

Supplemental Materials for CS114: Academic Strategies for the IT Professional

Purpose

This module, created by Professor Nick, is designed to support your studies as an optional but highly recommended resource. While there are no graded assignments, this space will serve as a repository for important materials, including new documents, slides, and other helpful content. Be sure to check back each week for updates and additional resources to enhance your learning experience

Contents

Supplemental Materials for CS114: Academic Strategies for the IT Professional	1
Purpose	1
Academic Support and Citing Resources	3
Discussion Board Expectations	3
Industry Certifications	4
Seminars: Information	5
Seminars: Recorded Sessions	6
Seminars: Previously Recorded Sessions	7
Proposed Weekly Study Schedule	9
Week 1 Proposed Study Schedule	10
Week 2 Proposed Study Schedule	11
Week 3 Proposed Study Schedule	12
Week 4 Proposed Study Schedule	13
Week 5 Proposed Study Schedule	14
Week 6 Proposed Study Schedule	15
Week 7 Proposed Study Schedule	16
Week 8 Proposed Study Schedule	17
Week 9 Proposed Study Schedule	18
Week 10 Proposed Study Schedule	19
Unit Readings	20
Free and Discounted Certifications	<u>117</u>

Academic Support and Citing Resources

Be sure to bookmark the following resources:

- Taking screenshots: <https://www.take-a-screenshot.org/>
- Tutors and other help: [Academic Success Center](#)
- Grammarly: <https://www.grammarly.com/>
- Plagiarism:
- Here are some videos from the Academic Success Center (Writing Center) on your campus website:
 - Purdue OWL Writing Lab - APA 7.0
Formatting: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
 - APA 7.0 Demystified in 5 minutes: <https://campus.purdueglobal.edu/media/apa-demystified-in-5-minutes>
 - Paraphrasing: <https://campus2.purdueglobal.edu/media/a-quick-guide-to-paraphrasing>
 - Citation Machine: <http://www.citationmachine.net/>
- ChatGPT and other AI applications:
 - Please follow the Purdue Global Guidelines found in the Campus website: <https://campus.purdueglobal.edu/article/artificial-intelligence-ai-and-writing-general-guidelines-for-students>
 - How to cite ChatGPT: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Discussion Board Expectations

There are graded discussions in each unit of this course. Follow these rules for each discussion topic:

- **Initial Post** -- This is your answer to the questions at the top of the page. It must be at least 100 words and posted on or before Saturday night at 11:59 pm ET during the unit week.

- **Responses to others** - - Two replies to other posts by two different classmates must also be made each week. These responses must provide content that advances the discussion, which also means they should be *several lines long* and have more substance than just an agreement or a compliment.
- **Timing** - - Again, the initial post should be completed on or before Saturday is over. Post on a minimum of **three different days** during the week that the unit is in progress and remember that **everything is graded in Eastern Time zone**. Once a unit is officially over, no additional posts will count for points.

Other Rules and Requirements

- Read the instructor's first post in each unit before posting your initial responses each week.
- Use *only black text* (it is okay if links are blue). Readability counts; do *not* use background colors or fancy fonts. This is an effort to ensure inclusivity in our classroom.
- Use a descriptive subject line for your initial posts. Do *not* label your first post "initial post", "first post", "Unit # post", or "my response," etc.
- Do *not* copy the questions into your posts - it is actually plagiarizing to do so, and it does not show an understanding of the material. Your posts' content should be able to stand on its own.
- Stay on topic.
- Respect others for their opinions.
- Organize your ideas using logical paragraphing.
- Write in your own words and use appropriate writing skills.

Industry Certifications

Earning industry certifications while you are working on your degree will greatly enhance your resume and career opportunities.

- Purdue University Global has an academic partnership with CompTIA®, and students can get deep discounts (over 50% off) on exam vouchers for all CompTIA certifications. Students can visit the [CompTIA site](#) and use a PG student email account to obtain the discounted vouchers or training materials.
- Students can save 40% on practice exams from [CyberVista](#) for Microsoft®, CompTIA, Cisco®, ITIL®, Oracle®, and more. Use promo code PG30 at checkout.

- Keep in mind, Purdue Global articulates industry certifications for college credits, both in undergraduate and graduate programs. If you earn certifications while enrolled and have not yet taken the related course, please submit your certification transcripts for articulation. The list of [IT certifications/examinations approved for transfer](#) includes the instructions on how to submit transcripts for each unique vendor.
- Ask your instructor about certifications! Most of them have earned the certifications related to the courses they teach and can share their experience.
- Also, please see the [Free and Discounted certifications](#) included in this document.

Seminars: Information

Seminars are listed in Eastern Time zone; visit [time.is](#) (and choose New York time) to see the current ET.

Click on the date in the calendar to the right and follow links to the live session. You can also click More Tools (in the navigation bar)>Seminar>Upcoming Meetings>Start or the Topic in blue. You may enter the meeting before the hour but there will not be any information until the top of the hour. You should be prepared to enter directly at the hour.

You will need to have your speakers turned on to hear the professor speak during the session. Seminars will be graded for full-hour *participation*. If you are unable to participate fully, complete the alternative before the unit is over. Per PG policy, if you come to the seminar and do the alternative, the higher of the two grades will be awarded.

If you do the alternative (Option 2), make sure you write in your own words and follow the instructions given in BrightSpace:

“While viewing the entire recording of this week’s archived Seminar, create a summary document. Seminar slides should not be copied – this would be considered plagiarism. You should be able to view the recording and make notes at the same time so that you capture the following items:

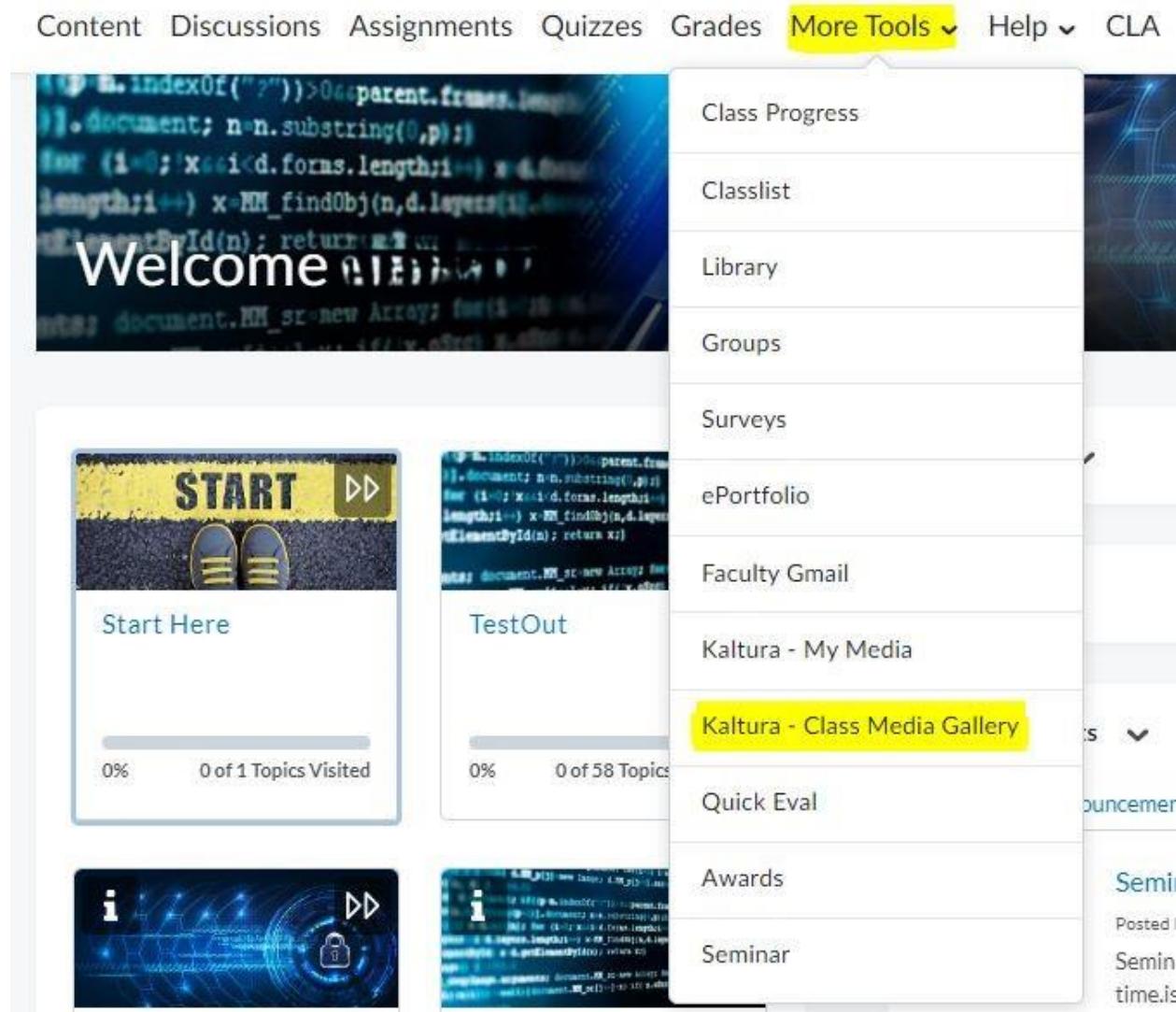
- Describe the main points discussed in the Seminar.
- Include sub-topics and/or subsequent classroom discussion from the **entire** Seminar.
- Include points found of interest about the unit content **and/or** any additional reflections or questions about the unit content.

You may write the assignment in a bulleted list format or paragraph format. APA style is not required. Remember to review the grading rubric so that you include all of the required elements.”

Seminars: Recorded Sessions

On the off chance that something happens and a seminar is not able to occur as planned or you are unable to attend - you can still watch the recording.

Videos and seminars created for this course can be accessed in the Kaltura-Class Media Gallery in More Tools from the Top Navigation Bar:



Content Discussions Assignments Quizzes Grades More Tools ▾ Help ▾ CLA

Class Progress

Classlist

Library

Groups

Surveys

ePortfolio

Faculty Gmail

Kaltura - My Media

Kaltura - Class Media Gallery

Quick Eval

Awards

Seminar

Seminars: Previously Recorded Sessions

Our term may overlap with many holidays and there may not be some seminars hosted; however, you are still expected to watch previously recorded seminars. Below you will find previously recorded seminars to perform the alternative assignment if seminar is not hosted during that week.

Unit	Recordings
1	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
2	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
3	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
4	Sep '24 Class
5	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
6	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
7	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
8	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
9	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class
10	Sep '24 Class Dec '24 Class

Unit	Recordings
Extra Seminar	<p><u>Career Services Seminar</u></p> <p>Additional Resources:</p> <p><u>Guide to Gaining Experience</u></p> <p><u>Commonly Asked Interview Questions</u></p> <p><u>Sample Resume</u></p> <p><u>Resume Guide</u></p> <p><u>Cover Letter Guide</u></p> <p><u>Interview Guide</u></p>

Proposed Weekly Study Schedule

Each week, I'll put in a suggested pacing guide to help you progress adequately throughout the course, while giving grace to the other commitments you have at Purdue Global and in your daily lives. You do not have to use the pacing guide; however, it is strongly recommended that you do so. Should you need to work ahead of this module because of life circumstances, please email me directly at nicholas.mahoney@purdueglobal.edu.

Week 1 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Review the Announcements for this course<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Seminar: CS114-01<input type="checkbox"/> Review this text from your professor<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarize yourself with Unit 1 of this course<input type="checkbox"/> Start Unit 1 Discussion in the Discussion Board
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Unit 1 Reading<input type="checkbox"/> Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 1 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Complete Part B in the discussion board<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 1 Discussion<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 1 Discussion by 11:59pm EST<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Unit 1 Assignment Dropbox<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 1 Discussion<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the 10-question Unit 1 Quiz
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 1 Discussion

Week 2 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 2 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Start your initial post to Time and Stress Management in the Unit 2 Discussion
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 2 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 2 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 2 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Time and Stress Management in the Unit 2 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 2 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 2 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Complete the Unit 2 Assignment Dropbox • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 2 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the 10-question Unit 2 Quiz
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 2 Discussion

Week 3 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 3 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Read through and complete the Unit 3 Learning Activities and save your results
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 3 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 3 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 3 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your results from the Unit 3 Learning Activities to complete the LASSI Assignment • Start your initial post in the Unit 3 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 3 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 3 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Complete the Unit 3 Learning Activities • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 3 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the 10-question Unit 3 Quiz
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 3 Discussion

Week 4 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 4 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Ensure your notes for this course are organized
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 4 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 4 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 4 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your initial post in the Unit 4 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 4 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 4 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 4 Discussion • Complete the 10-question Unit 4 Quiz • Start studying for the Unit 5 exam by looking at the Unit 4 Looking Ahead section
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 4 Discussion • Start studying for the Unit 5 exam by looking at the Unit 4 Looking Ahead section

Week 5 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the Announcements for this course• Attend Seminar: CS114-01• Familiarize yourself with Unit 5 Overview and Outcomes of this course• Study for the Unit 5 Exam
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the Unit 5 Reading• Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 5 Reading)• Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 5 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start your initial post in the Unit 5 Discussion• Complete the Learning Activities section of this unit (save your responses)• Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday• Study for the Unit 5 Exam
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 5 Discussion• Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 5 Discussion by 11:59pm EST• Complete the Unit 5 Assignment Dropbox from this week (3 paragraphs)
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study for the Unit 5 exam• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 5 Discussion
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 5 Discussion• Complete the Unit 5 Exam (if you have not done so already) - NOTE: It will close at 11:59pm ET

Week 6 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 6 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Start reading the Unit 6 Reading
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 6 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 6 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 6 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your initial post in the Unit 6 Discussion • Complete the Unit 6 Learning Activities section of this unit (save your responses) • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 6 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 6 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Complete the Unit 6 Assignment Dropbox from this week • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the Unit 6 Quiz • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 6 Discussion
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 6 Discussion

Week 7 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 7 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Start reading the Unit 7 Reading
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 7 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 7 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 7 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your initial post in the Unit 7 Discussion • Prepare for next week's interview by reviewing the Unit 7 Looking Ahead page in the course • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 7 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 7 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the Unit 7 Quiz • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 7 Discussion
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 7 Discussion

Week 8 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the Announcements for this course• Attend Seminar: CS114-01• Familiarize yourself with Unit 8 Overview and Outcomes of this course• Start reading the Unit 8 Reading
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the Unit 8 Reading• Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 8 Reading)• Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 8 Reading)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start your initial post in the Unit 8 Discussion• Review the Unit 8 Learning Activities activity and save your responses for your assignment• Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 8 Discussion• Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 8 Discussion by 11:59pm EST• Complete the Unit 8 Assignment Dropbox• Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday• Complete the Unit 8 Quiz• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 8 Discussion
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 8 Discussion

Week 9 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 9 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Start reading the Unit 9 Reading • Start studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 9 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 9 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 9 Reading) • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your initial post in the Unit 9 Discussion • Review the Unit 9 Looking Ahead activity and save your responses for your assignment • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 9 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 9 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Complete the Unit 9 Discussion • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the Unit 9 Quiz • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 9 Discussion • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 9 Discussion • Review the Unit 9 Looking Ahead activity within the unit • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes

Week 10 Proposed Study Schedule

Day	Task
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Announcements for this course • Attend Seminar: CS114-01 • Familiarize yourself with Unit 10 Overview and Outcomes of this course • Start reading the Unit 10 Reading
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Unit 10 Reading • Complete the Challenge Activity (found in the Unit 10 Reading) • Make flashcards for the 7 words in 7 days challenge (found in the Unit 10 Reading) • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your initial post in the Unit 10 Discussion • Start the Unit 10 Assignment Dropbox • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 10 Discussion • Ensure you post your initial response in the Unit 10 Discussion by 11:59pm EST • Complete the Unit 10 Assignment Dropbox (due 11:59pm EST on Tuesday) • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Continue studying for the Unit 10 Exam by reviewing old notes
Sunday	Plan for a rest day sometime this week to ensure you do not get burned out!
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to practice with your flashcards from Thursday • Complete the Unit 10 Exam (due 11:59pm EST on Tuesday) • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 10 Discussion
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post one response to a fellow student in the Unit 10 Discussion

Unit Readings

The following content is intended solely for enrolled students in this course. Its purpose is to support your learning by summarizing key readings to aid in studying. Please do not share or distribute this material. It is the intellectual property of Purdue Global.

Academic Strategies for the Information Technology Professional

Unit 1 Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

Reading Introduction

This week, you will review the Syllabus (your guide to the course) and learn how to navigate and use the many features of this online classroom. This is designed to help you become familiar with course policies, procedures, and expectations.

Now that you are in an academic program, it is time to start practicing good writing. You do not have to be perfect, but you should strive to be a clear and professional communicator. The Reading, found below, will cover:

- Communicating Online — Learning the correct way to write while attending an online class.
- General Guidelines to Communicating Online — Understanding "Netiquette."
- General Class Information — Find out what day your class starts and how to get help.

Navigation for your Class

This week, you will review the Syllabus (your guide to the course) and learn how to navigate and use the many features of this online classroom. This is designed to help you become familiar with course policies, procedures, and expectations.

Success

During this unit, you will introduce yourself to your instructor and classmates. A strong support system is one of the keys to success.

Rest assured you are not alone in this process. Your knowledgeable and talented instructor cares deeply about making the classroom experience both valuable and enjoyable for you. Do not give up. This is the first and probably the most important challenge you will meet during your time here at the University.

Be Patient

Be patient and give yourself the time you need to process all of this new information. Studies show that if you can make it through your first 3 weeks, you greatly increase your chances of getting that degree. This is not much time at all when you consider that the benefits of a higher education will last you the rest of your life. If you remember the

reasons you began this wonderful journey, it will help to motivate you to continue. Throughout the course you will be looking at various strategies that will help you overcome obstacles and reach your goals.

Why Earn a Degree?

Earning a degree can lead to multiple practical and emotional benefits. Here are some quotes from students on the benefits of having a college degree.

“Having a degree opens doors. Without that piece of paper, your options are limited, even with the experience.”

“I have been turned down for many jobs this year because I do not have a college degree.”

“I could provide a better life for my family.”

“I feel like I had accomplished something, and I would feel more confident.”

Additional Motivation

Just in case you need additional motivation to jump in and get started, it might be helpful to also look at the monetary value of a university education.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau at the United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (2023), a bachelor's degree can be worth an extra \$20,496.00 a year more than an Associate's degree.

Communicating Online

The Do's and Don'ts of communicating online.

