Manage your own learning . . .

How Do Students Become Self-Directed Learners?
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
Questions? Contact josh.walker@austin.utexas.edu

1. Assess the task at hand
   • Confirm exactly what you are expected to do. Ask your instructor for clarification if necessary.
   • Recognize the different demands between simple tasks (e.g., read, calculate, summarize, etc.) and complex ones (e.g., explain, evaluate, design, etc.).
   • Inventory what knowledge, skills, and materials are required to be able to succeed.

2. Evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses
   • Determine what you already know and can do related to the task.
   • Identify the knowledge and skills you still need to develop.
   • Select an honest method for gauging your progress in learning the material?

3. Plan an appropriate approach
   • For complex projects:
     • Gather all necessary information regarding deadlines, breaks, schedule conflicts, etc.
     • Work backwards from the final deadline to plot a course of action through each sub-part of the project.
   • For complex problems:
     • Gather all necessary information regarding variables, parameters, units, etc.
     • Estimate reasonable answers and solutions in order to visualize possible results.

4. Apply strategies & monitor your performance
   • Monitor your understanding during class and while studying.
   • Tag the places in your notes where you got something wrong or have questions about the right answer.
   • Regularly pause as you read to ask yourself questions about the text.
   • Make connections between what you are learning and what has already been learned in the course.
   • Reflect on the effectiveness of your approach to learning & studying
   • Utilize feedback to gauge your level of understanding, including results from:

5. Reflect on & adjust your approach
   • Seek help from others
     • a study group
     • review sessions
     • office hours
     • online group like Piazza.com or Hoot.me
   • Find new strategies to try out from classmates or instructors.

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