ferrett

# Getting Started

Congratulations! You are about to start, or restart, an amazing journey of opportunity, growth, and adventure. You may be at this point in your life for a number of reasons: You may be going to college right after high school; you may be focusing on a specific career or trade and want to acquire the appropriate skills or certification; or you may be returning to school after years in the workforce, needing additional skills or just looking for a change.

Whatever your reasons, this is an opportunity for you to learn new things, meet new people, acquire new skills, and better equip yourself both professionally and personally for the years ahead. This book is designed to get you started on that journey by helping you (1) learn how you learn best—and incorporate new ways to learn; (2) maximize available resources and seek out new opportunities; (3) relate what you are exploring now to future success on the job; and (4) learn how to accept and manage your emotions, love yourself and strive to become the best version of yourself.

Now that you have your book in hand, you are ready to get started. Or are you really ready? What else should you be aware of at this point? You may have already attended a basic orientation session where you learned about school and community resources and program requirements. Going through orientation, meeting with your advisor, and reviewing your catalog will help you get oriented. Additionally, this quick review is designed to outline the essentials that you will want to know, so that you not only survive but also make your first year a success. Peak Progress 1 provides a handy checklist

for the essential tasks you need to consider and accomplish the first week of school. Add to this list any tasks that are unique to your situation or school.

## Why Are You Here?

College success begins with determining your goals and mapping out a plan. A good place to start is to reflect on why you are in college and what is expected of you. You will be more motivated if you clarify your interests and values concerning college. You will read in Chapter 3 the reasons students don't graduate from college, including juggling multiple responsibilities, having poor study skills and habits, and lacking preparation, motivation, and effort. College is a commitment of many precious resources you can't afford to waste—time, money, and mental energies. Consider the following statements and your reasons for being in college, and share this in your study team or with students you meet the first few weeks of class:

- I value education and want to be a well-educated person.
- I want to get a good job that leads to a well-paying career.
- I want to learn new ideas and skills and grow personally and professionally.
- I want to get away from home and be independent.
- I want to make new friends and have new experiences.

## Tasks to Accomplish the First Week of School

- Attend orientation and meet with an advisor. Ask questions and determine available resources. (See Peak Progress 2 for questions to ask.)
- Register and pay fees on time.
- Set up an e-mail account and check it daily.
- Check deadlines and procedures. Never just quit going to class.
- Buy books and keep receipts. Establish a record-keeping system.
- Find out the location of classrooms, parking, and school resources.
- Know expectations and requirements. Get a syllabus for each class.
- Create an organized study area. Post instructors' names, e-mails, office locations, and hours, as well as important deadlines.
- Form study teams and exchange e-mails and phone numbers. Get to know instructors and other students.
- Explore resources, such as the library, learning skills center, health center, and advising center.
- Go to all classes on time and sit in the front row and get to know others.

- I want to learn to manage my emotions, grow and become the best version of myself.
- I want to fulfill my goal of being a college-educated person.

Jot down what you want from college and why you're motivated to get it.

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List four values that are most important to you and how college will help you achieve them.

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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4. 

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## What You Need to Know and Should Not Be Afraid to Ask

You don't want to learn the hard way that you need one more class to graduate, only to find it's offered only once a year (and you just missed it). Make your time with your advisor productive by getting answers

to important questions that will help you map out your coursework. Peak Progress 2 provides a handy checklist of common questions to get you started.

## What Do You Need to Do to Graduate?

You will be more motivated and confident if you understand graduation requirements. Requirements vary among schools. Don't rely on the advice of friends. Go to orientation and meet with your advisor early and often. Check out the catalog and make certain you know what is required to graduate. Fill in the following:

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- Number of units required:
- General education requirements:
- Curriculum requirements:
- Residency at the school:
- Departmental major requirements:
- Cumulative GPA required:
- Other requirements, such as special writing tests and classes:

## How to Register for Classes

Find out if you have an access code and the earliest date you can register. Meet with your advisor, carefully select classes, and review general education and major requirements. Add electives that keep you active and interested. Make certain that you understand why you

## The Most Common Questions Students Ask Advisors

1. What classes do I need to take for general education?
2. Can a course satisfy both a general education and a major requirement?
3. Can I take general elective (GE) courses for Credit/No Credit if I also want to count them for my major?
4. How can I remove an F grade from my record?
5. What is the deadline for dropping courses?
6. Can I drop a course after the deadline?
7. What is an “educational leave”?
8. What is the difference between a withdrawal and a drop?
9. Do I need to take any placement tests?
10. Are there other graduation requirements, such as a writing exam?
11. Where do I find out about financial aid?
12. Is there a particular order in which I should take certain courses?
13. Are there courses in which I must earn a C- or better?
14. How do I change my major?
15. Which of my transfer courses will count?
16. What is the minimum residency requirement for a bachelor’s degree?
17. Is there a GPA requirement for the major?
18. Is there a tutoring program available?
19. If I go on exchange, how do I make sure that courses I take at another university will apply toward my degree here?
20. What is a major contract, and when should I get one?
21. When do I need to apply for graduation?
22. How do I apply for graduation?
23. What is a degree check?
24. What is the policy for incomplete grades?
25. Can I take major courses at another school and transfer them here?
26. As a nonresident, how can I establish residency in this state?
27. How do I petition to substitute a class?
28. Once I complete my major, are there other graduation requirements?
29. What is academic probation?
30. Is there any employment assistance available?
31. Is there a mentor program available in my major department?
32. Are there any internships or community service opportunities related to my major?

are taking each class, and check with your advisor that it is meeting certain requirements.

Many colleges have a purge date and, if you miss the deadline to pay your fees, your class schedule is canceled. You may not be able to get into classes and may have to pay a late fee.