With friends and family, it is fun to use internet slang such as smileys :) and abbreviations such as LOL (laughing out loud) but as a professional you need to consider that anything you write can be forwarded to anyone else. You have to be careful what you say, and need to be more formal in your approach to school and career.

Now that you are in an academic program, it is time to start practicing good writing. You do not have to be perfect, but you should strive to be a clear and professional communicator.

Netiquette

The word “netiquette” is a combination of two words: network and etiquette.

There are no World Wide Web rules, and so the internet can be a pretty hectic place, but Virginia Shea (2008), the author of Netiquette, identified 10 Core Rules of Netiquette for communicating in cyberspace, which are still relevant today.

- 1) Remember the human: This is considered the “golden rule” of online communication. Always try to remember that there is a person on the receiving end of your online communications. If you would not say something while looking a person in the eye, do not say it in electronic form. Be kind.

- 2) Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life: This is certainly a common sense rule. Your behavioral standards should be the same whether you are online or offline.
- 3) Know where you are in cyberspace: Cyberspace is actually a virtual community. Just as in your own community area, certain behaviors are not acceptable in certain places. Respect each virtual community area by acting in a way that is acceptable.
- 4) Respect other people's time and bandwidth: Try not to waste other people's time by sending information that they really do not need.
- 5) Make yourself look good online: Your online presence is not based on how you look; it's based on how you present yourself through your writing. Strive to make yourself look good by expressing yourself clearly and professionally.
- 6) Share expert knowledge: You may very likely have something valuable to share, so when the opportunity presents itself make an effort to share your knowledge.
- 7) Help keep flame wars under control: Avoid taking part in unnecessary exchanges of angry electronic messages.
- 8) Respect other people's privacy: Avoid sharing information that is not intended to be shared. Additionally, it's a good practice to consider all electronic forms of communication private. Do not read emails that are not addressed to you.
- 9) Do not abuse your power: If you are in a position that allows you to access information for professional reasons, do not use your access for any other reasons. Be honest.
- 10) Be forgiving of other people's mistakes: Try to avoid criticizing people who are still learning the basics of communicating electronically.

Netiquette Do's

- Write out all words (type "you" instead of "u") and use appropriate capitalizations.
- Always capitalize the pronoun I.
- Explain yourself clearly.

Don'ts

- Do not use smileys (also called emoticons).
- Avoid acronyms. Not everyone will know what the acronyms mean and this can block the flow of communication.

For example, not everyone knows what ROTFL (rolling on the floor laughing) means.

- Do not use all capital letters when you type. The use of all capitals in text is considered SHOUTING!

Work Week

The Academic Week begins on Wednesdays and ends on Tuesday nights at midnight, Eastern Time.

Time Zones: Seminars are listed in Eastern Time zone. If you are not sure how that works for you, visit the U.S. official time website at www.time.gov

Grades: Keep in mind that grades are not automatically generated for Discussion Boards, Seminars, or Assignments. Instructors must look these items over before assigning points, and may not post any grades for a unit until a few days after the due date.

Weekly Units: Focus on completing Assignments during the time scheduled for each weekly unit. Most instructors will not accept, or grade, work that is submitted early; many will post new information on Wednesdays when each new unit officially begins, so it is best to wait until all of the information is available.

Empowered Learning

Review “Critical Thinking in Three Words” and read about the qualities of empowered learners.

Critical Thinking in Three Words

According to Benjamin Bloom (1956) and David A. Sousa (2006) critical thinking entails steps that lead to your unique creativity. When you set aside emotional/reactive thinking your critical thinking skills can grow with consistent motivation allowing you to be a better creative problem solver.

Sousa’s newly revised Bloom’s Taxonomy explains the importance of learning through analysis/research, evaluation, and creativity as it has evolved with the vast discovery of knowledge of the learning brain during and since the publication of “Decade of The Brain” in the 1990s (Sousa, 2006)

Analysis/Research — In all instances, you look at information with a curious eye. You both consciously, or subconsciously, compare and contrast that information with your background knowledge to help you determine a motivation for further learning. It is in your best interest to consciously investigate information with which you are working. In order to accomplish this in the most complete fashion, you should further research information. This gives you the background you need to move up to the next level of critical thinking.

Evaluation — In this level you make a judgment call, a recommendation, a decision on a proceeding, and you base your moves on the knowledge that you have gathered from the analysis/research level. You can confidently take your stand because of your analysis and research.

Create — It is in this top level of the taxonomy, the highest level of critical thinking that you use, you use your unique creativity to move from another’s information to your own unique display of learning. It can be said that you take your learning and share it in a way that labels it as your own. You use your creativity in a multitude of ways throughout your days. At times it is as simple as finding a new way to solve a frustrating problem; in

other instances, it is an amazing creation from within — a portrait, a novel, a song, a musical piece, or an invention.

Becoming aware of the levels of critical thinking allows you to focus on using the strategies to insure that you creatively plan as you move through your days. The opposing force in your brain is in the Limbic Area where the amygdala (the “reactive” brain) operates in a constant fashion searching all stress-related items that may do harm to the individual. The purpose of “fight or flight” response is in your DNA. The way to reduce stress is to use your critical thinking brain. The more you use analysis/research, evaluation, and creativity the less power you give to the “reactive” brain” (the amygdala).

Qualities of Empowered Learners

As you begin your learning in Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional, it is important to identify the qualities of successful students (analysis) so you may identify your own, emulate others and choose (evaluation) to incorporate them into your life, and eventually make these qualities into your own (creativity).

There are a great number of qualities you can call to mind, and the more frequently you rehearse these qualities, styles, and strategies the more they become a part of you. Take time to look at each one listed here and add your own as well. Identify how each works to empower you as a learner. Envision each as a part of your personal identification. How do you apply it in your life and learning? How can each be used as a tool of success as you move along your educational journey?

Responsibility

Perhaps an easy way to define responsibility is that you know what you have to do and you do it. You do not make excuses or blame others; instead, you take charge and find ways to overcome obstacles and continue making progress. The goals you set are your own and you make them a priority in your life.

Self-motivation

Strong learners are motivated. They have a vision of the future, whether that is tomorrow or in 5 years. They consistently keep that vision in their critical-thinking minds. They see the measurements of success with optimism and setbacks do not trigger the reactive brain, but instead inspire the critical thinking brain to focus on creative problem- solving strategies. They put one foot in front of the other with consistency and a positive mind-set.

Self-management

Successful students are organized. They employ such tools as time management and critical thinking to manage stress and balance multiple responsibilities. They have a workplace, a calendar of study hours, and a stance that prioritizes their education. They

monitor their grades carefully and use communication with instructors as an important tool.

Curiosity

Successful students are curious. Curiosity is a form of wonder. Wonder encourages analysis and research. This engages the critical-thinking brain. Curious students are not content with just the information given but strive to discover more about the learning topic and to share findings with peers. They add to discussions by contributing ideas and insights that enhance the given information. They recognize enhanced knowledge allows for greater creative problem-solving in future situations.

Independence

Successful students are independent. They do not need anyone to push them along in their choice to educate. They make choices based on goals they set. They can complete their responsibilities with pride. As independent learners, students also recognize when they need to reach for support from provided university or outside learning sources. First Term Experience is our source for coaching. Our Writing Center and Math Center assist in their respective areas. Our instructors can also advise you in seeking support. Independent students do not procrastinate when they recognize the need to seek help.

Interdependence

Interdependence in successful students means working together. This brings peers, instructors, support, outside sources, and other “people” into their learning arena. They are team members, risk takers, problem solvers, quiet thinkers, brainstormers, and problem solvers. As they build relationships they are both networking and thriving in their own learning and the learning of others.

Self-Awareness

Successful students practice self-awareness throughout life and learning. They investigate things such as learning styles that are unique to them. They look for interesting assessments that allow them to see what their learning characteristics might be including their strengths and weaknesses. They look into things like their multiple intelligences, their personality identifiers; they even become acutely aware of when they see their reactive mind trying to run the show. They can stop, think, and then act using their critical thinking skills. Self-awareness also allows them to see through another’s eyes. They consider how the receivers of their words perceive meaning and they work toward understanding and balance in all areas of life and learning.

Emotional Intelligence

Successful students are aware and in control of their emotional intelligence. Your emotional intelligence originates with the amygdala in the Limbic Area of the brain. The

amygdala has the power to save lives in severe situations. It sends a multitude of messages through the brain to raise your respiration, your heart rate, to deliver blood to your extremities, to make you flee, attack, or sometimes even freeze. It takes the energy from your critical thinking to allow every other event to occur. This is all a good thing if you need to escape danger. It is not a good thing in your daily routines.

Emotional Intelligence means you are aware of your stress and work to reduce it by way of your critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills. Your emotional intelligence (the amygdala) can gather energy just like a freight train speeding out of control. If you do not take measures of self-awareness to stop it before that happens, you can experience intense rage or withdrawal. You lose your ability to think critically. Working with your emotional intelligence and keeping it in your control with the use of critical thinking will create strong strategies of success in your studies and life. The more you focus on the positive the less the amygdala plays a role in your daily life. Working with qualities such as self-belief, patience, kindness, caring, and sharing are just some of the ways to keep the critical thinking brain engaged and the amygdala quiet (Sousa, 2006.)

Challenge Activity

According to Alan Roper (2007), there are seven strategies that can help online students to have productive experiences. As your challenge in Unit 1, to further enrich your personal development as a successful online student, please carefully read and reflect upon the following online article:

How Students Develop Online Learning Skills - [7 Tips](#) from Successful Online Students (Roper, 2007).

Take time in this unit to identify strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them over and over because through repetition you establish habits of success. Do not forget, you may always share your thoughts in the Virtual Office or Discussion Board.

Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary – 7 words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is actually quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need in order to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication.

Therefore, the more words you are able to use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources can be found at Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day
(n.d.)

Vocabulary Words:

Pedagogue: Teacher or leader.

Acumen: Quickness of intellectual insight; keenness.

Inundate: Overload; cover completely.

Abate: Lessen; reduce; suppress.

Innocuous: Harmless; unlikely to offend or provoke.

Luminary: A person of eminence or brilliant achievement.

Propitious: Presenting favorable circumstances.

Activity:

- **Practice with vocabulary** by copying and pasting into your browser:

https://kapextmediassl-a.akamaihd.net/IST/CS114/2405E/u1_reading_quiz.pdf

*Note: For assistance or additional support for writing in the Discussion Board, go to the Academic Tools section of the course for useful tools and resources.

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology Professional

Unit 2 Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Time Management

Students today are very busy, and their lives are full of responsibilities such as work, taking care of family, home, school, and many other things.

Students also have social and personal commitments such as getting together with friends, playing sports, shopping, and watching TV. All of these are time consuming, and with just 24 hours each day, finding the time to get it all done is what time management is all about.

Writing a weekly schedule is an important step. Appointments and meetings are less likely to be missed, and projects for your classes can be scheduled so that there is plenty of time to ask the instructor questions and still hand them in on time. Plan at least a week at a time for the best results.

The Importance of Time and Stress Management

In the last unit, you learned how to successfully navigate the course and understand the course expectations and course policies.

Now that you have a solid understanding of how the online classroom works and what it offers, you are ready to begin the next step.

One of the most significant problems you may face as an online learner is dealing with the additional stress classes and studying place on you, your family, and your time. In this unit, you will learn how to manage your life stressors by using time management tools and strategies to plan, organize, and prioritize your daily activities.

Effectively managing your time and stress will help you achieve your goals. Mastering the art of organization will help you find success in all areas of life, including home, work, school, and in the community.

Understanding Stress

One thing that will assist you in managing stress is to understand its origin. Research in the 1990s worked to learn more about the brain and its natural rhythm of learning. That first 10 years is now known as The Decade of the Brain in academia. To simplify some of the findings, you will look at two general sections of the learning brain.

The amygdala — this structure is located in the limbic area of the brain. The limbic area is one of the oldest and first developing areas. It is in the mid-brain and houses several structures you may recognize — the hippocampus (long-term memory), the thalamus (sensory perception), and the amygdala (fight or flight). The amygdala is ancient. Its purpose from the beginning of time has been to protect against threats to survival. It has the power to send a multitude of messages through the brain to ignite fight (aggression) or flight (withdrawal).

In the prehistoric era, the threats to survival were more concrete — lions, tigers, and bears, to be exact. Today, after thousands of years of evolving, one of the most dangerous forms of a threat to the brain is stress in any one of its many shapes or forms. Everyone is aware of how ominous and detrimental stress can be.

When the amygdala recognizes a threat, the structure goes into survival mode sending messages throughout the brain that can block critical thinking and common sense thinking from occurring. The amygdala is that powerful.

Research also shows that the cerebral cortex, also known as the critical-thinking brain located in the forefront of the brain, can intercept messages from the amygdala in the early stages of its ignition and prevent the "freight train" of survival instinct from gaining so much speed. If the cerebral cortex is not trained to stop the amygdala early, the "fight or flight" instinct is increasingly difficult to stop through personal discipline. The most important thing you can learn from this bit of information is that the earlier the intervention occurs the better the chances are that stress can be managed. Stress will always be present in your life but you can keep it in control by using your critical-thinking brain.

There are two pieces of information that may help you to understand yourself better. One is that the amygdala matures at about ten months of age, and the other is that the critical-thinking brain matures at about the age of 24. It is so much easier to see why stress can rule when you understand that your brain learns best by repetition; the amygdala has plenty of years to refine its M.O. (modus operandi or mode of operation) to protect you. Everyone has been in a situation where they feel frightened and have the urge to fight or run. Sometimes, this reaction happens in a nanosecond.

One of the answers rests with the critical-thinking brain. Your job is to "work it" early in life and repetitively seek creativity through the most important step — analysis. The earlier you learn to think critically, the more automatically you will use these skills; again repetition, repetition, and more repetition. Therefore, you must analyze the situation causing stress and strategize. How can you creatively counter stress? From here, you

will look at the strategies that have been proven to help, especially the one you will focus on in this unit, time management.

To-Do Lists

A daily to-do list can help you organize your activities for the day. Prepare your to-do list each morning (or the night before), listing all the activities you wish to complete during the day, and cross each one off as you complete it. Completing everything you planned to do for the day can provide a great sense of accomplishment.

The Keys to Successful Planning

Be Realistic — Only put things on your list that you think you can accomplish. Keep in mind that there are limited hours in the day and a limit to your energy level as well.

Build in Extra Time for the Unexpected — Keeping your goals in mind and planning your activities accordingly are not enough. Many times, you will come across unexpected circumstances that can interfere with your plans and goals. If you schedule every minute of your day, there will be no allowances for emergencies or things beyond your control. For example, losing your keys, a flat tire, bad weather, or a family emergency are not things you plan for, but they can still take up your time.

Know Yourself — What is your most productive time of the day? Are you a morning person, or do you like to work into the late hours of the night?

Chunk Your Time — You know what takes up most of your day, whether it is your job, school, family, or friends. Put these at the top of your list and list other activities (unloading the dishwasher or cleaning the house) that can be done in between the others.

The Keys to Successful Planning — If you have a project due at the end of your course, start planning for it at the beginning. Do not wait until the last minute, and do not get lost in the daily assignments.

Dealing with the Demands of Others — You may be able to avoid some interruptions from friends, family, colleagues, or classmates, but realize that the people you live with deserve your time and attention too. Schedule some time for fun and relaxation with family for each day to avoid burnout.

Learning How to Say "No" — Say no to additional projects, responsibilities, and demands when you are already over-committed. Your willingness to say no will help you realize your full potential and achieve your goals.

Using Unexpected Gifts of Time — Use your time waiting at the doctor's office or on your hour-long commute to work wisely. You would be surprised how much you can read and do in only 10 minutes.

Time Management Tools

There are many time management tools that can help you prioritize your goals and schedule your time wisely to maximize the time you have available doing those tasks that are most important to you. Some of these tools are weekly planners, diaries, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and computer-based calendars. They can help you plan for intermediate and long-term activities. The critical factor in effective time management is being organized. Being organized means keeping your goals in mind and planning your activities to make them a reality.

Time Management Questions

The key factor in effective time management is being organized. Being organized means keeping your goals in mind and planning your activities to make them a reality. Careful planning should come before doing any activity. When you plan ahead, you should be considering questions such as:

1. What do you have to do?
2. What resources do you require to get the job done (for example, time, money, people, accessories, or information)?
3. Can you break down the activity into smaller, more manageable tasks?

You have now read about basic time management skills; next, you will read about stress management. The next section of the reading will cover stress management.

Stress Management

Stress is your body's reaction to pressure or other demands that are placed on you. There are two types of stress: good stress and bad stress. Good stress is referred to as "eustress," and bad stress is sometimes referred to as "distress."

Good stress is the kind of stress that keeps you motivated to work harder. Without good stress, you would not feel motivated to study for a test or go out to lunch with a friend you have not seen in a long time. Bad stress is the kind of stress that causes you to perform poorly at work, school, and home.

Stress Management Factors

There are many factors in your life that can cause you to stress. These factors are called "stressors." The amount of stress a person will experience is directly related to:

- The degree to which the stressor is present
- How the stressor is perceived

Think about how you feel when you are stressed out. Now, think about how those feelings might affect your ability to learn. As a student, you need to stay focused and on task. You also need to stay healthy so that you can attend your classes and stay in school.

Think about how the stressors in your life may interfere with your ability to learn.

Dealing with Stress

If you do not take measures to deal with your life stressors, they can influence you in many different ways. Some examples of the physiological and emotional effects of stress are chronic pain, isolation from friends and family, anxiety, and depression.

People deal with stress differently. Some people take a nap when things get rough, some people self-medicate by taking drugs or alcohol, and some even take their frustrations out on friends or family members. It is impossible to altogether avoid stress in your life, but you can find ways to deal with your stressors more appropriately.

However, in a recent study, Rudland et al (2020), found that eustress (good stress) can be good for learning. It all depends on how the learner interprets the stress, what their motivation is, their belief in their own ability to handle the stress, and their personality and coping strategies.

Steps of Stress Control

Practice the basics of stress control by following these three steps.

- 1. Become a time management expert.** Learn how to tell the difference between important obligations and trivial activities. Know how to manage your day so that you work to complete the most important tasks first.
- 2. Pay attention to your physical health.** Your mind and body work together to ward off stress. For your mind to cope effectively with challenges, your body must function at optimal levels. Take time to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.
- 3. Develop your relaxation skills.** Due to busy lifestyles, many people have actually lost the ability to relax and set aside everyday life demands.

