



**LEARN**

# An Instructors View on Student Success

## **Be an Active Learner**

*The key to you for a successful class will depend in most part by how good you are in listening, questioning, note taking and studying and most important, test taking. My Objective is to give students these basic skills to help the dedicated student become successful in their learning experience.*

**Dominick Saffioti**

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I wrote this book to help students become successful in their chosen course of studies. Being an Automotive instructor for almost five years teaching in the public school system, and in the private sector I find that students of all ages from 13 to 55 years old struggle the most with knowing how to take notes how to study after a lesson and how to prep for a test. I hope that this book helps many who struggle with learning.

**Dominick James Saffioti**

# Introduction

## Effort

The key to you for a successful class will depend in most part by how good you are in listening, questioning, note taking and studying and most important, test taking. My Objective is to give students these basic skills to help the dedicated student become successful in their learning experience.

People learn best when they are ready to learn! Are you ready?  
As a student you will play the biggest part in your education. If you do your part and your Instructor does his part you **will be successful**. The instructor will give information in many ways; this is to make sure that all learners in the class can understand the main concepts and ideas needed by his students. He will ask questions to check you understanding and he will encourage your participation in the lesson. Your job as a Student is to listen to your Instructors ideas and information during his lesson. Discuss these ideas and share your own thinking and views with the class and your instructor.



It is vital that no matter what level of education you bring into the course, you should always keep an open mind and try to get something new out of the lesson. There will be times that the information your instructor is given will be very basic for those students with a lesser understanding of the subject. Try not to get frustrated, or bored because the lesson in your opinion is dragging on. Instead you should raise your hand and tell the class some of your experiences in this area that will support what the instructor has just covered. Your instructor is looking for this type of interaction.

**“The more you put into your education the more you will get out of it”**

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## Lesson 1

# Lesson preparation

## Lesson Preparation

### Before Lecture:

Pre- read all assigned material so that you can follow the lecture. This will also help with procrastination! It is more difficult to get motivated to read if you wait until after the lecture is over. Also, reading beforehand will help you take more to the point notes. This will also help you understand an Instructor who has an accent or a fast talking Instructor.



When pre-reading pay attention to the lesson objectives they are after all, what your instructor will test you on. Think about it, If you are told that after a lesson you will be able to ... “for example ... perform a task” you can rest assured that there WILL BE an evaluation test question on that objective.

Before a lesson I ask all my students to find the pages of the lesson that discuss each of the objective and write the page number next to that objective, This helps students who over study for tests or study the wrong information for the test. I have seen an immense change in my students test score when they apply this strategy.

Always Review notes from previous lectures. In the automotive field we always build up on previous lectures.

Use the learning center on line at [www.utialumni.org](http://www.utialumni.org) Take notes and bring them to class. Once in class, you can take your notes from the slide show presentation and the instructor lead discussion.

## **Lesson 2**

# **Listening**

# Listening

Listening is a skill, which must be developed. The responsibility for interest and understanding lies with you, not with the speaker. **Learning is up to the learner.**

If you can't hear, arrange things so you can. Move away from sources of noise (student or mechanical). Sit where you can see the speaker easily, and where other distractions are at a minimum. Look for the main idea or ideas of the presentation.

Maintain eye contact with the instructor and Focus on content, not how the instructor is delivering the information. Stay active by asking yourself questions. Here are some questions you can ask yourself as you listen. What key point is the Instructor making? How does this fit with what I know from previous lectures? How is this lecture organized?

**“Positive thinking gets Positive results”**

## **Lesson 3**

# **Note Taking**



# Note Taking

Having good class notes will help you to be better prepared for tests and you Instructors discussion. **Caution:** don't use the online availability of information as an excuse to skip class! You need the "full story" and the examples given in class if you are going to understand the notes well enough to answer test questions. There are many types of note taking strategies to choose from, you can go online or go to the local library to research the best way for your learning style.

## During Lecture:

- Come early and **sit in front**. You're less likely to "zone out" or fall asleep when you are closer to the Instructor.
- Bring your Course book to class it will give you another source of information being given in class. This can also help you stay focused because it gives you more to do (you can consult the text as the lecture proceeds).
- Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Do not let your fellow students take your attention away from what the instructor is saying.
- Listen for cues that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Ask reflective questions when you're not sure of what was being discussed.

Examples of cue statements are "The most important Point..." and "Remember that . . . "Be sure to include in your notes,

Information your Instructor repeats and also has you repeat. Also note any additional things he writes on the whiteboard. Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by writing abbreviated words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as % for percent, and writing short sentences. Place a "?" Next to information whose meaning you are not sure.



- Think about how to write your notes so that when you study for an exam you will be able to quiz yourself off your notes.
- Write the date at the top.
- Use abbreviations and omit unnecessary words.
- Listen for cues, such as organizing statements "the first step" and transition words like "This can be applied to".

- Record legibly, including both what the Instructor says and what are written on the board.
- Include examples in your notes, as these will help you both understand and remember the material. Also, The Instructor often uses the very same examples in their test questions.
- Don't rely on recording a lecture or reading someone else's notes.
- **If you miss something** because the lecture is moving too quickly or because you've "zoned out," skip a few lines and make a note that you missed something. After class, get the info from a classmate, the book, or the Instructor. (Ask instructor to slow down. Try not interrupting the class because you fell behind)
- At the end of the lecture, if not before, ask questions. Also, linger and listen in to the questions asked by other students. The Instructors answer is often extremely helpful!

### **After Lecture:**

- **As soon as possible after class, spend 10 to 20 minutes going over your notes.** Clarify, summarize, and if you used shorthand rewrite the notes out in long hand before you forget what your abbreviations and shorthand characters were. Think about the major concepts you learned. Retention improves significantly with immediate reinforcement. Put your new knowledge to work as soon as possible to help move it from your short-term memory to your long-term memory.

### **Learning Log**

One method to put the new knowledge to work is what's called a **Learning Log**. A learning log is nothing more than a log of what you learned that day. The student after a lesson writing down in a log what they have learned, what they feel was easy or hard in that days lesson and how they can apply this new information in there day to day work environment.

- Review your notes and Log frequently, both alone and with a study group.
- Compare your notes to another student's in order to pick up ideas about how to make your notes more useful to you.
- You might want to add notes from your textbook so that you will have a single source to study from when the test approaches. Use a different color of ink so that you will know what came from lecture and what came from the book.
- If you don't understand the course material, don't just re-read it. Try something else! Consult with the Instructor, a tutor, an academic advisor, a classmate, and or a study group.

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