### Know the Grading System

Learn the minimum grade point average (GPA) that you need to maintain good standing. If your GPA falls below 2.0, you may be placed on academic probation. The GPA is calculated according to the number of credit hours each course represents and your grade in the course. In the traditional system, A = 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points, D = 1 point, and F = 0 points (your school may have a different system, so ask to be sure). To calculate your GPA, first determine your total number of points. Following is an example:

Course	Grade Achieved	Number of Credit Hours	Points
Political Science	C	2	2 × 2 = 4
Psychology	B	3	3 × 3 = 9
English	A	3	4 × 3 = 12
Personal Finance	A	1	4 × 1 = 4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>

Then, to arrive at your GPA, you must divide your total points by your total number of credit hours:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{total points}}{\text{total number of credit hours}}$$

Thus, in this example,

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{29}{9} = 3.22$$

Monitor your progress and meet with your instructors often, but especially at midterm and before final exams. Ask what you can do to improve your grade.

## Adding or Dropping Classes

Ask about the deadlines for adding and dropping classes. This is generally done in the first few weeks of classes. A withdrawal after the deadline could result in a failing grade. Also, make certain before you drop the class that

- You will not fall below the required units for financial aid.
- You will not fall below the required units for playing sports.
- If required, the class is offered again before you plan to graduate.
- You don't need the class or units to meet graduation requirements.
- You are meeting important deadlines.
- You talk with the instructor first.
- You talk with your advisor.

Never simply walk away from your classes. The instructor will not drop you, nor will you be dropped automatically if you stop going to class at any time during the semester. It is your responsibility to follow up and complete required forms.

## An Incomplete Grade

If you miss class due to illness or an emergency, you may be able to take an incomplete if you can't finish a project or you missed a test. Check out this option with your instructor before you drop a class. Sign a written agreement to finish the work at a specific time and stay in touch with the instructor through e-mail and by phone.

## Withdrawing or Taking a Leave of Absence

Some students withdraw because they don't have the money, they can't take time off from work, they lack child care, or they are having difficulty in classes. Before you drop out of college, talk with your advisor and see if you can get the support and motivation to succeed. If you want to take a leave to travel, want to explore other schools, are ill, or just need to take a break, make certain that you take a leave of absence for a semester, a year, or longer. Taking a leave means that you do not have to reapply for admission, and generally you fall under the same category as when you entered school.

## Transferring

Before you transfer to another school, know the requirements, which courses are transferable, and if there is a

residency requirement. If you plan to transfer from a two-year school to a four-year school, your advisor will help you clarify the requirements.

## Expectations of Professors

Most professors will hand out a syllabus that outlines their expectations for the class. Understand and clarify those expectations and the course requirements right from the first day of class. Worksheet 1 is a convenient guide to complete when checking your progress with your instructor. Complete a similar form for each class. You'll want to have contact information about your professor, office hours, location of office, and so on. Every week or so reflect on how you're doing in every class and develop a relationship with your professors so that you are known as a serious student who wants to excel. Continually assess how you're doing and make adjustments as necessary. Reflect, assess, and adjust. This takes just a small amount of time and effort, but can result in big returns such as a meaningful relationship, clarification, and a better grade. It is also an excellent habit to get into for job success. Knowing your supervisor's expectations and checking deadlines, goals, progress, and ways to improve job performance are vital for peak performance.

## The Best Strategies for Success in School

In this text, we will focus on a number of strategies that will help you determine and achieve your goals. The Best Strategies for Success in School provides a comprehensive list of the proven strategies you will find woven throughout this text. Apply these to your efforts in school now and through your course of study. You will find that not only are they key to your progress in school, but also they will help you develop skills, behaviors, and habits that are directly related to success on the job and in life in general.

## Commitment

The best strategies in the world can't help you if you're not committed to acquiring new skills and creating positive long-lasting habits. Reflect on how committed you are to succeeding in college and in life. Are you just going to skim through this book or are you going to dig out key points, reflect on concepts, practice creating positive habits, and do the exercises? Take the challenge: go to class; read; reflect; write; experiment; and engage and connect with professors, other students, and campus activities. If you're committed and willing to learn new ideas and change your habits, you're on your way to being a peak performer.



# The Best Strategies for Success in School

1. **Choose an open and positive mindset.** Believe that you can enhance your intelligence and positive qualities through effort, perseverance, and grit. These beliefs will help you grow, create a sense of curiosity, a passion for learning, and the ability to bounce back. Love and accept who you are at this moment and focus on becoming the best version of yourself. You are your best resource.
2. **Attend every class and be an active and prepared participant.** Show that you are engaged and interested by being on time, sitting in front, participating, asking questions, and being alert. School is your job. Show up and be prepared!
3. **Pretest yourself.** THIS IS THE NUMBER ONE PROVEN TIP. Make up tests and take samples. Even better, do this with your study team. Pretesting reduces anxiety and gives you practice. You will see where you need to put in more effort.
4. **Write a summary.** After you preview the chapter, close the book and write a short summary. Go back and fill in with more details. Do this after each reading. Summarize out loud and share with your study team. This enhances learning.
5. **Know your instructors.** Choose the best instructors, call them by their preferred names and titles, e-mail them, and visit them during office hours. Arrive early for class and get to know them better. Get to know at least one instructor each term and stay in touch. This person may become your mentor and friend.
6. **Know expectations.** Read the syllabus for each course and clarify the expectations and requirements, such as tests, papers, extra credit, and attendance. Ask questions. What can I do to improve my grade?
7. **Join a study team.** You will learn more by studying with others than by reading alone. Make up tests, give summaries, ask questions and teach others. TEST YOURSELF. This is a proven technique for getting good grades.
8. **Organize your study space.** Create a quiet space, with a place for school documents, books, catalogs, a dictionary, a computer, notes, pens, and a calendar. Eliminate distractions by closing the door, and focus on the task at hand. Study first and then socialize. Do first things first.
9. **Map out your day, week, and semester.** Write down all assignments, upcoming tests, meetings, daily goals, and priorities on your calendar. Review your calendar and goals each day. Do not socialize until your top priorities are completed.
10. **Get help early.** Know and use all available campus resources. Go to the learning center, counseling center, and health center; get a tutor; and talk with your advisor and instructors about concerns. Get help at the first sign of trouble.
11. **Give school your best effort.** Commit yourself to being extra disciplined the first three weeks—buy your textbooks early; take them to class; get to class early; keep up on your reading; start your projects, papers, and speeches early; and make school a top priority. The first month is critical for making positive habits.
12. **Use note cards.** Jot down formulas and key words. Carry them with you and review them during waiting time and right before class. This works!