The Time and Stress Management Connection

According to the Mayo Clinic article, "Time Management: Tips to Reduce Stress and Improve Productivity," you can reduce stress by improving your time management strategies (2014). Think about it! We all experience some amount of stress from time to time; this seems to be a natural part of life. However, when your stress levels become so high that they interfere with your daily functioning, this is something you should definitely be concerned about. Without a doubt, high levels of stress interfere with your peace of mind and your overall productivity. This is where time management can be an extremely valuable tool. By managing your time effectively, you can boost your self-esteem and confidence and sense of accomplishment. When you plan ahead and clearly identify priority items, you tend to accomplish more and feel better about

yourself. You become mentally stronger, which in turn leads to lower levels of stress. The connection here is clear and critical!

Remember the Amygdala

Be aware. Recognize when stress is showing itself. Analyze the situation. What might you do about it (use some of the strategies above)? Critical thinking begins with analyzing the situation. Decide what to do and then creatively do it. Refine your strategies as you monitor the degree to which they are working. Critical thinking is circular. Your learning is enhanced through the cycle of analyzing/researching, evaluating, and using creativity to problem-solve consistently.

II. Challenge Activity

Time Management Tips and Strategies

For your challenge in Unit 2 and to further enrich your learning strategies, take the time to search online for tips and strategies that will help you to manage your time and establish your priorities successfully.

Continue to make connections as you move from unit to unit. Begin by reviewing the Unit 1 Reading and put your critical-thinking skills of analysis and research into practice. Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them over and over as through repetition you establish habits of success.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different "tools" that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

[Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](#)

Vocabulary Words

Circumspect: Watchful; discreet; cautious.

Elicit: To draw out; to encourage.

Affable: Easy to speak to; gracious.

Malleable: Capable of being shaped; adaptable.

Paragon: Model of excellence or perfection.

Indomitable: Not easily discouraged or subdued.

Ameliorate: Improve; make better or more tolerable.

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology Professional

Unit 3 Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Learning Styles

You will identify your personal learning styles and study strategies while also recognizing the strengths and weaknesses that you bring to your college experience.

Being aware of the way that you learn best will help you succeed in school. Your ability to achieve your personal, professional, and academic goals is directly related to knowing how to use your learning styles to your advantage.

Different people have different ways of learning and retaining information. Some prefer to hear the information, some prefer to see the information, and some prefer to do it.

For example: If you had to put a bicycle together, what approach might you take?

Read the instructions?

Ask a friend to tell you how it is done (or read the instructions to you)?

Ignore the instructions and start putting it together?

A **visual learner** would read the instructions.

An **auditory learner** would want to hear how to put the bike together.

A **kinesthetic learner** would prefer to do it and learn while feeling or touching.

Knowing your learning style will help you to find strategies to retain and effectively utilize information. Most people use a combination of all three learning styles yet consider themselves to prefer visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning strategies. Think about it,

when you learn something new, do you like to see it, hear about it, or move around when you are taking in information?

The Right Style for the Right Task

Different tasks and circumstances may require you to use one learning style over another. For example, riding a bike. Would you prefer to read about riding bikes, listen to someone tell you how to ride a bike, or get on a bike and try it yourself?

For most, riding a bike is the kind of activity that requires "hands-on" training; therefore, you would need to attempt the task to learn it.

Another example is learning how to play an instrument. In this situation, you would probably need to use all three learning styles. You would need to see the notes to know what sounds to make, you would need to hear someone else play the instrument so you know how it should sound, and you would need to play the instrument to make your own music.

Three Learning Styles:

- A visual learner needs to see it to believe it.
- An auditory learner needs to hear it to believe it.
- A kinesthetic learner needs to do it to believe it.

Read about [learning styles](#).

Then, take the following [learning style quiz](#) that you will reference in your discussion. Did the results make sense to you? Were they helpful?

Once you identify the ways you learn best (note that it can be plural), you can modify your study environment and tailor your study experience to meet your learning style needs.

For example, suppose you are an auditory learner. In that case, you will most likely learn best by listening, you might find it helpful to record yourself reading your assignments and then listening to the recording afterward. Suppose you learn best by actively participating in the task, a tactile/kinesthetic learner. In that case, you might find it helpful to experiment with new activities to apply the information you have read. Of course, if you are a strong visual learner you need to see everything for the greatest clarity in learning.

TIPS: Visual Learners

Use organized or typed material such as images, diagrams, flashcards, and mind maps.

TIPS: Auditory Learners

Use memorization strategies, songs, and auditory repetition. Try tape recordings of notes, readings, and important topics. Use your verbal skills to reinforce information.

TIPS: Kinesthetic Learners

Use a combination of sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing. Try chunking or step-by- step processes for lengthy tasks. Use direct involvement and hands-on strategies.

Why Study Learning Styles?

Today, understanding personality and learning styles is increasingly important in all aspects of your life and relationships. Employers consider personality types when hiring; strong relationships are empowered by understanding personality types; and students can empower themselves and their learning styles by knowing the many facets of their styles and personality components.

As part of your reading this unit, you will not only discover some of your traits (for the Discussion Board content), but will also learn more about the many types of traits you have and the strategies you might use in realizing your best self. The better you know yourself the more effective you can be in life and learning.

Learning styles are offshoots of your sensory skills. If you are a visual learner, your visual sense is strong and transmits neurological messages to the brain. If you are an auditory learner, your auditory nerves do the work. If you are a tactile/kinesthetic learner, your sense of touch and spatial awareness help transmit the messages that allow you to learn. Your goal is life-long learning; the more you understand the process of learning the stronger it is.

To further expand your understanding of yourself as a learner, you will also determine your strongest multiple intelligences. There are so many to choose from. In looking at the top three multiple intelligences, you probably agree that they identify you as a person. Perhaps one is math/logical. Is that what underlies your entrance into the School of Business and Information Technology? Perhaps it is your strong interpersonal skills; information technology includes learning and understanding how it interacts with people.

As you continue your discovery, be sure to research the styles and traits behind the words. Knowing the types is only half the information. As you continue your growth in

understanding critical thinking levels, analysis is accompanied by research to move to level five and make an evaluation based on knowledge. You may find you have overlapping qualities as well (for example, your learning styles are split across the board — you are multi-modal). Use that as an advantage as you continue your learning.

Your next task is to use your information creatively!

Multiple Intelligences

According to Howard Gardner (2006), there are eight multiple intelligences. Here is a list that you can use to comprehend the intelligences and their meaning to you as individual learners.

- **Interpersonal:** If you have strong **interpersonal skills**, you are people-smart.
- **Intrapersonal:** If you have strong **intrapersonal skills**, you are self-smart.
- **Verbal-linguistic:** If you are **verbal-linguistic**, you are word smart.
- **Logical-mathematical:** If you are **logical-mathematical**, you are logic and math smart.
- **Naturalist:** If you are a **naturalist** at heart, you are nature-smart (science and math).
- **Visual-spatial:** If you are **visual-spatial**, you are picture-smart.
- **Bodily-kinesthetic:** If you are **bodily-kinesthetic**, you are hands-on or body and movement smart.
- **Musical-rhythmic:** If you are **musical-rhythmic**, you are music smart.

Multiple Intelligence Strategies

Everyone possesses all eight of the multiple intelligences; some are just stronger than others. Access [The Multiple Intelligence Classroom: Matching Your Teaching Methods With How Students Learn](#) to gather more information.

Here are a few of the intelligences and strategies:

If you are a verbal-linguistic learner:

- Write a story for a book or newsletter.
- Keep a journal.

If you are a mathematical/logical learner:

- Sort, categorize, and characterize word lists.
- While reading a story, stop before you have finished and predict what will happen next.

If you are a body/kinesthetic learner:

- Write on a mirror with lipstick or soap.
- Take a walk and read all the words you find during the walk.
- Handle a stress ball during a study session.

The Keirsey Temperaments

David Keirsey maintains that there are four observable temperaments or personality traits (Keirsey, n.d.):

- **Artisan:** Says what is, does what works.
- **Rationalist:** Says what is possible, does what works.
- **Guardian:** Says what is, does what is right.
- **Idealist:** Says what is possible, does what is right.

Myers-Briggs Personality Indicator (MBTI)[®]

Try to discern your personality type by reading the description below of the Myers- Briggs Personality Indicator. Four categories compose the Myers-Briggs Indicator which are on a scale with zero in the middle, extroversion on the right end, and introversion on the left side. Where would you score on the extroversion/introversion; sensing/intuition; feeling/thinking; judging/perceiving scales?

- **E** stands for extroversion, **I** stands for introversion: The focus, direction, or orientation of your behavior — outward or inward. Extroverted types will need to verbalize ideas to help them decide; introverted types need introspection to decide.
- **S** stands for sensing, **N** stands for intuition: This is how you gather information — S types tend to be detail-oriented, and N types tend to see the larger picture.
- **T** stands for thinking, **F** stands for feeling: This is how you make decisions — based on facts or logic versus based on people's feelings.
- **J** stands for judging, **P** stands for perceiving: This is how you react to the world. Do you like to keep your options open? If so, you are probably more on the P side of the scale. If you are a J, you probably like structure and like to know and plan out exactly what you will be doing at any one time. A perceptive type might prefer to schedule certain things, but keep some time open for the

unexpected. For instance, bank tellers would probably score high on the J side of the scale, whereas a performance artist might score higher on the scale's P side.

Why Is This Important?

The question now becomes why is this important? As you learn all about the many facets of personality and learning, you empower yourself to become a stronger, more unique person and problem-solver.

As you develop a greater understanding of your personality traits and strengths, you will also begin to understand why you respond to certain situations or people the way you do. You will very likely develop a much clearer picture of your outstanding abilities.

Businessballs (2021) states that the purpose for studying personality types "is also the key to unlocking elusive human qualities, for example leadership, motivation, and empathy, whether your purpose is self-development, helping others, or any other field relating to people and how we behave." (Introduction, para.2)

Most importantly, as you study styles and strategies, it is important to recognize the value of the individual. Each person brings qualities to the table and it will benefit you to be open and flexible as you work together.

You have the information; how do you use it? The most important part of learning is your personal creativity. As you analyze and research information, you begin to evaluate what you gathered and to turn it into your own product that can help you to become a stronger creative thinker and problem solver.

Most situations allow for a great number of possible solutions as you seek answers and ideas. Remain open to trying new strategies several times before making an evaluation. Offer your thoughts and ideas to others knowing that there is plenty of room for all kinds of creativity.

It is in your increased knowledge that you become motivated to learn more. In your knowledge about yourself, you find the value and worth that makes you stand up proud as you offer your strengths to the world around you.

Study Strategies

As you focus on becoming a stronger, more empowered learner, it will be important for you to consider your strengths and weaknesses in terms of your study strategies. Where do you excel? Where do you need to make some improvements? How can you make full use of your strengths as you focus on making improvements? Explore the following areas as you seek to know yourself better as a learner and thinker (Weinstein, 2016).

- Anxiety — How well do you deal with your emotions?
- Attitude — How does your attitude affect your daily performance?
- Concentration — Do you find that you are easily distracted or are you good at staying focused?
- Information processing — Are you good at remembering and retaining information or is this something you struggle with?
- Motivation — Do you find it easy to stay motivated and engaged or do you tend to lose interest in things easily?
- Selecting main ideas — Are you confident when it comes to selecting main ideas?
- Self-testing — How effective are your current self-testing strategies?
- Testing strategies — How effective are your current testing strategies?
- Time management — How well do you manage your time?
- Using academic resources — How efficient are your current study aids?

To determine your study strengths and weaknesses, take time to complete the Lassi Inventory, and explore the Lassi modules by following instructions included in the course's Unit 3 Assignment area.

Summary

In completing this reading section, you have now prepared yourself to complete your discussion topic. Be sure to continue (if you have not already done so) working with your activities.

Continue to question your strategies and to seek to enhance them. Continue to wonder and discover, as these are two critical thinking skills that promote learning and exploration.

II. Challenge Activity

Explore Your Multiple Intelligences

For your challenge in Unit 3 and to further enrich your learning strategies, carefully consider Howard Gardner's (2006) eight multiple intelligences summarized above, and select your top three intelligences based on what you have learned about yourself throughout your exploration of the learning styles. Challenge yourself to find different ways to put your strongest intelligences to work for you in school, at home, and in the workplace as well.

Continue to make connections as you move from unit to unit. Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them

over and over because, through repetition, you will establish habits of success.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy, it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees. However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different tools that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

[Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](#)

Vocabulary Words:

Audacious: Extremely bold; overbearing **Auspicious:**

Prosperous; promising success **Clandestine:** Done in secret; shady action **Munificent:** Very generous

Pejorative: Belittling; disparaging

Pernicious: Dangerous; deadly; destructive; extremely harmful

Plethora: Excessively large quantity; overabundance

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 4

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is your ability to understand and remember the material that you read; it is a skill that weakens if it is not used. For that reason, you need to learn and consciously apply the process involved in reading comprehension.

The purpose of this unit is to provide you with knowledge and skills to help you become more effective readers and note-takers.

In this unit, you will explore tips and strategies for improving your reading comprehension. Reading plays a major part in your life, whether reading the directions for installing a new Blu-Ray™ player to your TV, reading menus at a restaurant, or reading the textbooks for your courses.

Situations Where You Need to Read

During your college career and beyond, you will face situations requiring you to read books, articles, journals, documents, and website information for comprehension and content.

You might be asked to analyze and interpret the information in these reading materials and reflect upon them in written form.

Three Major Factors in Reading Success:

1) Motivation

You know that you will be more likely to remember information that interests you, and motivation is directly connected to that; however, you will not always be able to read information that is interesting unless you help make it so. You can turn your level of motivation on or up. Motivation is found in just wanting to learn, to get a good grade on

a test or project, or to complete the course and keep moving toward your career goals. Part of motivation comes from information that makes sense to the reader.

This is an important component of comprehension (the second level of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in Unit 4). There are times when you have to go backward to go forward. You need to return to the first level of learning (knowledge) and seek clarification of the subject. How can you understand something you cannot recall or remember? Once you feel comfortable with the information, you can push forward to comprehension (explaining it) and application (using it). It is not until you can accomplish those steps that you can move into the logical part of critical thinking (analysis). It is easy to see how motivation can break down when the reader cannot move up the taxonomy of critical thinking.

2) Concentration

Concentration is another major component of learning information (reading comprehension). Everyone has experienced situations where they read the same paragraph multiple times. You have to focus on what you are doing and intentionally concentrate. Factors that may affect your concentration can be your location, the time of day, your attitude, and your stress, along with so many other variables (Emerald Works Limited, 2021a). Your job is to be aware of your task and concentrate on accomplishing it in the most efficient and successful way.

3) Effective Reading Strategies

You have many tools to help you concentrate and enhance your motivation to get meaning from what you are reading. Effective reading strategies are found at the top of the critical thinking pyramid. They are creative ways to take you from the bottom to the top six levels of critical thinking.

Your reading strategies should reflect your preferred learning styles and always help to improve your reading characteristics. When you personalize your styles you energize your motivation and concentration. There are two types of strategies — reading and note-taking. Watch for the similarities and differences (analysis level) as you are introduced to different examples. Try as many as you can to see if you find more effective and efficient strategies than those you currently use.

Strategies and Tips for Reading Comprehension Highlight

what you think is most important:

If you want to fully understand what you are reading, reading it once is not enough. Highlight the main ideas and review them after you have read the entire piece.

Broaden your background:

Read newspapers, magazines, books, and professional journals. Become interested in current events, particularly those happening within your career field. This will help you build a stronger mental framework for ideas and concepts.

Create motivation and interest:

Discuss ideas with your friends, family, coworkers, and classmates. The stronger your interest in the subject, the greater your comprehension will be.

Strengthen your vocabulary:

Building your vocabulary is a long process, not an event that happens overnight; however, the more you know about the language, the more you will understand. Keep a dictionary handy and look up words that are not familiar, and consider keeping a log of professional vocabulary words so you do not have to look these up a second time.

Have a reading method:

A reading method can greatly enhance your understanding when the material you are trying to understand seems difficult.

What is a reading method?

A method is a structured way to organize your time and the material in your head (and perhaps in notes) as you complete a reading assignment.

The first step would be to have a pre-reading strategy. You need to first determine your purpose for reading. Are you reading for pleasure? If so, you probably do not need a method because the information you gather while reading for pleasure is only used for entertainment.

Are you reading to gain knowledge to help you complete an assignment? If so, having a method will help you structure your reading information so that you can apply it appropriately to your assignments. Is the reading for an assignment leading to a project, a response to a discussion topic, a test, or preparation for writing a paper? Your answer will help you determine what kind of information you need to find before you even begin reading and help you establish your assignment goals.

SRI (scan, read, interpret) is a good example of an effective reading method. It involves the following three steps (Loveless, 2024):

1. **Scan** — How is the information structured? Look for items that may be highlighted in color or appear in different styles. Look for main headings, check out graphics and illustrations, and get a general sense of what is in the reading. Think of questions you would like to have answered when you begin reading the

material. Scanning helps you focus your attention on the things that you need to gain from your reading. You can also then decide how you want to approach your reading. Do you need to chunk your reading into small bits and read each part at different times, or do you have the time to read your assignment all at once?

2. **Read** — Start at the beginning and read. Look for main ideas and the details that support them. Look for keywords and ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how. Find an appropriate reading speed (not too fast and not too slow). Of course, find a relatively comfortable place with good lighting and few distractions in which to read. **Consider taking notes** — you will read more about note-taking in this unit. How you approach reading can determine how successful you are in remembering what you read. Having a method in which you know your purpose, scan the material, and keep your concentration, gives you an active role while reading. You will find that you learn the information better when you have a method that works for you.
3. **Interpret** — Once you have actively read the assignment, take another look at it. (This part can be considered post-reading strategies). Did you learn what you set out to learn? Check main headings, the keywords, and the other items you scanned before you started the reading — does it all now fit into place? If something did not make sense, go back and read that part again. Repeat back to yourself what you learned. Can you summarize it? Could you teach it to someone else? How does it fit with what you already know? Think about how you might use this information in the future. Does it change your perspective or present information that is different than what you had known before? Answering these questions will get you thinking critically, which is the goal of reading.

In your critical thinking steps, you come upon the 4th level, which is called analysis or can be expanded to analysis/research. This, as you have learned, is where you will acquire the information required to justify your actions (your creative moves). This is the level where your research's strength and validity will help you move to the next level.

Justification (evaluation — the 5th level of critical thinking) cannot be based on opinion. Opinion must be based on fact to substantiate the claims you make. Your research is a vital part of that process. So, the question becomes what else you can use besides **SRI**, perhaps you want more.

More Reading Methods:

SQ3R: SQ3R is a very popular reading method that can be used with all types of reading materials. It involves the following five basic steps (1) survey, (2) question, (3) read, (4) recite, and (5) review (Robinson, 1970).

You will start by (S) surveying the reading material by noting the general organization and structure of the reading, identifying headings and subheadings, and pinpointing key ideas and important terms.

Next, you will create a few (Q) questions that will help guide your reading. Your questions should be related to what you know you need to gain from the reading. Think in terms of what you must do with the information once you are done reading. Will you be writing a paper, preparing to discuss it with classmates, or completing an exam?

You will then (R) read the material, keeping your questions in mind and possibly highlighting and taking notes as well.

Next, you will (R) recite by verbally summarizing the information or talking with others about what you have read and discussing possible answers to your pre-reading questions.

Finally, you will (R) review your notes and make sure that you have fully addressed all of your questions.

PORPE: PORPE can be a bit complex, but once you understand the basics it can be a highly effective reading method, especially when it comes to lengthy or complex reading assignments. It involves the following five steps (1) predict, (2) organize, (3) rehearse, (4) practice, and (5) evaluate.

You will start by first reading the material and then you will (P) predict what you need to know about the reading or retain for future reference. You will then (O) organize your thoughts into some written form, possibly an outline, chart, or mind map. Next, you will (R) rehearse by verbally summarizing the information or talking with others about what you have read and discussing possible answers to your predictions. Finally, you will (P) practice by answering your prediction questions in written form, and you will take time to (E) evaluate your responses.

KWL: KWL is another extremely popular reading method that can be used with all types of reading materials. It involves the following three simple steps/questions (1) **know** what you already know about the topic; (2) **want** — what do you want to know once you are finished reading? and (3) **learn** — summarize verbally or in writing what you have learned.

5 W's + H: This reading method is simple to use and certainly easy to remember. It is a great method to use when you need to retain several specific facts and a comprehensive overview of your reading material. It involves the following six questions:

(1) who?, (2) what?, (3) where?, (4) why?, (5) when?, and (6) how? You can use these questions to guide your reading and note-taking.

Read Intelligently

What does it mean to read intelligently? Intelligent readers are people who approach reading with a plan in mind. They have a clear idea of what they need to gain from the reading, how to get what they need, and what they must do if they run into obstacles.

Take some time to carefully consider the following habits of intelligent readers and focus on creating your own good reading habits!

Four Habits of Intelligent Readers:

- I.** Know how deeply to study reading material. Read for what you need!
- II.** Know what you want to gain or know once you are finished reading.
- III.** When you do not understand what you are reading, return to the knowledge level to seek clarification. Get the facts straight first!
- IV.** Use active reading strategies such as the following to help yourself stay focused and engaged: highlighting, underlining, taking notes, and mind mapping.

Note Taking Strategies and Tips

Choosing a note-taking method that corresponds with your learning style can help you study more effectively.

Visual learners benefit from seeing the important information by itself; **auditory learners** benefit from reading their notes aloud to themselves; kinesthetic learners benefit from writing, highlighting, or typing their notes. Studying more efficiently means saving time and energy, which can also result in stress reduction.

Now, you will look at the following note-taking styles:

Cornell Mapping, Charting, and Outlining.

Cornell System

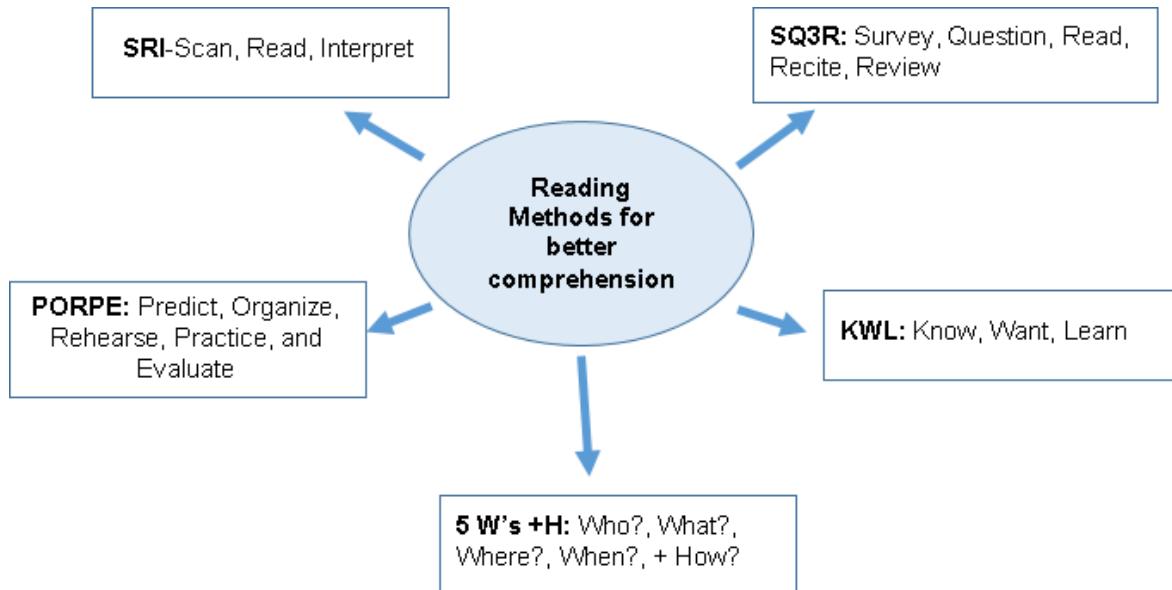
Cornell notes are easy to create and easy to use for studying. They can also be used for taking notes at meetings or organizing information at work.

The Cornell System originally devised by Walter Pauk (2010) in the mid-20th century while instructing at Cornell University, includes dividing the page into three main sections by drawing an upside-down T (Emerald Works Limited, 2021b). The resultant left column (of about 2.5" in width) is for cues or major topics. The right column (6") is larger to accommodate details related to the cues. A section across the bottom of the page (approx. 2" in height) is meant for a short summary of the page, or perhaps to hold source information (Emerald Works Limited, 2021b).

While taking notes from a textbook or article, it may be useful to write the details in the right column first and decide what cues are appropriate for the left column. Studying from Cornell notes can be easy. You can cover the details and then quiz yourself using just the cues.

Figure 1

Example Mind Map of Reading methods for Better Comprehension (Emerald Works Limited, 2021a).



Mapping is a visual representation of the information, showing relationships by the use of shapes, arrows, and lines. Taking notes in this style requires understanding these relationships before beginning to write, but the visual appeal may help you memorize certain kinds of information. Computer network diagrams are examples of mapping.

Charting

Some information, such as timelines and comparisons, can easily be placed into a chart. On the computer, it is accomplished using tables in Word® or by using Excel®. Charts can help you memorize categorized information for tests.

Outlining

Outlining is a method that focuses on main points, sub-points, and supporting details. The information in the main heading is general, and the subheadings are more specific. For example, the topic may be to tell what has influenced you as a person.

- I. Important people in my life
 - A. Family members
 - i. Mother
 - ii. Father

- iii. Grandmother
- iv. Brother

B. Favorite teacher

II. Important experiences in my life

A.

B.

II. Challenge Activity

Build Habits of Success

Building habits for success by using different strategies to improve reading and note-taking skills will serve you for life. For your challenge in Unit 4 and to further enrich your learning strategies, take time to explore the Internet for information on effective note-taking.

Apply these learning tools to your reading and note-taking to experience more enhanced learning. Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes and begin to use them over and over because through repetition, you will establish habits of success.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

[Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](#)

Vocabulary Words:

Candor: Honesty

Denigrate: Belittle; attack maliciously

Interminable: Seeming to have no end; never-ending

Resilient: Rebounding; returning to original form **Sedulous:**

Diligent, persevering, persistent **Unconsciousable:** Lacking
conscience

Vacuous: Empty, foolish, without substance, inane, purposeless

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 5

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading Effective

Writing

Although writing mechanics — spelling, word choice, sentence structure, subject/verb agreement, and the like — are certainly important to conveying your messages well, there is more to writing than just using correct English.

Everything that is written is done so with a purpose. You write a grocery list, so you do not forget to buy what you need when you go to the store.

Memos are written to tell you about something important at work. A diary is written to help the writer keep a record of the author's thoughts and actions.

Becoming an Effective Writer

Writing is often a challenging and frustrating experience; however, the ability to express your ideas clearly, carefully, and professionally will be important to you throughout your college career and in your chosen career field as well. You will read about the elements of effective writing, and you will learn how to construct powerful paragraphs. You will also visit the university Writing Center and learn about the university's plagiarism policy and how to avoid the pitfalls of plagiarism.

Purposes

Here is a list of some purposes you might have for writing:

Writing Purposes:

Inform	Explore	Explain
Entertain	Describe a process	Argue
Persuade	Evaluate	Analyze
Compare	Problem Solve	Express feelings
	Share an opinion	

Determine the Purpose

When you are given a writing assignment for school, you should first determine the purpose of the writing (other than to get a passing grade, another logical purpose).

Some papers will be designed for simple research, which may include informing, explaining, describing a process, etc. Position papers require that you persuade, argue, and analyze an issue. There can be more than one purpose for a paper. The more focused your purpose is, the better you can directly communicate your intention to your audience.

The Purposes or Modes of Writing

Narration ~ Narrative writing focuses on telling a story. Most of you have experienced narrative writing at some point because storytelling is natural and enjoyable. A narrative account will have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Short stories, personal discussions about real-life events, and fictionalized accounts generally use some form of narration.

Description ~ Descriptive writing focuses on presenting details. Much of your writing involves some description because this is how you paint a picture for your reader to see. Descriptive captions, personal journaling, and poetry generally include descriptions.

Comparison and/or Contrast ~ Comparison and/or Contrast writing focuses on relationships. Often, you might describe events or objects in terms of their similarities and/or differences.

Quite often, people use the comparative and contrasting method to highlight how something has changed or evolved over time. Essays, reports, and personal accounts include some comparison and/or contrast.

Cause and Effect ~ Cause and effect writing focuses on the actions or events that produce certain outcomes or effects. A writer can choose to begin with causes and lead to effects or use the opposite approach by beginning with the final outcomes and tracing these outcomes to their root causes. Essays, personal accounts, and many different types of reports will likely include cause-and-effect writing elements.

Exposition (Definition and Classification) ~ Expository writing focuses on providing explanations and information. Definition and classification are quite frequent components of expository writing. Much of the written material you use for your college classes would be considered expository writing. Encyclopedia articles, reports, course textbooks, informative essays, and research papers might all use exposition and/or definition elements.

Persuasion ~ Persuasive writing focuses on convincing the reader to accept a personal opinion or stance on an issue. Many newspaper and magazine articles contain

elements of persuasive writing. Effective persuasive writing contains many facts and examples that support specific points. Editorials, advertisements, and reviews generally use elements of persuasion.

Process Analysis ~ Process analysis writing focuses on the specific steps or actions necessary to create certain final outcomes. Process essays, instruction manuals, and recipes would all use elements of process analysis.

Please take time to read the following information regarding [Modes of Writing](#) (Purdue University Global Academic Success Center and Writing Center, 2018a).

Audience

Your writing audience is the person, or persons, who will read what you write. It could be a specific person, a general group, or people who fit a certain demographic (such as Macintosh users, online students, or people of a certain age bracket).

For coursework, your audience might be your instructor.

There are three major categories of professional audiences:

The Lay Audience has no prior knowledge or experience with your topic. They tend to understand the "human aspect" more than technical details.

The Managerial Audience tends to have some knowledge about your topic but may not understand or care about too many details. They would like to know how the information fits into the world around them.

The Expert Audience already supposedly knows the basics, so you can use more specific terminology in your explanations. When in doubt about which kind of audience you must target for an assignment, you should ask your instructor.

Form

To help you achieve your purpose and reach your audience, you must determine the most appropriate form. Different forms include, but are not limited to, lists, paragraphs, essays, reports, presentations, letters, memos, and e-mails.

Your choice of form is often determined by what is expected. A wedding invitation, for example, may not be well accepted if sent as plain text in a bulk e-mail, and presenting your final draft of a major project scribbled on restaurant napkins is not likely to earn you a passing grade.

The Writing Process:

Writing is not just a product; it is a complete process that involves prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing (Purdue Global Academic Success Center and Writing Center, 2018b):

Prewriting: In the prewriting stage, you should begin to think about your Assignment, determine your purpose and topic, analyze your audience, and begin brainstorming to generate ideas.

Drafting: In the drafting state, you should begin to put your ideas into paragraph or essay form. Think about ways to connect ideas and begin supporting main ideas with specific examples, illustrations, facts, etc.

Revising: In the revision stage, you should take another look at what you have written. Think about ways you might make your writing better, stronger, and clearer.

Editing: In the editing stage, you should double-check your spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Your main focus here should be careful proofreading.

Need Help with Writing? The following steps will help you see how to organize your time and energy in the writing process.

1. Start early and plan your time.
2. Carefully read directions: Read and re-read the assignment directions. Think critically about what is required, and ask questions if it is unclear.
3. Pick your topic: Will you have enough resources to do it well, or is the topic too wide and would be too hard to do?
4. Determine audience, purpose, and form
5. Research and evaluate resources: ensure that they are appropriate to use.
6. Stay organized: The following steps will help you see how to organize your time and energy in the writing process:
 - Take notes carefully: Write them in your own words right away. If you see something that looks like a good quote, write it down carefully, indicate that it is the author's words, and note exactly on what page it appears.
 - Organize your information with an outline.
 - Complete a rough draft: Write or type a "rough draft" following your outline. Do not assume your first version is your last.
7. Proofread three ways:
 - Writing mechanics: "Look at spelling, grammar, and sentence variety."
 - Overall organization: "Use your outline as a guide. Is this the best presentation, or do you need to make adjustments?"
 - Formatting: "Did you follow APA rules or other directions your instructor gave?"
8. Review Plagiarism Guidelines and check for proper in-text citation and reference entries.

Other Writing Considerations

- Strong paragraphs begin with a topic sentence to introduce the reader to the information contained in the paragraph.
- An occasional quote is fine, but writing your own words is always stronger.
- Do not add your opinion inside a summary or paraphrase; make it clear where the original author's thoughts end and yours begin.
- Sentence variety includes typically avoiding writing two sentences in a row that begin with the same word or words.
- Avoid adding unnecessary words or repeating information in different ways.
- If your paper is not long enough, revisit your outline and notes to see if another major section could be added. You may also have to do more research.
- Remember that all statistics, numbers, quotes, summaries, and paraphrases require in-text citations.
- Read comments from your instructor when you receive your grade, as you will learn much more from comments than the number of points earned.

Helpful Tools When Writing with Technology

One of the great things about using technology to assist you is the handy tools available in many popular word-processing programs.

Use the tools wisely to get help with spelling, grammar, and vocabulary. Just make sure to read your writing out loud or have a friend proofread it for you.

Spell Check

The spell-checker found on your word processor is a great tool, but like most tools, a writer needs to use it carefully. In Microsoft® Word®, misspelled words are shown with wavy red underlines, and you can right-click these words to find suggested correct spellings. The tool, however, will not catch misuse of “their” and “there” or the differences in meaning between “incite” and “insight” — some suggestions lead to words with different meanings.

Using your critical thinking skills when making spelling choices while spell-checking is important.

Here are some examples of misspelled words in Microsoft® Word®: “a

grat tool”

“wavy red underines”

Grammar Check

Another great tool is Grammar Check.

Similarly, grammar check has its limitations. Grammatically incorrect phrases and sentences are underlined with wavy green lines (some versions of Word might use dark blue). Still, it has been found that the grammar suggestions made too often change the meaning you intended to present. Use your critical thinking skills when deciding whether something indicated by green underlines needs to be changed.

Writing the Paragraph

Writing can be intimidating for many college students, especially adult learners who have not had to write essays or papers in quite a while. No matter what you are writing — a paper for class, a short story, or even a grocery list — you are putting pieces of your world together in new ways.

The paragraph is a basic building block to good writing. Knowing how to construct well-written paragraphs can help you answer that Discussion topic or write a final project. Here is one formula for writing a paragraph that you may find helpful. To

find out more about paragraphing, go to the Challenge Activity.

Types of Sentences

As you write paragraphs (Purdue Global Academic Success Center and Writing Center, 2018):

- Make sure, to begin with a clear Topic Sentence (a sentence that clearly indicates the main idea or topic of your paragraph)
- Include several Supporting Sentences and Details (sentences that develop the main topic and give examples and illustrations.)
- Concluding Sentence (a final sentence that summarizes the main point of the paragraph and clearly ties back to the topic sentence/main idea)

Topic sentence-

The main idea of your paragraph

Example: Studying online provides many benefits to students.

Supporting Sentences and details-

Gives more information/details about the topic sentence

Examples:

One of those benefits is that students can study and learn at their own pace. (Detail)
Courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Another benefit would be that no travel time or gasoline cost is involved in getting to class.

Concluding Sentence- Summarize the paragraph Example:
These two benefits, among many others, make online learning a great option.

Types of Sentences

Now, look at all types of sentences together.

Studying online provides many benefits to students. One of those benefits is that students can study and learn at their own pace. Courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Another benefit would be that no travel time or gasoline cost is involved in getting to class. These two benefits, among many others, make online learning a great option.

You can diagram this as:

1. Topic sentence: Main idea of the paragraph: Studying online benefits students.
2. Supporting sentences: Gives more information/ details about the topic. One of those benefits is that students can study and learn at their own pace. Courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Another benefit is that there is no travel time or the cost of gasoline involved in getting to class.
3. Concluding sentence: Summarize the paragraph: These two benefits make online learning a great option for many students.

Make sure to include all three types of sentences in the paragraphs you will be writing for this unit's assignment.

A Visual Strategy for Writing a Strong Paragraph ~ The Hamburger Model

For each person's visual learning style, here is a great way to remember the important components of a strong paragraph, as illustrated by the picture of a hamburger:



- The top of the bun represents your topic sentence.
- The burger and fixings represent your supporting sentences.
- The bottom of the bun represents your concluding sentence.

A Visual Strategy for Writing a Strong Paragraph ~ The Hamburger Model (continued)

Remember, you cannot hold a burger in your hands to enjoy its complete experience if you do not have the top or the bottom bun. Ensure you start your paragraph with a topic sentence to alert your audience to what they will be reading, give them the info, and then seal it all with the concluding sentence.

Paragraph Development: Beyond the Basics

Now that you have a clear understanding of the basic elements of a paragraph, it's time to start thinking about moving beyond the basics. There will be many occasions in your academic and professional careers when you will need to write for different purposes. Frequently, you will need to develop paragraphs that are more detailed and specific. In these cases, you will want to understand how to develop your ideas in more depth clearly.