*(continued)*

## The Best Strategies for Success in School *(concluded)*

13. **Review often.** Review and fill in notes immediately after class and again within 24 hours. Active reading, note taking, and reviewing are the steps that improve recall. Review over time to increase your recall. Use small chunks of time.
14. **Study everywhere.** Review your note cards before class, while you wait for class to begin, while waiting in line, before bed, and so on. Studying for short periods over a period of time is more effective than cramming late at night.
15. **Identify your strengths and weaknesses.** Be open to grow and change and believe that you are capable of increasing your intelligence and positive qualities. They are not fixed. Put more emphasis on effort and less on talent.
16. **Organize material.** You cannot remember information if it isn't organized. Logical notes help you understand and remember. Use a mind map for outlining key facts and supporting material. Develop a system that works for you.
17. **Dig out information.** Focus on main ideas, key words, and overall understanding. Make questions out of chapter headings, review chapter questions, and always read summaries. Ask questions as you read and listen to lectures.
18. **Look for associations.** Improve memory by connecting patterns and by linking concepts and relationships. Define, describe, compare, classify, and contrast concepts. Use creative ways to increase your memory by using all your senses.
19. **Ask questions.** What is the obvious? What needs to be determined? How can you illustrate the concept? What information is the same and what is different? How does the lecture relate to the textbook? Make questions out of chapter headings.
20. **Bounce back.** The most successful students learn that failure is just an indicator. Learning involves setbacks and making mistakes. Effort is the key. Keep going.
21. **Study when you are most alert.** Know your energy level and learning preference. Maximize reviewing during daytime hours. Block out mornings or afternoons.
22. **Turn in all assignments on time.** Give yourself an extra few days to review papers and practice speeches. Sometimes 20 percent more effort results in 80 percent improvement. Talk with your professors if you're having difficulties.
23. **Make learning physical.** Read difficult textbooks out loud and standing up. Draw pictures, write on a chalkboard, and use visuals. Tape lectures, go on field trips, and study with others. Integrate all learning styles. Read out loud.
24. **Review first drafts with your instructor.** Ask for suggestions and follow them to the letter. Share your first drafts with your study team or learning center.
25. **Pay attention to neatness.** Focus on details and turn in all assignments on time. Use your study team to read and exchange term papers. Proofread several times.
26. **Practice! Nothing beats effort.** Practice speeches until you are comfortable and confident. Give your speech to your study team or in your classroom.
27. **Recite and explain.** Pretend that you are the instructor and recite main concepts. What questions would you put on a test? Give a summary to others in your study group. Make up sample test questions in your group. This really works!

*(continued)*

## The Best Strategies for Success in School *(concluded)*

28. **Take responsibility.** Don't make excuses about missing class or assignments or about earning failing grades. Accept reality, be honest and take responsibility for your choices and mistakes and learn from them. Breathe and move on.
29. **Ask for feedback.** When you receive a grade, be reflective and ask questions: "What have I learned from this?" "How did I prepare for this?" "How can I improve this grade?" "Did I put in enough effort?" Based on what you learn, what new goals will you set for yourself? Information helps you grow and learn.
30. **Negotiate for a better grade before grades are sent in.** Find out how you are doing at midterm and ask what you can do to raise your grade. Offer to do extra projects or retake tests. Be sincere and show you want to improve.
31. **Always do extra credit.** Raise your grade by doing more than is required or *expected*. Immerse yourself in the subject, and find meaning and understanding.
32. **Take responsibility for your education.** You can do well in a class even if your instructor is boring or insensitive. Ask yourself what you can do to make the class more effective (study team, tutoring, active participation). Be flexible and adapt to your instructor's teaching style. You are creative and your best resource!
33. **Develop a positive, open mindset.** Attitude is key! Focus on what brings you joy and look for the good in life. Be grateful for all that you have even the small pleasures and blessings. Focus on the positive actions that you need to overcome obstacles, and consistently take steps to meet your goals.
34. **Stay healthy.** You cannot do well in school or in life if you are ill or have low energy. Invest time in exercising regularly, eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs. Binge drinking not only destroys brain cells, but can be deadly. Reduce stress by deep breathing, meditating and being mindful, allowing negative emotions to float away and focusing on making positive choices that align with your goals.
35. **Dispute negative thinking.** Pay attention to your thoughts and emotions. Practice being able to tolerate distress and learn to breathe and be in the present moment. Dispute irrational thoughts and replace with positive, realistic and helpful self-talk. You are not your feelings. Allow these thoughts and emotions to float away.
36. **Organize your life.** Hang up your keys in the same place, file important material, and establish routines that make your life less stressful. Pick up every day.
37. **Break down projects.** Overcome procrastination by breaking overwhelming projects into manageable chunks. Choose a topic, do a rough draft, write a summary, preview a chapter, do a mind map, and organize the tools you need (notes, books, outline).
38. **Make school your top priority.** Working too many hours can cut into study time. Learn to balance school, your social life, and work so that you're effective.
39. **Meet with your advisor to review goals and progress.** Ask questions about requirements, and don't drop and add classes without checking on the consequences. Develop a good relationship with your advisor and your instructors. Take advantage of all the resources available to help you.