Eleven Sentence Paragraph Outline

I. Topic Sentence:

A. **Supporting Sentence:** First reason or example that supports the main topic.

1. **Detail Sentence:**
2. **Detail Sentence:**

B. **Supporting Sentence:** Second reason or example that supports the main topic.

1. **Detail Sentence:**
2. **Detail Sentence:**

C. **Supporting Sentence:** Third reason or example that supports the main topic.

1. **Detail Sentence:**
2. **Detail Sentence:**

II. Concluding Sentence:

Revising Questions:

- Is the topic sentence broad enough to include all of the supporting sentences?
- Does each supporting sentence relate directly to the topic sentence?
- Do the detail sentences provide clear details about the supporting sentence?
- Does the concluding sentence sum up the paragraph?

Sample 11- Sentence Paragraph

- 1) The lives of online college students can be quite complex and challenging.
- 2) One of the first complexities online college students face is how to juggle school, work, and personal responsibilities.
- 3) There is no classroom that provides a separate environment for study, so online students must make sure to set strict boundaries at home.
- 4) Careful scheduling, prioritizing, and a firm commitment to educational success are all critical.
- 5) Yet another challenge many online students face is mastering the technical requirements of online education.
- 6) Although most students are familiar with computers, quite often, the technical demands of the online environment can be overwhelming.
- 7) In order to be successful, online students must find ways to quickly gain the technical skills they need in order to perform well in their courses.
- 8) A final challenge that many online students face is motivation.
- 9) Of course, it's easy to be motivated at the beginning of a term, but it can be hard to stay motivated and committed as the weeks go by.
- 10) Therefore, online students must be prepared to work extra hard to keep the momentum going by constantly refocusing and reenergizing themselves.
- 11) Although online students must deal with many different challenges and demands, online education is well worth all the work that goes into it.

Read about Plagiarism

Knowing what plagiarism is and is not is very important as you write your Discussion topic responses, project responses, and papers. Go to the Academic Tools area in the course and select the “Writing with Integrity” document. Then, choose and read Plagiarism FAQs (Purdue Global Academic Success Center and Writing Center, 2018c).

Check your knowledge by taking a [plagiarism self-test](#) (this is not graded):

The Writing Center (see Academic Tools, then Academic Success Center) can help you with all sorts of writing questions and instruct you about how to avoid plagiarism.

The Writing Center offers four types of support: you can chat with a live tutor online, submit a question to a tutor, visit the writing reference library, and submit a paper for feedback. Keep these valuable resources in mind as you receive Assignments in classes for which you might need help. Visit the Writing Center link to find out when the Writing Center is open for service. You will return to these pages throughout your education as they provide valuable material on many aspects of the writing process.

II. Challenge Activity

The university’s Writing Center is an amazing support for you as a student. Read about [Paragraph Development](#).

Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them over and over because, through repetition, you will establish habits of success. Do not forget you may always share your thoughts in the Virtual Office or the Discussion Board.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary – 7 words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is actually quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need in order to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication.

Therefore, the more words you are able to use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

Access [Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day) (n.d.).

Vocabulary

Assiduous: Unremitting; constant. **Guileless:**

Honest, straightforward, not sly. **Indolent:** Lazy; sluggish.

Pragmatic: Practical; realistic; sensible.

Maladroit: Clumsy, bungling.

Mundane: Worldly as opposed to spiritual; commonplace, everyday

Recalcitrant: Stubbornly resistant to and defiant of authority or restraint.

Activities:

- [Practice with the vocabulary](#)

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 6

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading Critical Thinking

When you think critically, you evaluate all the available information, decide what is true or not, and make your own decisions about what you believe. In order to think critically, you must have the ability to use logic and reason. You must also be able to evaluate whether the information you receive is based on fact or opinion (Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2013).

Everyone uses logic each day. When you are cold, you decide to put on a sweater. When you are tired, you decide to go to sleep. With every decision you make, there is a logical order of steps in the thinking process that you can follow.

Applying Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an important part of being a successful student. Learning how to use logic and reason will give you the ability to evaluate information effectively, make decisions on where you stand on important issues, and help you support your own arguments. This will become increasingly important during seminars, when posting to the discussion board, and while completing assignments.

Four Steps to Improve Your Thinking (Foundation of Critical Thinking, 2013)

Step 1. Clarify your points

- Look for specific facts and truth.
- Do not agree or disagree with someone (author) unless you fully understand the information you have been given.
- Ask or look for examples to help you understand.
- Summarize and see if you can explain it to someone else clearly.

Step 2. Stick to the point

- Do not stray from the main focus of the conversation or topic.
- Keep your mind from wandering to related and then unrelated topics.

- Ask yourself how the smaller bits of information connect to the main focus of the conversation.

Four Steps to Improve Your Thinking (Foundation of Critical Thinking, 2013) (continued)

Step 3. Question Questions

- Do not just accept information — question it.
- If you do not understand something, ask questions.
- Think of what information you really need — have you asked the right questions?
- Can you look at the information from another point of view?

Step 4. Be Reasonable

- Be willing to listen and change your mind (It is okay not to be perfect).
- Identify language that might not be reasonable.
- Avoid becoming defensive or irritated.
- Be open to other points of view.

The Value of Critical Thinking

When you think critically, you evaluate all the available information, decide what is true or not, and make your own decisions about what you believe. In order to think critically, you must have the ability to use logic and reason. You must be able to analyze the given information and research it for validity. You must also be able to evaluate whether the information you receive is based on fact or opinion. Taking further creative action on the information and evaluating your final decision or action uses all of the components of critical thinking.

When you look at something logically, you begin the process of analysis. You use this logic every day in every part of your life. If you are cold, you put on more clothing; if you are approaching a situation that might be dangerous, you move in another direction.

When you choose to eat a food a second time, it is because you have run an evaluation on its taste and decided that you liked it enough to eat it again.

Many areas of life, including your schooling, require that you stop and think; you become aware of the process of critical thinking and apply it to your daily life with purpose. This is a major component of the successful student. Using logic and reasoning (both critical thinking skills) will give you the ability to make decisions on where you stand on important issues and help you to support your arguments (The Foundation of Critical Thinking, 2017). You will see the importance of critical thinking as you engage in seminars, on the discussion boards, and in writing your assignments.

Gathering data to support your statements makes all the difference in the world when it comes to sharing your creativity, as your validity has now been enhanced by research.

Critical Thinking in Academia

In college, you are expected to do more than just read the material that is presented; you are expected to read it, think critically about it by analyzing/researching, evaluating it, and finally creatively using it in your own unique way.

Critical Thinking in Academia (continued)

Although identifying statements as fact or opinion is part of critical thinking, it is only the beginning. Critical thinking is really an ongoing process of recalling, understanding, applying, analyzing, making judgments, and creating your own new thoughts or ideas.

For example:

Frank tells his sister Cathy that her car needs servicing. She questions that her car really needs it, so she decides to take it out for a drive.

She notices a few odd noises and that the brake pedal is not as tight as it used to be. Realizing these are new problems, she takes the car in for servicing.

Critical Thinking in Academia (continued)

Take a look at the six levels of critical thinking as proposed by Dr. Benjamin Bloom. Dr. Bloom's work (1956) and the power of his theory remain in full use today. In 2001, a team of educators proposed a revised taxonomy, which you will also view in this Reading (Airasian, et al., 2001).

The taxonomy is hierachal (Bloom, 1956). This simply means you must achieve mastery on the first level or step before you can successfully proceed to the second level or step and on up to level six, the highest level of critical thinking.

Step One is called Knowledge. This simply means you can recall something you know about the subject matter at hand. Apply this to Cathy as you continue. Cathy has plenty of prior knowledge regarding how a car should work correctly.

Step Two is called Comprehension. This means you can explain the information with which you are working to someone without struggling. Explaining is comprehension. Seeing that Cathy is very comfortable with her car, she can explain her properly working vehicle to someone or question concerns regarding her vehicle.

Step Three is Application. Application simply means to do it or use it. Cathy drives her car daily. She applies all she knows to the driving of her car.

Now, Frank, her brother, tells her he thinks something is wrong with it. She, therefore must move up to level 4 in the critical thinking hierarchy.

Step Four is Analysis. Cathy now needs to compare the information she knows to the newly proposed information; her car needs repair. Cathy needs to analyze the situation to determine if Frank's suggestion is correct; her car needs service. She needs to research necessary applicable information relating to her car and her understanding of a car in good condition versus a car needing repair. If she goes

Critical Thinking-Step 4 (continued)

on Frank's opinion alone, she is not truly using all of her critical thinking levels and skills. Perhaps she will engage the service garage in an assessment on their part.

Perhaps she will investigate pricing at several places. She may even investigate trading her car in for a newer model.

Step Five (in the original Bloom's Taxonomy) is synthesis. This refers to gathering all information and creating your new plan.

Step Five (in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy) is evaluation and guides you to make an assessment of the situation based on the information gathered from your analysis and research. There is a great deal of neurological movement through many areas of the brain during the top three levels of the taxonomy, so keep in mind that you really do move between them all as you come to your final creation, which is the ultimate goal of critical thinking.

Therefore, you evaluate, make a decision, recommend, and debate a topic or decision based on the data you have collected. Cathy is now ready to make her decision as to what to do about her car, if anything. Based on the information you have been given here, you do not yet know what her decision will be. You do know that because of the time and effort she put into her decision, it will be her own decision, her own piece of the final creation (Airasian, et al., 2001).

Step Six (in the original Bloom's Taxonomy) is evaluation. As you can easily see, the revision simply switches the top two levels and renames synthesis as Create. The justification for this is found in the article referenced (Airasian, et al., 2001).

Step Six (in the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy) is create. Create is the top level of critical thinking, in which you take all of your thinking and turn it into your own production (whatever that might be). This vast array of possibilities is what create is all about. In the real world, it is as simple as taking a recipe and switching ingredients to please your palate. It can be as wonderful as the composition of a symphony. It can be so quick that you do not even recognize that you are at the create level of critical thinking. The more you engage in full critical thinking, the more rapidly and easily you create in your own fashion. Whenever you solve a problem, you are at the create level. Whenever you do something new, you are at the create level. Some verbs that alert you to this top level of critical thinking include create, design, develop, formulate, invent, write, visualize, and

predict. Anything you do in the creative problem-solving arena is considered at the top of the critical thinking hierarchy.

Now, Cathy can make her own decision with full confidence that it was the correct decision. If, after choosing her way, she decides she is not happy with her creative decision and action, she will return to the drawing board the next time she has an automobile question or problem ahead of her. She will restart the process of analyzing, researching, evaluating, and creating her solution. You will revisit this process as you continue to strengthen your critical thinking skills, learning from your previous actions that did not come to fruition the way that you hoped that they would.

Critical Thinking- Bloom's Taxonomy refers to the process of analyzing, researching, evaluating, and creating solutions. You will revisit this process as you continue to strengthen your critical thinking skills, learning from your previous actions that did not come to fruition the way that you hoped that they would.

One of your greatest goals in life and learning should be continued engagement at the top level of critical thinking as much as humanly possible. By doing so, you will establish not only a habit of success but also the engagement and empowerment of the critical thinking brain (cerebral cortex) and the de-escalating of the emotional/reactive brain (the amygdala), giving you the greatest opportunity for balance and excitement in life and learning.

Research and Evaluation

It is important for you to know the difference between reliable sources of information and unreliable ones. A good way to increase your chances of finding reliable sources of information is to use academic and/or professional search engines. One such resource is the university's Library. Take a few minutes to visit the Library by selecting "Academic Tools" in the Content area of the course. Search the right-hand navigation bar for the Tips, Tricks, Handouts, and the Help section. View helpful video tutorials included in this area.

There is a lot of valuable information on the Internet as well; however, there is also a lot of false information, opinions, inferences, and assumptions to watch out for as you are reviewing online sources. When researching online, you need to be able to discern which sites are "legitimate" and reliable sources for academic work.

Step-by-Step Research on the Web

The following step-by-step presentation shows you crucial tips for finding information online.

General Tips:

- Use keywords
- Do not use full sentences
- Do not worry about capitalization
- Spelling counts
- Narrow it down

General Tips (continued)

In the following presentation, you will see specific tips and techniques for "narrowing it down."

Scenario:

Why are you using the search engine?

In this scenario, you live in Hays, Kansas, and need to get your computer repaired. You have a PC, not a Mac®.

How do you find the information you need?

Narrowing Your Search: Part 1: Put phrases in quotes:

If you are looking to repair your computer, you would likely type in computer repair. The search engine assumes you are looking for any site with the word computer and repair. Narrow it down by typing the phrase with quotes: "computer repair"

Result: The search engine will show you just the sites with the phrase (where both words occur side-by-side) "computer repair."

Narrowing Your Search: Part 2 Use + to require something:

+hays +Kansas

Result: Only sites with Hays and Kansas will then be listed. (Note: Capitalization is optional.)

Narrowing Your Search: Part 3 Use - to cut out something:

-Mac

Result: Any site with Mac repair will then be eliminated.

Narrowing Your Search: Part 4 Combine commands: "computer repair" +hays

+Kansas -Mac

Important Note: Do not place spaces after the + or -, only between terms.

Result: Sites with the phrase, computer repair, and the words, Hays and Kansas, but not the word, Mac.

Narrowing it Down: Sample Searches

Sample Searches at Google.com®:

The sample searches below illustrate how using the tips from this presentation will help you narrow down your results to those that are important to you.

Narrowing it Down: Sample Searches (continued)

All of the results below are approximations of current Google search results. computer repair = 16,800,000 results

“computer repair” = 9,090,000 “computer repair” +hays = 9,670

“computer repair” +hays +Kansas = 1,130 “computer repair” +hays +Kansas -mac = 458

Other Sample Searches

“baseball tickets” +Cubs +Wrigley +September
= 4,480 results

“computer chair” +delivery -leather
= 31,600 results

Sometimes, you need to consider adding keywords or finding alternative ones, or you might just need to take the time to look through the first few pages of results of these longer lists.

Many search engines have advanced search options which can be of help as well.

Academic Resources

You will find many excellent academic resources in the library. There is a direct link to the Library located in the Academic Tools area of your course. Check it out!

Please see the Course Resources area of the classroom for information on search engines, online web searching techniques, and website evaluation strategies.

Appropriate Sources

The university does not allow the use of Wikipedia™ or other Wikis because these resources can be edited by anyone. Blogs and chat rooms may offer information for practical use, but are considered conversation and, therefore, not appropriate for research papers.

Applying Critical Thinking

You have just learned to find online resources. Now, look at how to make use of your critical thinking skills as you determine which sources are worthwhile.

Evaluating Information

Once you have located information, the next step is to determine (using your critical thinking skills) whether or not the information is appropriate to use. Visit the following website to read about the importance of thinking critically using the [five W's](#) (Schrock, 2001-2016) as you evaluate online sources:

The Five W's

Use the 5 W's: Who, What, Where, When, and Why while evaluating resources.

The Five W's (continued)

Carefully consider the following items (described in more detail at the site listed on the previous page) as you evaluate online sources:

Authority (Who): Who is the author or sponsor, and what are his/her credentials? Did the author/sponsor provide contact information?

Accuracy (Where): Where did the information come from? Are there citations and links to other websites?

Objectivity (What): What is the purpose of the site (inform, entertain, persuade, advertise, etc.)? Is the discussion fact-based or opinion-based?

Currency (When): When was the site originally created? Has it been recently updated? Are the links working?

Coverage (Why): Why is this site worthwhile? Is the site easy to navigate and does the information seem logical?

Important Definitions

Tip: The following definitions will help you understand important concepts of critical thinking such as logic, fact, and opinion (The Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2013).

Fact or Truth: A statement that can be proven true.

Example: Many research studies have proven that “women live longer than men.” This statement can be proven true.

Inference: Arriving at a conclusion based loosely on facts that are known or assumed to be true.

Example: Upon seeing a woman carrying a briefcase at 8 am, you could infer that she is going to work. This may or may not be true.

Assumption: Taking the information for granted, supposing it is just how it should be.

Example: You can assume that since Bob was hired as a computer expert, he will know the answers to your questions. This may or may not be true.

Conjecture: Guessing or making predictions based on incomplete information; it has not been proven.

Example: There is life on other planets. This may or may not be true.

Opinion: A personal judgment or shared belief; an attitude or viewpoint that may or may not be true.

Important Definitions (continued)

Example: Some people believe that Macs are better than PCs. While some will agree and others disagree, a final agreeable truth will not be possible.

Value: Something desired by a person or group of people.

Example: Teenagers should watch less television. The word “should” is a clue in this statement; while some agree and others disagree, a final agreeable truth will not be possible.

II. Challenge Activity

You can never learn enough about the power of critical thinking. As your challenge in Unit 6 and to further enrich your learning strategies, go to the Internet and do a search for “How good are your critical thinking skills?” (Chartrand, 2014).

Apply these learning tools to decision-making to realize stronger, more enhanced learning. Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them over and over, as through repetition, you will establish habits of success. Do not forget that you may always share your thoughts in the Virtual Office or Discussion Board.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary – 7 words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees. However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is actually quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have

to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need in order to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you are able to use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

Access [Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day) (n.d.)

Vocabulary

Apogee: The highest point **Caveat:** A

warning or caution **Diatribute:** A bitter

verbal attack

Reticent: Inclined to keep quiet; reserved; restrained

Sanguine: Optimistic; cheerful

Vagary: An extravagant, erratic, or unpredictable notion, action, or occurrence; a whim

Veracity: Truth; truthfulness

Activities:

- [Practice with vocabulary.](#)

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 7

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading: Goals

Why Set Goals?

Having a clear direction for your future and a picture of your plan is extremely important for maintaining a positive attitude. Clear goals are key to creating and maintaining a positive mindset, even when things get tough.

Qualities of Goals

For goals to be useful, they need to have the following qualities:

- The goals that you set for yourself must be based on your values and beliefs.
- No one else can choose goals for you. Others can make suggestions, but you must "own" your goals for them to be useful.
- You must decide what you want to achieve.

Goal Setting and Planning

In this unit, you will be focusing on goal setting and planning. To set realistic goals for yourself, you must first understand what is important to you. You will also begin planning for your next project by setting up an interview with a professional in your chosen field. You will be investigating the power of setting goals. You seek to recognize the importance of goal setting and apply this **S.M.A.R.T.** concept to your interview, leading to the completion and submission of your assignment in Unit 8. Goal setting will assist you and motivate you to reach for success.

Why is Goal Setting Important?

Imagine you decide to build a house. You do not bother with setting any goals for its completion. Wow! What a mess.

Imagine you want to be a doctor when you grow up but never thought you needed to take a science class in high school or did not even plan on going to college.