*(continued)*

## The Best Strategies for Success in School *(concluded)*

40. **Be persistent.** Whenever you get discouraged, just keep following positive habits and strategies and you will succeed. Success comes in small, consistent steps. Be patient and keep plugging away. *Effort* is key to success.
41. **Spend less than you make.** Don't go into debt for new clothes, a car, CDs, gifts, travel, or other things you can do without. Education is the best investment you can make in future happiness and job success. Keep your life simple.
42. **Use critical thinking, and think about the consequences of your decisions.** Don't be impulsive about money, sex, smoking, or drugs. Don't start a family until you are emotionally and financially secure. Practice impulse control by imagining how you would feel after making certain choices. Be creative by exploring many options and being flexible. Consider the long-term consequences to your choices.
43. **Don't get addicted.** Addictions are a tragic waste of time. Ask yourself if you've ever known anyone whose life was better for being addicted. Do you know anyone whose life has been destroyed by alcohol and other drugs? This one decision will affect your life forever. Don't start smoking or taking drugs. Replace quick fixes with meditation, mindfulness, nature and healthy relationships.
44. **Know who you are and what you want.** Visit the career center and talk with a career counselor about your interests, values, goals, strengths, personality, learning style, and career possibilities. Play to your strengths and interests. Try out internships and part-time jobs. What brings you joy?
45. **Use creative problem solving.** Think about what went right and what went wrong this semester. What could you have done that would have helped you be more successful? What are new goals you want to set for next semester? What are some creative ways to overcome obstacles? How can you solve problems instead of letting them persist? Use critical thinking to make sound decisions.
46. **Contribute.** Look for opportunities to contribute your time and talents. What could you do outside of class that would complement your education and serve others? Check out internships, volunteer, and service learning opportunities.
47. **Take advantage of your texts' resources.** Many textbooks have accompanying websites, DVDs, and study materials designed to help you succeed in class.
48. **Respect yourself and others.** Be supportive, tolerant, and respectful. Look for ways to learn about other cultures and different views and ways to expand your friendships. Surround yourself with people who are positive and successful, who value learning, and who support and respect you and your goals.
49. **Focus on gratitude.** Look at the abundance in your life—your health, family, friends, and opportunities. You have so much going for you to help you succeed.
50. **Just do it.** Newton's first law of motion says that things in motion tend to stay in motion, so get started and keep working on your goals! *Create positive habits* that support your goals and practice, practice, practice. *Once again, effort is key.*

## Progress Assessment

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_ Office hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How am I doing in this class?

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2. What grades have you recorded for me thus far?

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3. Are there any adjustments that I should make?

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4. Am I missing any assignments?

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5. Do you have any suggestions as to how I can improve my performance or excel in your class?

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Complete a similar form for each class. You'll want to have contact information about your professor, office hours, location of office, and so on. Every week or so reflect on how you're doing in every class and develop a relationship with your professors so that you are known as a serious student who wants to excel.

# Be a Lifelong Learner

# 1

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

*In this chapter, you will learn to*

- 1-1** Demonstrate how a positive, open mindset creates perseverance
- 1-2** Identify self-management techniques for success
- 1-3** Create a personal mission statement
- 1-4** Identify skills and competencies for school and job success
- 1-5** Identify your learning style
- 1-6** Identify your personality type
- 1-7** Explain how to integrate learning styles and personality types
- 1-8** Apply the Adult Learning Cycle and integrate the VARK system
- 1-9** Describe how to overcome obstacles with positive habits and better focus

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

*It's the first week of classes and I'm already overwhelmed. How will I manage all this? Do I even belong here? I'm feeling anxious and worried.*

Are you feeling like this? Are you afraid you will never achieve your goals? Instead of focusing on negative feelings, channel your energies into positive results and envision yourself being successful. A positive, open mindset focuses on growth and learning. Perseverance and grit flow from these beliefs.

You can fulfill your potential with effort and positive habits. In this chapter, you will learn about self-management and how to use self-assessment, critical thinking, visualization, and reflection to become a success in all facets of life. Relax; you do belong. You have grit. Accept all your feelings and breathe deeply to relax and become clear about your goals. You have the ability to make good choices to meet these goals.

**JOURNAL ENTRY** The transition to college is a major change. Describe your emotions and how you're coping with all the changes of college. **Worksheet 1.1** will help you apply the steps to regulate emotions. Think about the transitions and obstacles you may have faced to get to this point and what you did to overcome them.



Wayne0216/Shutterstock

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome.”

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON  
Founder of Tuskegee Institute

For a long time, I’ve asked the question, What makes the difference? Why is it that some people succeed in spite of obstacles, hardships, and setbacks and others fail even though they have ability, talent, and a high IQ? *The answer is that people who are successful—peak performers—have a positive, open mindset. They understand the power of perseverance and grit. A positive mindset is focused on growth and flows from the belief that skills and essential qualities can be cultivated and enhanced through effort, practice, and perseverance.* Peak performers know they can motivate themselves to improve in school, reach their goals, and create a love of learning. This isn’t about picking up a few tips, but involves a new way of seeing. It involves a core belief that their intelligence is not fixed, but can be developed through effort and resilience. They are able to bounce back from setbacks by turning obstacles into opportunities for growth. They know that learning is lifelong and are curious and passionate about learning and growing through effort. In short, peak performers have grit.

Lately, you may have been asking yourself, “Who am I?” “Why am I in school?” “What course of study should I take?” “What kind of job do I want?” or “What should I do with my life?” These are all important questions. Some you may have already answered—and some of those answers may change by tomorrow, next week, or next year. And that’s OK. This is all part of a continual process—of learning about yourself and what you want out of life. *Whatever your goals are in life, a college degree will help you to succeed both personally and professionally.*

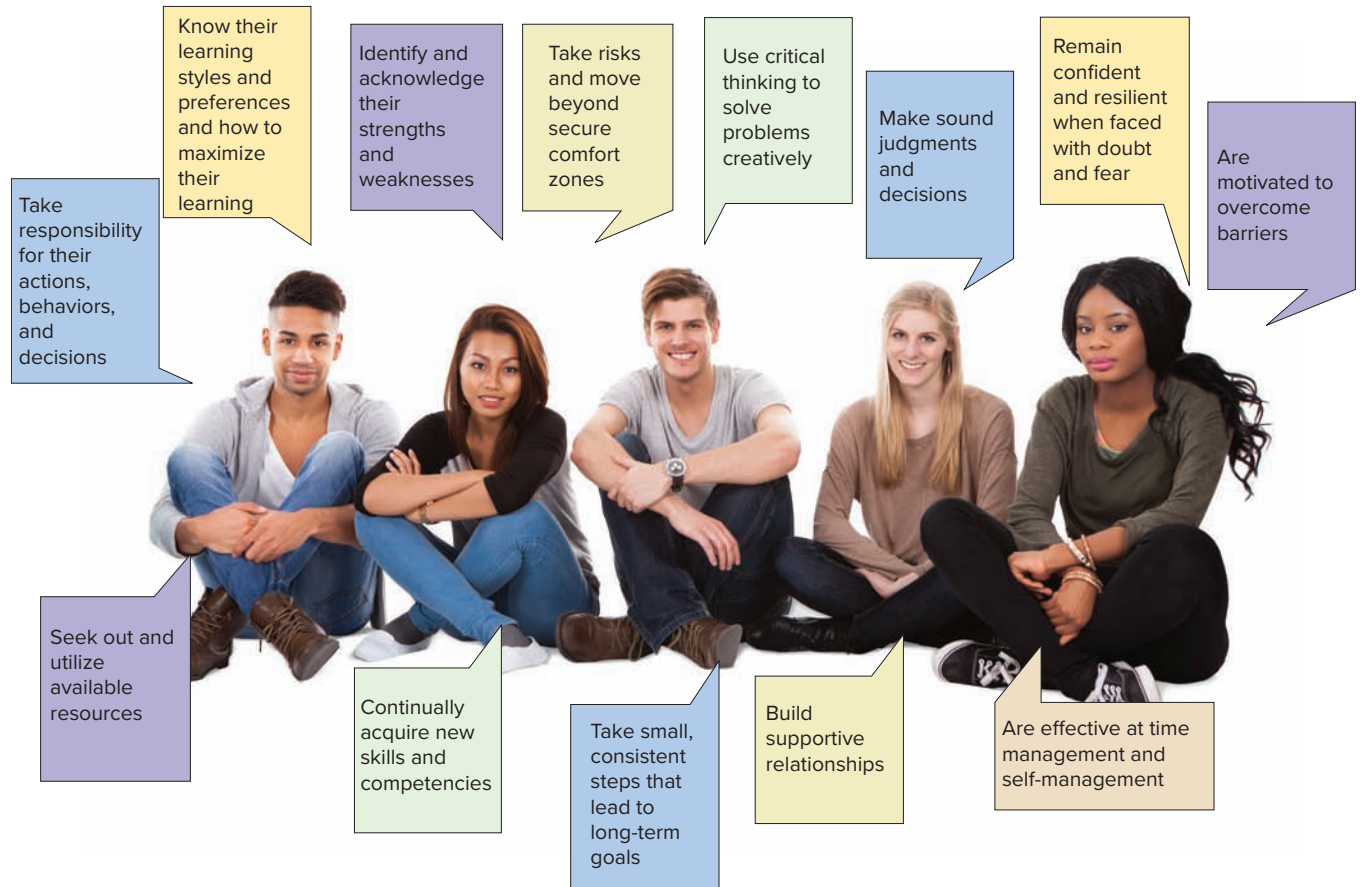
As you journey on the road to becoming a peak performer, this book will show you methods that will help you master self-management, learn critical skills, set goals, and achieve success. One of the first steps is self-assessment. Self-assessment requires seeing yourself objectively. This helps you determine where you are now and where you want to go. Then, by assessing how you learn—including your learning and personality styles—you will discover how to maximize your learning potential.

The many exercises, journal entries, and worksheets throughout this text support one of its major themes—that success in school and success in your career are definitely connected! The skills, qualities, and habits you learn and practice today will guide you throughout your life. Perseverance and grit all flow from an open, positive mindset that focuses on growth.

## What Is a “Peak Performer”?

Peak performers come from different locations, ages, cultures, and genders. *They have one common factor: they have an open, positive mindset that focuses on growth and effort.* This growth mindset is based on the belief that they can develop their full potential by cultivating essential personal qualities and enhancing their intelligence. This belief leads to curiosity, a love of learning, joy, and positive choices. Anyone can become a peak performer by setting goals, putting in the effort to achieve them, and by being resilient in the face of setbacks. Peak performers excel by focusing on results. They know how to change their fixed, negative thoughts into positive, open, and realistic beliefs. They break down long-term goals into daily action steps and positive habits. They realize that taking small, consistent steps can produce big changes over the long haul. They are persistent and realize

## Peak Performers



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the value of completing their degree. They bounce back by seeing mistakes and setbacks as challenges and opportunities to grow. They are curious and awake to the wonder of life. They know they belong. Peak performers have growth mindsets and know that growth takes effort, persistence, and sheer determination. They practice the power of breath and mindfulness to stay calm and in the present moment.