Goals Motivate

Goals stimulate your creativity. You use one of the best creative words possible — you visualize. When you engage in visualization, you are on the top step of Bloom's Taxonomy (revised) and you are fully engaged in critical thinking. Without goals, you will not achieve that visualization.

Goals Guide

Goals are set to lead you as you move from beginning to end. They carry you along your way.

Goals Inspire

Goals help you to recognize that you are the creator of your own stories. You can achieve anything that you want to achieve with the inspiration you will get from goal setting. You will take things one step at a time and with each step you feel the power of completion.

Goals Challenge

If not for the challenge involved in accomplishing a goal, you would not get past the first step. Goals do not have to be extremely hard to reach, and they should not be too simple either, as there is no challenge in that. You reach when you set goals. You want that object, job, or future that is just out of reach.

Goals Empower

To empower others and yourself in positive ways is the greatest accomplishment. Feeling the inner strength and conviction of empowerment as you achieve the goals you set is a rewarding experience — a truly intrinsic reward. Setting goals brings you closer and closer to your ultimate destination.

You will focus on goal setting and planning. Remember, you want your goals to be realistic and achievable. There are many components of goal setting to consider as you begin to enhance this process for your growth and success.

What Kinds of Goals Can You Set?

Consider the different areas of life as suggested by [Mindtools.com](https://www.mindtools.com) in their Goal Setting Toolkit (Emerald Works Limited, 2021b). **Note:** *This website may collect student information, so you are not advised to access this website.*

The areas are creative, approach, career, learning, family, financial, physical, enjoyment, and public service.

What are some of the questions you might ask yourself about these different areas? You might say you want to be more physically fit. You might say you want to go on

vacation to Disney World next summer. How about asking what you can do to make the world a better place? What do you want to be when you grow up? How is your attitude? Are you hungry for learning? Do you want to earn more money? You could go on and on setting goals in any of these areas.

Therefore, you should choose to be a goal setter. Why? How are goal setters different from people who do not think about their future and their desires?

Goal Setters

People who set goals for themselves are more likely to:

- Suffer less stress and anxiety
- Concentrate and remember better
- Demonstrate greater self-confidence
- Perform better and achieve more
- Be happy and satisfied

According to a study by Locke and Latham (2002), specific moderate-highly difficult goals coupled with feedback resulted in higher performance (as cited in Robbins & Judge, 2019).

So make sure your goals are very specific (see S.M.A.R.T. goals later on in this reading) and that you must stretch yourself a bit to attain them. Feedback can be in the form of colleagues' or family members' feedback, or it can be a grade, degree, certificate of completion, etc.

Now, you see a strong purpose for goal setting. Results help deliver balance, contentment, and more desire to grow; now, take some time to write down and brainstorm what you would like to see happen in the various areas of your life. Get your thoughts flowing; what do you hope to accomplish in the near future? How about in the distant future?

Relationship with Time

Most people have dreams and goals for various aspects of their lives. You can have personal, educational, professional, financial, and community-service-based goals. The length of time you have to achieve your goals is important in determining how you can approach them.

Short-Term and Long-Term Goals

Short-term goals are generally attainable within a short time (days, weeks, or months). Examples might be losing weight, getting a new computer, or asking for a promotion at

your current job. You need to plan how to attain these goals, but you can see the results soon.

Long-term goals are those that may take years to complete. Starting your own information technology business or saving enough money for retirement are examples of long-term goals; you need to think and plan well ahead to accomplish these.

Your degree program is likely to fit in between those periods. Although you are working on your degree now, you will be in school for several terms to learn the things you need for your career. Your university degree is an important stepping-stone towards your long-term goals.

Being Realistic: Performance Versus Outcome Goals

Outcome goals are those that concentrate on the end result. Did you get the job? Did you invent something new? Did you complete the task?

Performance goals, on the other hand, concentrate on the path leading you to the result. Even if you did not get the job, you put your resume together and practiced interviewing. Even if you did not invent something new, you discovered small things that could be put to use later. Even if you did not complete the task, some of the steps you took accomplished something of value.

Performance goals are much more realistic than outcome goals and provide you with more control.

Getting to Where You Want to Go

How can you get to where you want to go without knowing the destination or how to get there? That would be like getting into your car and just driving without a purpose. If you do not know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.

To learn, grow, and change, you need to set goals for yourself. It is very important that your goals be realistic enough for you to achieve them.

- **Set priorities**

When you have several goals, give each a priority. This helps you avoid feeling overwhelmed by too many goals and directs your attention to the most important ones.

- **Write it down**

When you write your goals down, it gives them more strength, and it gives you more perseverance.

- **Keep operational goals small**

Keep the low-level goals you are working toward small and achievable. If a goal is too large, then it can seem that you are not making progress toward it. Keeping goals small and incremental gives more opportunities for reward. Derive today's goals from large ones.

- **Set performance goals, not outcome goals**

Set goals over which you have as much control as possible. Nothing is more disappointing than failing to achieve a goal for reasons beyond your control.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Whether short, intermediate, or long-term, every goal you plan should be **S.M.A.R.T.** (Emerald Works Limited, 2014a).

[S] Specific

What do you want to accomplish? Your goal needs to be specific enough to be able to determine what actions are required to achieve the desired result.

[M] Measurable

How will you know you have reached your goal — what marker or milestone will identify success? Remember, performance goals will provide better control than outcome goals, so it is best to measure the steps along the route to your destination.

[A] Action-oriented

What exactly will you do to reach your goal? You will need to take a proactive stance. Some sources say “A” stands for “aggressive,” or working with purpose and diligence towards your goal.

[R] Realistic

A goal must be achievable. Have you researched it enough to know that it is possible? Do you know someone else who has accomplished this goal? Goals set too high may be discouraging, but setting the bar too low will not provide motivation.

[T] Timed

Each goal must have some sort of deadline. Some flexibility may be necessary, but deadlines help keep you motivated and focused toward completing your goals.

Five Principles of Goal Setting —(Emerald Works Limited, 2014a):

Clarity — make sure your statements are clear and easy to “see” and understand.

Challenge — your goals should challenge you to succeed. They are meant to be motivational. Are they important to you? How badly do you want to succeed?

Commitment — you should be committed to what you say you want and what you want to achieve. Keep it in your mind’s eye. Move consistently toward its completion. Write down why this is a valuable goal for you.

Feedback or revision — it is important to monitor success through all steps of S.M.A.R.T. goals. There are points when changes to wording or timing may be necessary. Understanding the value of revisiting the written word often helps to keep you on course. Be sure to investigate and research further on goal setting and especially on S.M.A.R.T. goals.

II. Challenge Activity

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals

S.M.A.R.T. goals are an excellent way to keep on track and achieve success; however, what happens when you look to surpass S.M.A.R.T. goals and go for the even S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals?

For your challenge in Unit 7 and further enrich your learning strategies, take some time to review the following S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals to enhance your learning and application of creativity. Do not forget to memorize the acronym and each of its letter meanings. Who can you inspire with your newfound knowledge?

[S] Specific — Define it! Make sure to clearly define your goals to know exactly what you are trying to achieve. The clearer your picture of what you are after, the more likely you will be successful.

[M] Measurable — Measure it! Finding some way to track your progress while working towards a goal is very important. One way to stay inspired is to see your progress.

[A] Action-oriented — It is all in the actions! You must make sure to tie your goals to specific actions or steps. If you fail to do this, you simply will not make progress. No action = no progress! Try to come up with as many specific actions as you can to make progress.

[R] Realistic — Reasoned

Be honest! Be honest and straightforward with yourself as you set goals and make sure you are setting your sights on meaningful achievements for you and that are within your reach.

[T] Timed deadlines rock! Deadlines can be great motivators, so make sure to keep yourself moving forward by setting a schedule and making sure each action item is tied to a proposed completion date. You can always adjust your schedule if necessary.

[E] Ethical, Exciting, and Enjoyable

Get excited! Goals should excite, energize, and pull out the very best in you! If your goals are not a good “fit” with who you are or what you believe in, you will most likely not achieve them. Think E.E.E.: ethical, exciting, and enjoyable.

[R] Resourced Plan to invest! Remember, you must plan to invest something into your goals. Your investment might be your time, your hard work, and even some of your hard-earned money. Think about what you must put into your goals to make them a reality.

Apply the learning tools and information to your goal setting. The more frequently you use the strategy, the easier it will be to use it more frequently. Continue to make connections as you move through your assignments. Search for the strategies that you find most helpful to your learning and thinking processes. Begin to use them over and over because, through repetition, you establish habits of success.

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication.

Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add one new word to your vocabulary daily? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even a year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

[Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](#)

Vocabulary Words:

Aberrant: Deviating from normal or correct

Abstruse: Difficult to comprehend; obscure

Catalyst: An agent of change; a person or thing that causes change

Contentious: Argumentative; combative; quarrelsome

Obfuscate: To make obscure or unclear **Sanctimony:**

Self-righteousness; hypocritical

Supercilious: Disdainful; characterized by haughty scorn

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 8

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Networking for Career Success

Networking is another stepping stone to taking control of your goals for your future. In the modern world, in fact, networking is becoming more and more important as we are seeing the amazing growth and popularity of many online networking avenues such as Facebook™, MySpace™, X™ (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn™, to name just a few. Most of us are becoming quite familiar with social networking; however, the kind of networking that will be especially important for your future success is professional networking.

When we talk about professional networking, we are talking about the relationships that you are building with people who can somehow contribute to and support your academic and career success. Maybe your current supervisor realizes that you are taking online classes in order to advance within the company and has supported you in this endeavor. This supervisor is an important part of your network. Maybe a classmate who is working on a similar degree program has suggested a class that you should take. This classmate is an important part of your network. There are many different ways to build a professional network; however, it takes time and ongoing effort, so it would be a good idea to start building or adding to your own professional network Now!

Advantages of Professional Networking

- Career Opportunities

Many jobs are now found through professional networking, so it will be important for you to start building a strong network of friends and colleagues well before you are ready to make a career change or look for a new job. According to the United States Department of Labor (n.d.), approximately 70% of all jobs obtained in the country are secured through networking.

- Advice and Support

There are many people out there who have been where you are now. As you add more people to your professional network, you are also building a strong support base for yourself. It is amazing how many people will be willing to offer your ideas and insights that will help you to reach your goals.

Advantages of Professional Networking (continued)

- Confidence and Trust

As you begin to build a strong network, you are building a foundation for your own success. Your network will consist of people who support you, people who know what you are capable of, and people you can trust and rely upon.

Powerful Networking Tools

Please explore the following resources to find out about powerful networking tools that are within your reach!

LinkedIn™ ~ LinkedIn is an amazing online resource that provides a wide variety of networking tools and opportunities.

Indeed - The Complete Guide to Networking ~ Take a Web field trip to learn more about building a professional network. Go to [The Complete Guide To Networking](#) and review the many different networking resources and tips (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022).

Career Services ~ You may contact the Purdue Global Career Services team at careerservices@purdueglobal.edu

You can partner with your career specialist to discover effective networking tips and to locate resources for networking and gaining experience within your field.

Career Network ~ The Career Network is located on the “My Community” tab drop down menu of your student portal of your PG Campus Navigation bar.

- **Ongoing Career Discussions:** Look to the left for the Community area where you can participate in career-related discussions with your Purdue Global classmates and career specialists.

- **Career Information & Resources:** Select CareerNetwork 2.0, locate the Menu area in the top right corner, select the down arrow, and then select Career Information from the dropdown list. Review the career-related information and resources on the left-hand side of the screen.

Student Life ~ Access the Student Life area by selecting the My Community tab located across the top of your main student portal homepage to the right of the University info tab. Explore this area to see how you can begin building a network of classmates, instructors, and professionals by getting involved!

- Clubs and Professional Groups
- Honor Societies
- Personal & Professional Growth Workshops

Student Life ~ (continued)

- Student Organization Fair

Your Professional Network ~ Use your goal setting and critical thinking skills to begin building or strengthening your professional network now while you are still in school. Before you know it, you will be completing your degree and focusing on the next stage of your career development. A strong network of family, friends, relatives, classmates, colleagues, and co-workers will be critical to your ongoing career success. Use this three-step approach to build your network:

ABC's of Networking

A. Act Now!

One of the most important things you should understand about the whole networking process is that it is something that takes time and effort. If you wait to begin building your network, you will be putting yourself at a definite disadvantage. Start building your network now!

B. Build a Strong Foundation

Even if you do not realize it, your network already exists at least to some extent. However, it will not thrive and flourish unless you pay close attention to it and care for it. Therefore, it is extremely important that you begin to recognize the critical elements of your network and to utilize them. You have family members, friends, and relatives who

are at the core or first degree of your network. You now need to make sure this core group is strong and reliable by strengthening your relationships with members, helping members when you can, and also seeking help from members when you need it.

Remember, a strong network is based on a firm commitment from all members! You should also keep in mind that this group is the foundation of your network, so you must constantly strive to add to and treat it as the platform upon which you will build a more expansive network.

C. Concentrate on Future Connections

According to Lisa Chau in her article, “Networking, Social Media, and the Six Degrees of Separation” (2012), one of the most important elements of networking is the focus on constant expansion. In other words, your network should be in a constant state of construction, and you should always be looking for ways to build out from your first degree contacts (friends, family) toward second, third and even fourth degree contacts. Maybe there is a neighbor you waive to as you are out walking your dog, how might you include this person as a second degree contact?

Who else might you want to meet or get to know at some point? What kind of people could help you reach your career goals? These would be your third and fourth degree

C. Concentrate on Future Connections (continued)

contacts. Start making a list of future connections now and work with your first and second degree contacts to build your future connections.

Apply the ABC's of Networking by completing the following chart. Use this chart as a blueprint for building your professional network. Your goal should be to continue adding names in all three contact areas and to consistently increase your strength ratings by concentrating on building stronger contacts.

1st Degree Contacts: People you know well and can trust: Family members, friends, relatives, and other close connections.

2nd Degree Contacts: People you are acquainted with in a general sense, but would like to know better: Neighbors, teachers, co-workers, or people you see from time to time.

3rd Degree Contacts: People you would like to include in your network because they could help you to achieve your career goals: Managers, company owners, successful business people, or entrepreneurs.

Network Strength: Consider the strength of your relationship with this person: Rate as High, Medium, Low, or Pending.

Professional Networking Contact Chart

Names	Relationship/Title	Network Strength
1st Degree Contacts	2nd	
Degree Contacts	3rd	
Degree Contacts		

Seven Practical Steps for Networking

It is not hard to build a professional network, but it does take time, effort, and ongoing commitment. In fact, building a network is much like growing a tomato plant. In both cases, the first step is to plant the seed (Rothberg, 2013).

However, you cannot stop there or the seed will never sprout and you will never get to reap the benefits of your plant or network. Really, the hard work comes once the seed is in the ground because it is totally dependent upon you for the care and nurturing it is going to need in order to grow into something strong. But what are the seeds of networking, so to speak? How do you get started? Stephen Rothberg, author of *Networking for College Students and Recent Graduates* in *Top 7 Steps You Can Take Now*, offers some practical steps you can take in order to build or strengthen your professional network:

Seven Practical Steps for Networking (continued)

1. Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering offers a wonderful opportunity for you to meet and work with people from all different backgrounds and occupations. Maybe you already work in a volunteer capacity, but you have never thought of it as an opportunity to network. One of the best ways for people to get to know you is for them to see you in action and this is just what takes place during any volunteer opportunity.

2. Explore Internship Opportunities

An internship can be a great way to get a preview of the career field you are pursuing, and it can also provide you with many skills and contacts that will benefit you in the long run. Explore the Web for excellent resources on internships.

3. Consider Employment Opportunities

Work environments provide some of the most beneficial networking opportunities of all. If you are already working, find opportunities to network with co-workers, supervisors, and managers. Let the people you work with know that you are going to school and are serious about making some career advancements. If you do not already work, start thinking about possible part- or full-time opportunities that would help you build skills and contacts related to your career area.

4. Identify Mentors

A mentor can be anyone who can offer you practical career advice, guidance, and ongoing support. In fact, the person you select for your informational interview may actually end up being a mentor to you. Think about people you admire, respect, and trust; these are the kinds of people who can provide strong mentoring relationships. Reach out, ask them for guidance, and be up front in letting them know that you want to learn from them. Mentoring can be an amazing process!

5. Advisors and Professors

Your advisors and professors generally have a wealth of experience that lies outside of the office or classroom, thus then can be extremely valuable additions to your networks. Get to know them by asking questions, trusting them, and seeking advice and guidance.

6. Professional Student Organizations

Have you taken time to explore the many different student organizations offered here at the university? Take time to visit the Student Life area by selecting the Community Center tab located across the top of your main Campus page to the right of the My

7. Professional Student Organizations (continued)

Studies tab. Explore this area to see how you can begin building a network of classmates, instructors, and professionals by getting involved!

Registered Student Organizations

- Clubs and Groups
- Honor Societies
- Associations

8. Think Networking

Just about anyone you know can be a vital part of your professional network; however, it is likely that you often miss opportunities to add to your network because you are not —thinking networking. In other words, you have to let people know about yourself, your career plans, and your educational goals. Once they see where you are headed, they will begin to help guide you on your path. Never miss an opportunity to add to your network! That neighbor who walks her dog and waves at you may be the best contact you could ever make.

Problem-Solving for Academic and Professional Success

Problem-solving is yet another skill that will be extremely important to your academic and career success. In fact, goal setting and problem solving actually go hand-in-hand because in both cases your focus is on achieving some final outcome such as reaching a goal or solving a problem. Quite often, as you strive to reach goals you will simultaneously encounter problems or challenges that you must solve in order to continue making progress towards your final outcome. A common mistake many goal-setters make is to give up on their goals when they encounter problems. This is not what you want to do! Of course, you cannot plan ahead for all of the obstacles you will encounter as you are striving to reach a goal and so it will be especially important for you to develop strong problem solving skills now, so that you will have the confidence and competence to solve problems as they arise.

Think about it! Your academic and professional success are going to be directly tied to how well you set goals and solve problems. Completing a course with a passing grade, for example, is a common goal for students; it is also a goal that can be tied to many problems such as computer issues, time management issues, or even comprehension issues (I just do not understand this Assignment!). Problems such as these that might crop up along the way can seriously derail your progress and interfere with your motivation as well. Therefore, good problem solving skills are at the core of effective goal setting. Keep these four items in mind as you strive to be both an effective goal setter and an efficient problem solver:

Problem-solving for Academic and Professional Success (continued)

- Define your problem or goal
- Brainstorm possible solutions or approaches
- Evaluate and select best solutions or approaches
- Put your plan into action

DO IT!