Peak performers accept reality and are clear about the situations that they face. They practice deep breathing and mindfulness to identify and manage their emotions. They know that they are not their emotions and can allow them to float away. In spite of challenges, they resist the urge to overreact or give up and instead choose healthy behaviors that help them succeed. In short, they are their own best friend.

## Self-Management: The Key to Reaching Your Peak

What is a primary strength of every peak performer? A positive, open attitude that focuses on healthy ways to manage emotions! Peak performers **acknowledge** and accept reality and with mindfulness, pay attention to their thoughts and emotions. They **breathe deeply** to calm down and create clarity about the situation. They are able to hold these two seemingly opposite thoughts at the same time: *they love and accept who they are at the present moment and commit themselves to growing, learning, and being the best version of themselves.* They **consciously choose** the most



appropriate actions for the situation that will result in positive long-term consequences. They see that life is interconnected and interdependent and a series of inevitable changes that offer opportunities to learn, grow, and manage emotions. This life view is the key to peak performers. Does this describe how you approach each day? Who and what supports and sustains you? Check your attitude by completing **Personal Evaluation Notebook 1.1**.

You have a choice. Mindsets are just beliefs and anyone can develop the powerful beliefs of a peak performer. In fact, we all had this open, positive mindset as babies. We took on the most difficult tasks of learning to walk and talk with zest. We never decided that the tasks were too hard or not worth the effort, but jumped in with enthusiasm and resiliency. We can recapture that exuberant learning by focusing on growth. Instead of dwelling on problems, create options, alternatives, and behaviors to keep you on track. With practice, you can retrain your brain to create a positive mindset. The more you practice allowing your negative thoughts to float away, you rewire your brain to actively develop a positive mindset. Being mindful can help you live in the present moment and tasks seem more meaningful and less daunting. Develop grit through focus!

A positive, open attitude is one of the many components of **self-management**. Are you aware of your thoughts and emotions? Do you have the ability to tolerate distress? Are you aware of the power of breathing deeply and mindfulness to help you become calm? Are you comfortable at holding seemingly opposite thoughts? For example, can you love and accept yourself just as you are at this present moment and want to grow and change into the best version of yourself? Can you choose the most appropriate action for the situation and one that leads to long-term positive consequences? Think of self-management as a toolkit to help you discover healthier ways to manage your emotions. Along with a positive attitude, important techniques in this toolkit include awareness, mindfulness, visualization, and critical thinking. Transform your relationships with self-management.

## Self-Assessment

One of the first steps in becoming a peak performer is awareness and **self-assessment**. Out of self-assessment comes recognition of the need to learn new tasks, skills, relate well with others, set goals, manage time and stress, and create a balanced, productive life. Self-assessment requires facing the truth and seeing yourself objectively. It isn't easy to admit you procrastinate or lack certain skills. Honest self-assessment is the foundation for making positive changes. An open, positive mindset wants honest feedback so growth can flourish.

Self-assessment can help you

- Focus on growth and where you want to improve
- Acknowledge, accept, and manage emotions with mindfulness and awareness
- Be resilient and bounce back from setbacks
- Use critical thinking and reasoning to make sound decisions
- Determine your interests and what you value and clarify goals
- Change negative patterns of thinking and behaving
- Create a positive, open, and motivated state of mind
- Work more effectively with diverse groups of people for mutual support
- Thrive when stretching yourself and redirect stress into energy
- View setbacks as challenges and opportunities for growth and learning
- Determine and capitalize on your strengths

# Personal Evaluation Notebook

# 1.1

## Am I a Positive Person?

Having a positive, open attitude is key to effective self-management. Most people believe they are generally positive but often are not truly aware of their negative, unkind self-talk or behavior. Answer the following questions to determine your overall outlook. After you have answered the questions, ask a friend, co-worker, or family member to answer the questions about you. Were your answers the same?

	Mostly True	Sometimes True	Rarely True
I believe that I can learn new things and enhance my intelligence.	_____	_____	_____
I look for the positive in each situation.	_____	_____	_____
I do not take offense easily.	_____	_____	_____
I welcome constructive criticism and use it to improve & grow.	_____	_____	_____
I am resilient, kind to myself, and not easily discouraged.	_____	_____	_____
I love & accept myself at this present moment & want to grow and change.	_____	_____	_____
I do not take everything personally.	_____	_____	_____
I take responsibility and face problems, even when it is not comfortable so that I can grow.	_____	_____	_____
I am capable of coping with change.	_____	_____	_____
I don't look for perfection in myself.	_____	_____	_____
I don't look for perfection in others.	_____	_____	_____
I have healthy, supportive, interconnected relationships.	_____	_____	_____
I can forgive myself & others and move on. I don't dwell on mistakes.	_____	_____	_____
I do not become overly involved or disturbed by others' problems.	_____	_____	_____
I am open & do not make snap judgments about people.	_____	_____	_____
I praise others for their accomplishments.	_____	_____	_____
I don't start conversations with something negative.	_____	_____	_____
I view mistakes as opportunities to grow, stretch, and learn.	_____	_____	_____
I know if Plan A doesn't work, then Plan B will. I am flexible & accept change.	_____	_____	_____
I know how to tolerate and manage difficult emotions & situations.	_____	_____	_____

Add up the check marks in each column. If your "Mostly True" column scores are the highest, you are already a very positive and open person. If you have several check marks in the "Rarely True" column, you may want to reflect on how you can become a more positive person who is open to growth and learning.

“If you can’t change your fate, change your attitude.”

AMY TAN  
American writer

- Recognize irrational and negative thoughts and behavior
- Create positive habits that support your goals
- Utilize resources that maximize your energies and efforts

The world is full of people who believe that, if only the other person would change, everything would be fine. This book is not for them. Change is possible if you take responsibility for your thoughts and behaviors and are willing to practice new ways of thinking and behaving. With consistent effort, growth and change will happen.