You may use this effective goal-setting and problem-solving strategy (adapted from Wehmeyer, et al., 1998) as you focus on setting up your interview with a professional and building your professional network.

D: Define the specific problem. What is the specific problem or goal?

What would be different for you if you solve this problem or meet this goal? Who else is involved? What do they think?

O: Outline or brainstorm different ways to solve the problem or reach the goal. What can you do to solve your problem or reach your goal?

I: Identify the consequences of each plan through careful evaluation and choose the best plan.

What will happen if you follow each of these plans? What help will you need? Which is the best plan?

T: Take Action! What are the steps you need to take to achieve your plan? Take the first step! Are you making progress toward your goal?

Celebrate Success!

When you reach your goal or solve your problem, recognize your success by celebrating!

II. Challenge Activity:

Problem Solving in Action ~ DO IT!

Take some time this week as you are working on the interview with a professional for your assignment, and thinking about your own career goals, to apply the DO IT! strategy to a problem or goal.

II. Challenge Activity: (continued)

Define: Take time to define a specific problem or goal. What exactly is it that you want to overcome or what is it that you want to achieve?

Example: Daniel is working on a degree in information technology in order to prepare himself for a career in IT project management. As he is working on his degree, he would like to get a part-time job that will provide him with some general office experience.

Outline: Brainstorm some possible approaches you might take by outlining different strategies.

Example: Daniel creates an outline of possible approaches he might take in this situation: He can apply online by using indeed.com. He can respond to job postings in his local paper. He can visit his local employment office. He can start networking by talking to friends about his job plans and seeing if they have any suggestions for him.

Identify: Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy and identify the best course of action.

Example: After careful consideration, Daniel determines that a combination of networking and utilizing his local employment agency will produce the best outcome.

Take Action: Put your plan into action and move forward!

Example: Daniel will use the S.M.A.R.T. goal setting process to set specific goals, actions, and deadlines for himself.

Celebrate Success: Celebrate your success!

Example: Once Daniel lands his first office job, he will celebrate by purchasing his first briefcase!

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary – 7 words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is actually quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different tools that you will need in order to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication.

Therefore, the more words you are able to use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

Access [Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day) (n.d.)

Activities:

- [Practice with vocabulary](#)

Review these vocabulary words:

Astute: Clever; shrewd; intellectually observant

Evince: To show clearly; to indicate

Impetuous: Having sudden energy; impulsive; forceful

Querulous: Complaining; peevish; discontented

Palliate: To make something appear less serious; to alleviate **Sagacious:**

Having sound judgment; perceptive; wise; like a sage **Vindictive:**

Revengeful; spiteful

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit 9

Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Career Planning Resources

Which career is right for you? The Career Connections information will help set you on the right path. O*NET Online, CareerOneStop, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the university's CareerNetwork area and Career Services team are just some of the many valuable resources that you will be exploring to help you connect to the right career path.

If you already have a career or know the career you want, these resources can help you discover how your interests and skills can help you achieve your educational and career goals. If you are not quite sure where you want to go, these resources can help you explore this in more detail.

One of the first steps of successful career planning is self-assessment. This is where you take the time to get a clear view of your career-related interests, personality traits, skills, and values. Take time this week to complete the Work Interest Assessment, which is designed to help you develop a comprehensive career profile that you can use as your foundation for further career research and exploration.

Completing Your Work Interest Assessment Will:

- Help you identify what you are interested in based on your personality and interests.
- Help you to determine what you need and want in a job within your profession.
- Help you to find work that you will enjoy and lead you to establishing a satisfying career.

Follow the steps below to access the Work Interest Assessment:

1. Go to the Community Center area on your student portal homepage.
2. Select Career Network.
3. Select Assessments across the top of the page.
4. Select Click Here to take a work interest assessment.

In this assessment, you will respond as to how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement provided.

Take time to explore outstanding career resources as you continue to gather information that will assist your personal growth and development throughout your Purdue University Global educational career.

O*NET Online

There is great information online that can help you as you are exploring career options. Perhaps you would like more information on your area of expertise. You might be interested in finding out about options within a certain career area. Maybe you have not decided what you want to do and you want to find a starting point for your career research. Wherever you are in your journey, [**O*NET Online**](#) is a great website to help you start your exploration.

Where to Begin your Exploration of O*Net Online

Begin your exploration of the O*NET site by selecting the “What is O*NET?” tab and then selecting the Starting Points tab. Look for the **Students** section where you will find direct links to the following valuable resources:

- O*NET Interest Profiler — A self-assessment designed to help you identify your interests and connect them with possible career options. This is a great starting point for career exploration.
- My Next Move — A career exploration tool that will provide you with printable reports highlighting the following eight areas related to your career choices: knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, technology, education, job outlook, and explore more.

Next, look for the **Counselors** section and select the Career Exploration Tools item to access the following resource:

- O*NET Work Importance Locator (formerly the Work Importance Profiler) — A self-assessment designed to match your values with work choices. This is an excellent way to ensure you are focusing on occupations that “fit” with what is most important to you.

Continue your exploration by returning to the O*NET home page. Select on the "Find Occupations" link. Then find the job family title and select on the arrow to select your area of interest. Then select "Go." Have fun exploring.

Whether you are just beginning to think about your career possibilities, or whether you are in a current position, it is vital to keep your eyes open and your critical thinking brain engaged in consistent growth in learning and acquiring information. To develop as a

person and as a professional you need to go out of your comfort zone, which is not always easy but necessary for success. Continue your quest for information.

CareerOneStop

As you continue with your career planning journey, the [CareerOneStop](#) offers several additional sources of information:

- Careers
- Training
- Skills
- Jobs
- Wages
- Industry
- State and Local
- Mobile Apps

The U.S. Small Business Administration

For those of you who are interested in running small businesses, whether it's in IT or in another area, the Small Business Administration [\(SBA\) website](#) (n.d.a) offers a plethora of resources and valuable information including "[Start and Grow Your Business](#)" (SBA, n.d.b).

Purdue University Global Career Services

Contact the Career Services team at careerservices@purdueglobal.edu The Career Services team offers many valuable services:

- 24/7 access to the student portal homepage
- Resume and cover letter reviews
- Job leads and job search support
- Social media profile reviews
- Occupational direction
- Interview preparation

- Networking tips

Purdue University Global CareerNetwork

Access the CareerNetwork by selecting the Community Center tab across the top of your student portal homepage. Select CareerNetwork from the dropdown list and begin exploring. You will be able to accomplish many important career-related tasks in this area.

- Network with peers
- Search for job leads
- Many more career-related tasks

Career Action Planning

You will reflect upon information from course readings, assignments, career research, the informational interview assignment, and the LASSI assessment as you complete your career action plan.

Much like a road map, a well-constructed career action plan will help you see how to get from where you are now to where you would like to be at certain points in your future. You might think of it as your GPS. The process of creating an action plan will require that you make use of many of the skills you have covered in this course: time management, goal setting, writing, reading, note-taking, critical thinking, career planning, and career/value assessment.

A Clear Vision

A career action plan will help to create a road map as to how you can attain your professional goals. This type of planning can also help you with various other aspects of your life as well.

You have come a long way in this course beginning with a study of self-awareness. You have grown in your skills of critical thinking, reading, note-taking, improving your professional writing skills, setting personal and professional goals, and exploring career fields that may hold interest for you.

Focusing on career action plans will give you the motivation to reach your goals you set for yourself. Taking time to critically analyze and research information before you make decisions will enhance the success of the goals you want to achieve.

What do you want to be “when you grow up?” That is a great question for each one of you at any age. Are you there, yet? Are you changing direction? Are you just beginning your journey? Writing a career action plan will guide you to completion.

Action Planning:

As seen below in the graphics provided, action planning is a process that has the following steps:

Step 1: My Present: Where are you now?

Step 2: My Future: Where do you want to go in terms of your career?

Step 3: Personal Education Plan: How will you realize your career goals—where you want to go in the future?

Step 4: My Actions: Completing the personal education plan by determining what you will do to make it happen. Create a step-by-step action plan, delineating each step to reach your goal(s).

My Actions: Step-by-Step:



(Careersoft, n.d.a)

By now, you should be recognizing that career action plans are much like the critical thinking strategies of Bloom’s Taxonomy (revised) that you have explored throughout the course — always in action, always in review.

Whether you write a short few words or paragraphs of plans, the most important thing is to write. Write down your thoughts to bring them to reality. Include the information necessary to keep your career action plan specific, measurable, action-oriented, reasonable, and timely. You should recognize those terms from Unit 7 and the discussion of S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Benefits

The career action plan allows you to put your thoughts regarding your career, into an organized step-by-step sequence so you can operationalize your plan. Spending time writing a career action plan allows you to explore your options. Establishing curiosity is a strong critical thinking skill in the process. Most people are not in the same place in their respective career journeys, so the career discovery that you do will be on different levels than your classmates — some using life experiences, some beginning at the beginning.

Take a look at the graphic action planning process steps above once again.

My Present

Self-Assessment: Where am I right now?

This question is important because it will help you to establish a clear picture of your current skills, experiences, and areas for improvement as well. You will want to make sure to reflect upon recent course readings, discussions, and activities that have helped you to recognize your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and abilities. Remember, critical thinkers regularly take time to look at themselves closely, honestly, and critically. This is just what you will be doing in this stage — the result will be increased self-awareness.

My Future

Goal Setting: Where do I want to be in the future?

This question is important because it will help you to create a solid vision of your future as you define exactly where you want to be in the next 2–5 years. Make sure you understand your inner-motivations for each goal as well by asking yourself the following question: “Why is this goal important to me?” As you set career goals for yourself, you will want to use the S.M.A.R.T. elements you focused on in earlier units. Make sure to develop both short- and long-term goals so that you can see yourself making progress as you complete short-term goals that move you closer to achieving your long-term goals. Remember, your goals should be challenging, yet realistic; they should inspire you and keep you motivated. Do not be afraid to aim high, but be ready to put forth the hard work and effort it will take to realize your dreams.

My Path

Evaluation: How will I get there?

This question is important because it will help you to begin mapping out your forward progress. This is where you design your strategy for success, so to speak. You will need to make use of your critical thinking skills as you determine the route you will take

to move from point A (my present), to point B (progress towards achieving goals), to point C (achievement of short- term goals), and all the way to point D (achievement of long-term goals). You will also want to consider resources you will need to make use of (instructors, employers, advisors, books, courses, and websites). Remember, it will be important for you to return to this stage frequently throughout your action planning process because as your life circumstances change or as you encounter unexpected obstacles and setbacks, you may need to reevaluate and readjust your strategies.

My Actions

Following Through: What specific tasks must I complete?

This question is important because it will help you to determine the actions you need to take to achieve your goals. The specific actions you take are the building blocks of successful goals; without actions backing them up, your goals will be nothing more than fancy words on paper. Each goal you set should be backed by a series of specific actions or steps you will take to make progress towards achieving the goal. Remember, you should also establish clear deadlines or completion dates to ensure that you are constantly moving forward and making continuous progress.

Next Steps

Continuous Process: What is next?

This question is important because it will help you to continuously look forward. Once you reach your short- and long-term goals, you will most likely want to go through the entire career action planning process repeatedly.

Reach Your Goals

Your career action plan is a tool that will help you reach your goals; however, the key component is ongoing action on your part.

You must regularly reflect upon your plans, adjust them to accommodate changes in your thinking and circumstances, and focus on carrying out the tasks that will bring you closer to the goals you have set for yourself.

Build Your Awareness: Value Inventories and Work Values

Value inventories determine the priority of your values to you. Some of these values may also be organizational values as well. How well your values align with the organization's values bodes well will influence your overall job satisfaction (McKay, 2019). Values can include such concepts as integrity, salary, ethical approaches, relationships, collaborative work environment, opportunities for personal and professional growth, etc.

Your work values can be subdivided into intrinsic values (internal) and extrinsic values (external). Intrinsic values might be the satisfaction you gain from working in a career where you can develop meaningful relationships with others, while extrinsic values might be the satisfaction you feel in receiving medical benefits from working.

Examples and Definitions of Work Values

Here are examples of items that could appear on a work value inventory, along with a definition of each one. When reading this list, think about how important each value is to you.

Achievement: Doing work that yields results

Artistic expression: Expressing one's artistic talents

Autonomy: Receiving no or little supervision **Challenge:**

Performing tasks that are difficult **Collaboration:**

Working with others

Compensation: Receiving adequate pay

Creativity: Using your own ideas

Helping others: Providing assistance to individuals or groups **Helping society:**

Contributing to the betterment of the world **Influence:** Having the ability to affect people's opinions and ideas **Job security:** A high probability that one will remain employed **Leadership:**

Supervising/managing others

Leisure: Having adequate time away from work

Prestige: Having high standing

Recognition: Receiving attention for your work

Utilizing your skills and background: Using your education and work experience to do your job

Variety: Doing different activities

Career Advancement

Many students are working toward a goal of career advancement as they complete their degrees. This is an area of importance for each person and again it is never too early to realize possibilities. In researching with several valid sites, you will find out more about topics of relevance such as employment laws, skills, finding jobs, negotiating salary, balancing work and life, losing a job, quitting a job, and many other important components of careers. Be sure to be an avid researcher as that is always the first step in critical thinking.

Writing your career action plan is a great place to start. Keeping it current is a major part of keeping it in your sight. Do not put it away where you will not see it for ages, mark your calendar to take a look at it routinely, and be open and available to information that may present itself that will require revisions and enhancements to your plan.

Career Action Planning Resources

Please take time to read more about the importance of career action planning and view a sample template at the careers gateway site (Careersoft, n.d.):

[Career Action Planning](#)

[Career Action Plan Template](#)

Finalizing

You should now be finalizing work on your career action plan.

Demonstrate what you have gained from course readings, assignments, career research, web field trips, the informational interview assignment, and the LASSI Inventory by developing your career action plan.

II. Challenge Activity:

Taking Control of Your Career Strategy

For your challenge in Unit 9 and to further advance your career exploration, take time to view the Purdue Global Career Services presentation in the discussion area. As you are listening, consider why you are going to school and what you expect your degree to do for you. Do you think your degree is the magic formula? Carefully consider the Skill Wheel described in the Career Services presentation and note the special qualities and skills you currently possess. What are those special qualities you possess? How will you develop other qualities or skills you will need? What one skill or quality do you possess that will make someone want to hire you? How will you demonstrate this to a potential employer? What will make you stand out? How will you demonstrate this in a cover letter or on a resume? When is the best time to start working on your cover letter and resume?

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees. However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication. Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing, and powerful you will be as

a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day

Vocabulary Words:

Disparaging: Belittling.

Dispassionate: Calm; objective, unbiased.

Elude: Evade; cleverly avoid. **Loquacious:**

Talkative; wordy. **Meticulous:** Extremely thorough; finicky. **Myriad:** A great number; innumerable.

Ubiquitous: Existing everywhere; omnipresent.

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Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional Unit

10 Reading

There are three items to complete in this reading area:

1. Reading
2. Challenge Activity
3. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary

I. Reading

Hard Work and Perseverance

All of your hard work and perseverance throughout the term has finally paid off, and you are about to complete your first IT course. You are now officially one step closer to achieving your goal of earning your degree. You have accomplished so much since you first began this journey, and you should be very proud of yourself.

This week, you will have the opportunity to reflect on what you have learned during the past nine weeks and comment on how you plan to apply this new-found knowledge to your future academic and professional pursuits. Once you have completed all requirements and are virtually finished with your course, use the rest of the week to recharge and begin mentally preparing for your next term. Maintain your positive energy and keep your eyes on the goal you have set for yourself.

Reminder: *You will be notified that a student survey is available for you to complete during the last week of the term. Please take the time to complete it and share your feedback about the course.*

The Future — Succeed or Survive?

You have chosen to succeed by embarking on your college education. Your future is in your hands, and you have unlimited potential.

Joseph Murphy said, “You have infinite riches within your reach. To gain them, all you have to do is open your mental eyes and behold the treasure house of infinity within you.” (Murphy, 2000, p.1).

How did you fare through this unit? Use your critical thinking skills, especially the top 3 levels to adjust or enhance your practices.

Analyze your efforts in this past term. Determine through further research what you can do to make your next term as effective or more effective. Make your decisions and proceed with energy, and positive attitude, and personal creativity into your unique study methods to achieve yet another successful goal.

As you look back at your travels through your Academic Strategies class, you will see the development of that inner vision of success. You opened yourselves to a new awareness and an online classroom support group of peers. You learned more about, and moved up the steps of critical thinking taxonomy.

Your work should be linked together for future reference. When you retrieve the information learned from this course, it will allow you to guide, inspire, challenge, and empower not only yourself but also others.

1. Relationships
2. Managing time and stress
3. Learning styles and multiple intelligences
4. Critical thinking
5. Enhanced reading and note-taking
6. Enhanced writing skills
7. S.M.A.R.T. goals
8. Career searching and networking
9. Action plans
10. Positive energy

GICE x 3

Guide, Inspire, Challenge, and Empower. You get it, you internalize it, and you share it. One of the strategies instructors would like you to carry forward is called GICE. You may have recognized this happening with your instructor when you first came into class. An instructor's aim is to guide, inspire, challenge, and empower (GICE) each one of their students and to watch each one GICE themselves, to internalize the empowerment of self-determination. Students began to recognize when they could take over that job for themselves and even more importantly, pass it on to others. You found your voice of positive energy to GICE each other as classmates and as a community of learners. This is an empowering component of positive energy, which you should choose to pull into your next classes as part of this course's unique package of learning, application, and critical thinking.

Review: In the Beginning

In Unit 1, you've spent time building relationships — with each other and with your classroom environment. Remember how it took a while and if you are brand new in the online learning arena, it took time to get used to it. There was so much to process all at once, class opens, and just like that, you are on the run to understanding your requirements and keeping your balance. Requirements must be met as you find your way through the classroom and campus sites that you must become familiar with quickly. Building relationships is

so important during this time. You found an instructor who cared and wanted nothing more than to GICE you as you began your educational journey.

In Unit 2, you've made the important connection between time management and stress management. You learned to be aware and to recognize when you are out of balance. Stress reduces your ability to think critically and creatively. Your biological/emotional brain (amygdala) produces the stress, and you have the power to recognize and reduce stress through your critical thinking skills of analysis/research, evaluation, and creativity. The creativity you employ (the top level of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy) includes the use of some of the strategies you have studied in CS114 for managing time and stress (Sousa, 2006).

Your emotional intelligence, the understanding and use of emotions in a positive fashion, is one of the most important qualities you can foster. As you understand more about the way your brain learns, you can creatively enhance your balance in life. Your biological/emotional brain (amygdala) produces the stress, and you have the power to recognize stress and to reduce it through your critical thinking skills of analysis/research, evaluation, and creativity. The creativity you employ includes the use of some strategies you have studied in this course for managing time and stress.

"The rules for work are changing. We are being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other" (Goleman, 1998, p.1).

In Unit 3, you've studied learning styles and multiple intelligences. You gathered information on your particular and unique ways of learning and came to understand more about who you are and how you learn and interact in the learning environment. It is enlightening to know that everyone has the eight inborn qualities of natural intelligence and are strongest in two or three of them. It helps you to identify yourself as a unique and valuable human being in this world.

You spent time over the first three units identifying ways to renew yourself. You learned how to prioritize, and how to adhere to those priorities. It made the first weeks of this course a little tough, but it set up your habits of success.

"Renewal is the principle-and the process-that empowers us to move on an upward spiral of growth and change, of continuous improvement." (Covey, 1989, p. 304).

In recognizing your opportunities to grow, in feeling GICE become internalized, you can actually "hear, see, and feel" stronger learning.

Enhancing your Personal Reading and Writing Skills

In Units 4 and 5, you've focused on critical academic skills - reading, note taking and writing. These are foundational skills that you will rely upon extensively throughout your studies and in the professional world as well. Use them! Improve them!

You learned that not only must you read well, but you must also read for meaning. What can you do with the information you garner from your reading? How can you apply it to life and learning?

Many times, your writing is one of the first impressions that you make on others. Learning and using the many resources from the Writing Center; you can grow, yet again, in another valuable way. Your future successes in your career and life depend on your constant recognition and renewal of your skills. Getting to know and using the basics of strong writing should be a goal in itself.

Review: The Second Part of the Course

In Unit 6, you were introduced to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy of Critical Thinking Skills (Sousa, 2006). This thinking hierarchy was new to many and opened up wonderful doors of wonder and interest in learning more about the way your brain learns.

Recognizing that jumping into decisions (evaluation - level 5) before analyzing or researching (level 4) can upset the balance of life and is a breakthrough in your thinking process. Your creativity (level 6) must be unique and your own. It must be based on strong decision-making that is based on strong analysis and research of information.

Another learning event occurred when you recognized and acknowledged that you could say, "I am aware of the thinking levels, I am using them more, and finding them to be the natural rhythm of your daily routines." You are recognizing when the emotional/biological brain is trying to impose stress and are counter-attacking with your analysis/research, evaluation, and creativity — your critical thinking brain.

Critical thinking should surround everything you do. It is involved in every part of your life keeping you in balance and seeking more creativity. It is a positive outcome to life that perpetuates a desire for more positive outcomes. In the academic world, it can be called open-ended creative problem solving which allows you to create newer and more diverse problems, which can also be solved creatively. It is a wonderfully vicious circle of life, learning, and positive energy.

Time to be S.M.A.R.T.

Unit 7 allows you to walk away from Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional with an excellent goal-setting tool called S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Take the time to write your goals down, but do it the S.M.A.R.T. way. Do you remember what the letters of this acronym stand for?

- S** – Specific
- M** – Measurable
- A** – Action-oriented
- R** – Reasonable
- T** – Timed

Be specific when you choose your goals. Make sure you determine a manner in which you can measure your progress. What are the actions you will set in place to achieve your goal? Your goal should be reasonable, it should be achievable, but also make sure there is a challenge in that achievement. Time your goals so the distance from start to finish is short enough to make you feel and see success but long enough to allow you to do what needs to be done to realize that success.

The Career Search and Networking

Units 8 and 9 brought you tools and strategies to use in investigating the right career for you and also encompassed the power of networking to achieve your career goals.

Examine your values as you seek your place in the professional world. You have amazing resources at the university and on the Internet to help you identify a career that matches your uniqueness and methods to get you out there and recognized as a valuable component of an organization, whether it is in IT, in your own business or otherwise. Take time to do both the exploration and the networking and do them well and over time. One of the points to remember in networking is follow-through. It is amazing how many connections you can lose because you do not keep in touch.

Stay in close connection with your career opportunities sites, including the university's CareerNetwork (located on the PG Campus page "Community Center" tab), O*NET Online, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook. How many others can you find? Design your life. Put your energy into one of the major components of life and balance — your career.

Projections

As the course is ending, it is time to set your desires in front of you. What is your short-term goal after going through this 10-week course? What is your long-term goal? You took the time to write them out specifically in your Unit 9 Assignment. Where are you keeping that valuable assessment and projection? How often will you revisit it to see how you are progressing? Do you need to make changes to your goals? Everyone changes and grows consistently. It could be what you think today may be different than what you experience tomorrow. Keep your goals current. Share them with your family for support and encouragement.

Final Assignment

Yes, you have just about completed your work in Academic Strategies for the Information Technology (IT) Professional. Congratulations! Your opportunity to share the most important learning for you awaits you in your last project, Writing Across the Curriculum. What are the most important things you will take away from this course? According to Deepak Chopra (2003):

If your sense of self is constricted, then it expresses itself as a tight and constricted body, a fearful outlook, and an insecure environment. On the other hand, if your sense of self is expanded, it experiences a relaxed body and a friendly, open environment where your intentions synchronistically fulfill themselves. Your expanded self always feels a sense of worth, feels at peace, feels free and unbounded, feels in flow, and feels a sense of awe at the mystery of existence.

Sense of self also determines attitude (p. 265).

Take time to look into the secrets of success that so many write about. Use your online resources and visit your libraries for more information to enhance all areas of your learning. Go forward proudly.

II. Challenge Activity

Create Your Success

For your challenge in Unit 10 and to help yourself focus on creating your success, take time to consider the following eight tips for success compiled by Richard St. John after seven years of research and 500 interviews of successful people (2007):

Passion: You should work for the love of it rather than just for the money.

Work: Find enjoyment in what you do and do it well.

Good: Practice and always focus on doing the best you can.

Focus: Stay energized and on task.

Push: Continually challenge yourself.

Serve: Care about what you do and those you serve.

Ideas: Think of ideas that solve problems.

Persist: Never give up.

Much like a career action plan, a personal mission, or vision statement will help you to envision your future accomplishments. Please review the following steps and try writing your mission/vision statement:

A Five-Step Plan for Creating Personal Mission Statements:

Determine your purpose by examining the following:

1. What have you been good at over time?
2. What are you passionate about?
3. What are your personal values?

4. How would you like to add value to the world and for whom?
5. Where would you like to be in the short-term (1–3 years) and long-term (4–10 years)?

III. Powerful Words for a Powerful Vocabulary — 7 Words in 7 Days

Effective communication is not only an essential academic strategy; it is fast becoming one of the top skills employers are looking for as they screen potential employees.

However, how do you become an effective communicator? The answer to this question is quite simple, yet it involves some serious commitment on your part. You have to practice and make a firm commitment to equipping yourself with the many different “tools” that you will need to express your ideas clearly and effectively in both written and spoken communication. This is where a powerful vocabulary can make a world of difference for you because words are the building blocks of communication.

Therefore, the more words you can use, the more creative, convincing and powerful you will be as a communicator. What if you could add just one new word to your vocabulary each day? Think about the progress you would make in a week, a month, or even an entire year.

Vocabulary Enrichment Resources

[Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day](#)

Vocabulary Words:

Acquiesce: Assent; accept passively; reluctant acceptance.

Acumen: Sharp or keen insight; cleverness; shrewdness.

Ambivalence: Uncertainty; inability to decide.

Indefatigable: Tireless; inexhaustible.

Malevolence: Malice; intention to harm.

Precarious: Uncertain; unstable; insecure.

Tenuous: Flimsy; weak; vague

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Free and Discounted Certifications

Last Updated 2/2/25

Project Management

Project Management Institute – Kickoff (Free)

PMI Kickoff provides a foundational understanding of project management concepts that are crucial for planning, organizing, and executing projects effectively. By mastering these principles, you'll gain practical insights into how to deliver successful projects, whether you are leading teams, collaborating as a member, or contributing as a stakeholder. This assignment ensures you gain hands-on experience with globally recognized project management practices, preparing you for both academic and professional success.

Link: <https://www.pmi.org/kickoff>

Product Management

Pendo - Product-led Teams Certification (Free)

This course provides valuable insights into how to apply product-led strategies to drive growth for your organization. Through seven engaging modules, you will learn key concepts such as leveraging data, evolving product delivery strategies, driving customer success, and implementing product-led methodologies within your organization. By the end of the course, you will have earned a "Product-Led Certified" badge to enhance your professional profile.

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/product-led/certification-course/>

Mind The Product – Radical Product Thinking: Vision Setting Course (Free)

The Radical Product Thinking: Vision Setting Course explores why conventional thinking about visioning is flawed—including what makes a good product vision statement and how to create a shared vision that fuels team and organizational alignment.

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/radical-product-thinking-vision-setting-course/>

Mind the Product – Digital Adoption Certification Course (Free)

You may know [what digital adoption is](#), but this Digital Adoption Certification Course breaks down what it means to build optimal digital experiences for internal users in order to increase software and workflow adoption, remove business process friction, and drive [employee productivity](#).

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/digital-adoption-certification/>

Mind the Product/Google/Pendo – AI for Product Management (Free)

The AI for Product Management Course explores AI's place in product management—including how to leverage AI throughout the development life cycle, best practices for building AI-powered features, and why product managers should view AI as a strategic tool, not a threat.

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/ai-for-product-management-course/>

Pendo – Product Management Basics Certification Course (Free)

Product Management Basics covers the fundamentals of the product manager role, a comprehensive overview of the Product Management Life Cycle, and best practices for building products that impact business outcomes.

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/product-management-basics-certification/>

Career Foundry – Intro to Product Design Course (Free)

Discover the entire product design process, from concept to delivery. Learn the fundamental principles of product design, including Design Thinking, product strategy, and user-centred design. Apply core product design skills, such as user research and usability testing, as you practice using the design process to integrate an AI feature into an app.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/intro-to-product-design/>

Career Foundry – Intro to Product Management (Free)

Discover the entire product management process, from concept to delivery. Explore the day-to-day work of a product manager, including collaborating with other roles on the job,

and present your ideas to stakeholders. Apply core product management skills, such as conducting research effectively, and creating and maintaining a product roadmap. Work 1:1 with an expert mentor and tutor, who will give you personalized feedback and insights into life as a product manager.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/intro-to-product-management/>

Data Analytics

Pendo – Product Analytics Certification Course (Free)

The Product Analytics Certification Course from Pendo and Mind the Product dives deep into the foundations of product analytics strategy, from [what is product analytics](#), use cases for leveraging analytics, and how to foster a data-driven product organization and company.

Link: <https://www.pendo.io/product-analytics-certification/>

Career Foundry – Intro to Data Analytics Course

Discover the entire data analysis process, from mastering the fundamental principles to presenting the results of your analysis. Get to know how data can be used to solve business problems with intelligent solutions. Apply core analytical approaches, such as descriptive, predictive, and diagnostic, as you interpret, visualize, and present your very first data analysis.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/intro-to-data-analytics/>

User Experience/User Interface

Miro (Free)

Miro offers many free certifications that can be completed in under 2 hours from designing sprints, kanban boards, to technical diagramming, and creating remote whiteboarding sessions.

Link: <https://academy.miro.com/page/course-catalog>

Career Foundry – UI Design Intro Course (Free)

Written by the same experts who create our full UI Design Program, this course will give you a hands-on introduction to UI design. In the space of five tutorials, you'll use Figma to design your own app screen from start to finish—learning key UI principles as you go. This is an ideal starting point if you're new to UI design and curious to learn more.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/short-courses/become-a-ui-designer/>

Career Foundry – Intro to UX Course (Free)

Discover the entire UX design process, from concept to delivery. Learn the fundamental principles of UX design, including Design Thinking, user-centred design, and information architecture. Apply core UX skills, such as user research and iterative design, as you create your very first app design. Work 1:1 with an expert mentor and tutor, who will give you personalized feedback and insights into life as a UX designer.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/ux-fundamentals/>

Digital Marketing

Career Foundry – Intro to Digital Marketing (Free)

Dive into the world of digital marketing while gaining hands-on experience developing and implementing your very own social media campaign. Explore the ins and outs of digital marketing strategy, competitor research, personas, and branding, before creating and launching content of your own design. Learn how to analyze your campaign results and effectively communicate your findings and recommendations to colleagues and stakeholders. Work 1:1 with an expert mentor and tutor, who will give you personalized feedback and insights into life as a digital marketer. Join an active community of over 5000 graduates and 700 instructors, and get access to exclusive digital marketing events and webinars.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/intro-to-digital-marketing/>

Software Development

Career Foundry - Intro to Frontend Development (Free)

Discover the entire web development process by building a fully-functional website from scratch. Learn the fundamental frontend development languages; HTML and CSS. Apply core web development skills, such as building responsive layouts and de-bugging, as you

deliver your first web development project. Work 1:1 with an expert mentor and tutor, who will give you personalized feedback and insights into life as a web developer.

Link: <https://careerfoundry.com/en/courses/intro-to-frontend-development/>

Geeks for Geeks – Free Python Course with a Certificate – Updated 2025 (Free)

This **free Python online course** will become your go-to guide that will help you get started in the world of Python programming at your own pace. In this Python full course, you will learn how to solve coding problems using Python programming language. Not only this, but you will also learn all the knowledge that is necessary for you to convert your coding logic into efficient Python code.

Link: <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/courses/python-course-certification-free>

My Great Learning.com – Free Beginning Java Course (Free)

This Java free course is an excellent entry point for beginners eager to grasp the fundamentals of Java programming. The journey begins with a concise introduction to the Java programming language, followed by guidance on installing Java IDE. As you progress, you will delve into various programming concepts such as variables, data types, operators, arrays, flow control statements, and functions, all demonstrated through relevant code examples.

This course offers a unique chance to dive deep into creating your first Java program, providing a solid foundation in the early stages of Java programming. By enrolling in this free Java course, completing the quizzes, and fulfilling course requirements, you will earn a certificate of completion. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your skills with a Java course free of charge, specifically designed for those new to Java programming.

Link: <https://www.mygreatlearning.com/academy/learn-for-free/courses/java-programming>

Geeks for Geeks – Free C++ Online Course with Certificate (Free)

Learn and master C++ programming with our free C++ Course with certificate! This beginner-friendly course is perfect for anyone looking to learn the fundamentals of C++. Through easy-to-follow lessons and hands-on projects, you'll master key CPP concepts like variables, loops, functions, structures, arrays, pointers, vectors, stacks, queues, & more.

Link: <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/courses/free-cpp-course-online-certification>

SimpliLearn – HTML Course for Beginners (Free)

The markup language used to construct web pages is called HTML. HTML is an abbreviation for Hypertext Markup Language. The word "hypertext" refers to the linking of websites. The document of text within the tag that specifies the layout of web pages is defined using a markup language. HTML provides instructions to the user on how it should present a web page's contents, images, videos, and text.

HTML documents are downloaded from the internet server or local storage by web browsers, who then turn them into the internet web pages. HTML initially featured cues for a web page's look and technically explains the framework of a web page. HTML can modify web pages' functionality and content by embedding scripts written in programming languages like JavaScript.

The appearance and organisation of material are determined by the use of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets). Every piece of HTML markup has default properties that are set by the browser; however, the page on the internet designer may also use CSS to change or improve these properties. The many kinds of HTML tags and components will be covered, along with how to organise and style your web pages using HTML and how to include text, photos, videos, and other information.

Link: <https://www.simplilearn.com/free-html-course-for-beginners-skillup>

Cybersecurity and Network Engineering

ISC2 – Entry-level Cybersecurity Training + Certification Exam (Limited time – Free)

Proves you have the foundational knowledge, skills and abilities for an entry- or junior-level cybersecurity role.

WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE CC EXAM

Domain 1. Security Principles

Domain 2. Business Continuity (BC), Disaster Recovery (DR) & Incident Response Concepts

Domain 3. Access Controls Concepts

Domain 4. Network Security

Domain 5. Security Operations

Link: <https://www.isc2.org/landing/1mcc>

Palo Alto Networks – Introduction to Cybersecurity (Free)

This course introduces the fundamentals of cybersecurity, including the concepts needed to recognize and potentially mitigate attacks against home networks and mission-critical infrastructure. Learn about the current cybersecurity landscape, how to identify cybersecurity threats, evaluate different malware types and cyberattack techniques, the relationship between vulnerabilities and exploits, how spamming and phishing attacks are performed, Wi-Fi vulnerabilities, attacks, and advanced persistent threats, and perimeter-based Zero Trust security models.

Link: <https://beacon.paloaltonetworks.com/sl/a0e236ad>

Palo Alto Networks – Fundamentals of Network Security (Free)

The Fundamentals of Network Security course helps you recognize and potentially defend home networks and mission-critical infrastructure. Discover the basic operations of enterprise networks, common networking devices, routed and routing protocols, network types and topologies, and services such as DNS. Learn about IP addressing, subnetting, packet encapsulation based on the Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) model, network security technologies such as packet filtering, stateful inspection, application firewalls, IDS and IPS, web content filters and more.

Link: <https://beacon.paloaltonetworks.com/sl/a859a574>

Palo Alto Networks – Fundamentals of Cloud Security (Free)

The Fundamentals of Cloud Security course introduces concepts on how to recognize threats and potentially defend data centers, public/private clouds, enterprise networks, and small office/home office (SOHO) networks from cloud-based attacks. Discover how to describe cloud computing models, virtualization, hypervisors, public cloud service provider options, and private deployment options and more.

Link: <https://beacon.paloaltonetworks.com/sl/b0ff1947>

Palo Alto Networks – Fundamentals of Security Operations Center (SOC) (Free)

The Fundamentals of SOC (Security Operations Center) training is a high-level introduction to the general concepts of SOC and SecOps. Learn about the security operations framework, people, processes, and technology required to support and defend the business, and the interfaces needed with other organizations outside of the SOC.

Link: <https://beacon.paloaltonetworks.com/sl/f8299032>

Linux-Based

The Linux Foundation – Blockchain: Understanding its uses and implications (Free)

Understand exactly what a blockchain is, its impact and potential for change around the world, and analyze use cases in technology, business, and enterprise products and institutions.

Link: <https://www.edx.org/course/understanding-blockchain-and-its-implications>

The Linux Foundation – Introduction to Open Source Networking Technologies

Learn technical fundamentals needed to adopt SDN, NFV, disaggregation, orchestration, network automation, and modern networking. Discover use cases and technical options for open networking.

Link: <https://www.edx.org/course/introduction-to-software-defined-networking-technologies>