Self-assessment is very important for growth at school and for job success. Keep a portfolio or digital archive of your awards, performance reviews, training program certificates, and projects. Assess the results achieved and set goals for improvement. At the end of each chapter, you will find a Career Development Portfolio worksheet, which will help you relate your current activities to future job success. This portfolio will provide you with a lifelong assessment tool for learning where you are and where you want to go and is a place for documenting your results. This portfolio of skills and competencies will become your guide for developing marketable skills throughout your career. Chapter 14 further explores how to develop an effective portfolio and prepare for your future career.

## Creativity and Critical Thinking Skills

Throughout this book, you will be asked to apply creative and critical thinking skills to college and life. **Critical thinking** is a logical, rational, systematic thought process that is necessary in understanding, analyzing, and evaluating information in order to solve a problem or situation. Creativity is experiencing the world with wonder and curiosity and using new approaches to solve problems. It’s being flexible and imaginative. Self-management involves using your creativity and critical thinking skills to make the best decisions and solve problems.

Using critical thinking helps you

- Suspend judgment until you have gathered facts and considered source
- Search for evidence that supports or contradicts your initial assumptions, opinions, and beliefs
- Ask, “Is this true? How can I be certain?”
- Adjust your opinions as new information and facts are known
- Ask questions, research and examine the problem closely
- Reject incorrect and ignore irrelevant information
- Reflect on how you act
- Recognize and dispute irrational thinking
- Consider likely consequences to your actions
- Develop creativity in problem solving

Because critical thinking determines the quality of the decisions you make, it is an important theme throughout this book. You use your critical thinking and creativity skills every day—from analyzing and determining your learning styles to communicating effectively with family members, classmates, and co-workers.

Make sure to complete the exercises and activities throughout this book. **Think Creatively** case studies throughout the text highlight that we are constantly making decisions that often have many repercussions—both positive and not-so-positive. Work through these to enhance your creative and critical thinking skills.

## Visualization and Affirmations

Visualization and affirmations are powerful self-management tools that help you focus on positive actions and outcomes. **Visualization** is the use of imagination to see goals clearly and envision engaging successfully in new, positive behavior. For example, “I see myself engaged in college, doing well, and graduating. I can see myself walking across the stage and my friends and family applauding. I feel such a sense of accomplishment. I did It!” **Affirmations** are positive self-talk and thoughts that counter self-defeating patterns of thought with more positive, hopeful, and realistic thoughts and feelings. For example, “I am friendly, kind, respectful, and fun to be around. I have many friends because I’m a good friend. I am open and positive and know that I can grow through experience and effort.”

*Using visualization and affirmations can help you create positive thoughts, relax, boost your confidence, change your habits, and perform better on exams, in speeches, or in sports.* You can use them to rehearse for an upcoming event and practice coping with obstacles.

Through self-management, you demonstrate that you are not a passive spectator in your life; you are responsible for your self-talk, images, thoughts, and behaviors. When you observe and dispute negative thoughts and replace them with positive and realistic thoughts, images, and behaviors, you are practicing critical thinking and creativity. You are taking charge of your life, focusing on what you can change, and working toward your goals. In short, a positive, open mindset helps you focus on growth and learning.

You can practice visualization anytime and anywhere. For example, between classes, find a quiet place and close your eyes. It helps to use relaxation techniques, such as taking several deep breaths and seeing yourself calm, centered, and focused on your goals. This is especially effective when your mind starts to chatter and you feel overwhelmed, discouraged, or stressed. See yourself achieving your goals. Say to yourself, “I feel calm and centered. I am taking action to meet my goals. I will use all available resources to be successful. My intelligence and personal qualities are not fixed. I can grow, change, and stretch daily.”

## Reflection

Another important self-management tool is **reflection**. To reflect is to think about something in a purposeful way, with the intention of gaining a deeper understanding. When you are aware and attentive to your thoughts and feelings, you gain insight into who you are now, who you’ve been in the past, and who you’d like to be in the future. Sometimes the process causes us to reconsider our previous beliefs and behavior and explore new alternatives and ideas. Reflection can activate the prefrontal circuits in the brain and help strengthen your mind and make your brain more flexible and resilient. Research shows that when you focus attention on the mind, circuits in your brain can be changed and you can improve your health and relationships. Learn breathing techniques to calm your mind and you’ll be able to respond calmly in creative ways.

Don’t confuse reflection with daydreaming. Reflection is conscious, focused, and purposeful—not simply letting your mind wander. When you reflect, you acknowledge your thoughts and feelings and then either let them go or direct your thoughts and actions in more positive ways. Reflection helps you develop empathy, kindness, and compassion as you develop the ability to understand yourself and others. *As you practice reflection, the connections among your neurons fire and grow and you create a more integrated and balanced brain.* You feel flexible and freer.

“Stop a minute, right where you are. Relax your shoulders, shake your head and spine like a dog shaking off cold water. Tell that imperious voice in your head to be still.”

BARBARA KINGSOLVER  
writer

Reflection helps you to clarify your feelings and thoughts and consciously choose the most appropriate action. For example, let's say you are feeling angry with a friend. With reflection you are able to feel your anger and choose not to act upon it. With reflection you can accept your feelings and love and accept yourself. You may choose to talk calmly with your friend. Your thoughts and feelings do not have to control you or your actions. With practice you can learn to be more positive, balanced, calm, and integrated and less prone to becoming angry and lashing out. Be still and tune in.

A convenient way to reflect is to meditate or spend a few minutes each day sitting quietly and simply recording your thoughts, such as in a journal. This text provides an opportunity to practice reflection and critical thinking, including a **Journal Entry** exercise at the beginning of each chapter and a follow-up **Worksheet** at the end of each chapter.

Throughout the text, we'll explore additional self-management techniques that focus on certain aspects of your schoolwork, employment, and personal life. **Peak Progress 1.1** explores the ABC Method of Self-Management, a unique process to help you work through difficult situations and achieve positive results. It uses skills such as acceptance, awareness, mindfulness, and critical thinking to find positive outcomes.

## Peak Progress

1.1

### The ABC Method of Self-Management

Earlier in this chapter, you answered some questions to determine if you approach everyday life with a positive attitude. Researchers believe that positive, optimistic thinking improves your skills for coping with challenges, which may also benefit your overall health and minimize the effects of stress.

What does “negative thinking” mean? If you are thinking negatively, you may tend to

- Filter out and eliminate all the good things that happen and focus only on bad things
- Blame yourself (or someone else) automatically when something bad happens
- Anticipate the very worst that could happen and dwell in fear
- Feel like a failure and give up easily
- Believe that effort is not worth it
- Criticize yourself—either aloud or internally—in a way you would never do to someone else
- Determine that you can't change or grow
- Waste time complaining, criticizing, reliving, making up excuses, rather than creating solutions and moving on.

*The good news is that anyone can learn and grow with a positive mindset. Be aware of patterns of defeating thoughts that are obstacles in achieving your goals.*

Dispute these negative and irrational thoughts with a positive mindset focused on growth.

Clear thinking will lead to positive emotions. Let's say you have to give a speech in a class and speaking in public has caused you anxiety in the past. Your anxious mind might say, “I am terrified, sick to my stomach, have shaky hands, increased heartrate, my breathing is shallow I and am sweating. What if I get sick in front of everyone? What if I lose my notes or forget my main points? What if everyone laughs at me?” Try this affirmation: “Public speaking is a skill that can be learned with practice and effort. I will not crumble from criticism and, even if I don't do well, I can learn with practice and grow from constructive feedback. I will explore all the resources available to me, I will practice, and I'll do well in this class.” Then visualize yourself calm, confident, and relaxed as you give my presentation in front of the class. You are focused and attentive to the audience, and making your key points. The audience is engaged and responding with warmth and acceptance. You feel accomplished and connected.

Self-management can be as simple as ABC. These steps help you manage your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors so that you can create the results you want.

**A = Acknowledge reality:** Accept the situation that triggered your emotions and fully acknowledge your emotions.

*(continued)*

## The ABC Method of Self-Management *(concluded)*

**B = Breathe:** Breathe deeply so that you create space for reflection and become calm and focused. Accept and feel beloved just as you are at this present moment and commit to learning and growing into the best version of yourself.

**C = Choose:** Consciously choose the most appropriate response for this situation and that will result in positive long-term consequences.

Let's use another example. When you read the quote at the beginning of this chapter, you might have felt the same way—overwhelmed. You are in a new situation, with many new expectations. Let's apply the ABC Method to focus your energies on developing a positive outcome. For example, you might say,

**A = Acknowledge:** "It's the first week of class and I have a mountain of reading and lecture notes to go over. I feel overwhelmed and fearful. What if I fail? What if I can't keep it all straight—learning styles, personalities, and temperaments? These other people are probably a lot smarter than me. Maybe I should drop out."

**B = Breathe:** "Wow. I need to slow down and refocus my chattering mind. I will breathe deeply until I'm calm and focused. I belong here. I love and accept myself and want to grow become the best version of me."

**C = Choose:** "I choose to put this situation in perspective instead of overreacting. Going to college is a

big change, but I have handled new and stressful situations before. I welcome this new challenge to grow and stretch. I choose to put a lot of effort into my classes and break big jobs into small tasks. I choose to use proven strategies like testing myself and joining a study team. There are lots of resources available to help even if I face setbacks. I am persistent. I can do this!"

Dispute negative thoughts and replace them with open, positive thinking, you feel energized, and your thoughts spiral upward: "I accept that I'm feeling overwhelmed and can tolerate these feelings because they are normal in new situations. I know with deep breathing and mindfulness, I can calm down and sooth myself. I will choose healthy ways to manage these overwhelming emotions. I choose to eat healthy, exercise regularly, spend time in nature and meditate. So many resources are available to me—my instructor, my classmates, my advisor, and the book's resources. I will get to know at least one person in each of my classes, and I will take a few minutes to explore at least one resource at school that can provide support. I will go to classes, test myself, and study in teams. I see myself confident and energized and achieving my goals. I will persist. I belong here! I am growing and learning daily."

In the end-of-chapter **Worksheets** throughout this text, you will find opportunities to practice the ABC Method of Self-Management for any stressful situation.

## Tools to Help You Reach Your Peak

This product is full of strategies and tools to help you reach your peak performance. The **ABC Method of Self-Management** will help you challenge and dispute negative and irrational thinking, it will help you reflect upon your beliefs and determine if they are helpful and supportive or limiting. When you become discouraged, go through the steps and replace negative thoughts and feelings with optimistic, realistic, and hopeful thoughts. This is where creativity and critical thinking come in. Your emotions and thoughts are not you and do not have to control you or your behavior.

A feature called **Think Creatively and Critically** will help you practice using both creativity and critical thinking. This feature will also weave in brain research that shows you that the brain continues to grow and change. Brain research has shown that the brain takes the shape the mind rests upon.<sup>1</sup> If you continually rest your mind on self-criticism, doubt, worry, and anxiety, your neurons will fire together and you will have low self-esteem, become discouraged, and be quick to anger. However, *when you practice mindfulness, see the good in yourself and life, let go of negative thoughts, and focus on your goals, your brain will grow in self-confidence, calm strength, and resiliency.* Be positive and open to growth.