

SOMETIMES YOU CAN'T REMEMBER...

...**because** you don't want to remember, have no interest in the material, have no clear reason to remember. **SUGGESTION No. 1:** Meditate awhile and try to find a reason to remember; talk with another student who does seem interested in the material and learn what motivates her or ask your instructor. Write your reason down once found and keep it around for periodic pep talks with yourself when needed.

...**because** you don't understand the material you're trying to remember. **SUGGESTION No. 2:** Try to get a "bird's-eye view" of the "whole" before attempting to remember details of each part; ask someone for help if you really have tried and just can't understand the material or read a simplified version or critique of the concept before retackling the original. Caution: initial understanding should be complete several days before the test in order that the last few days can be spent organizing, relating, memorizing, and reinforcing. Don't wait until the last minute to "understand."

...**because** you don't initially read and study with the intent to remember—always assuming you'll think about it "later," look back and learn it "later." **SUGGESTION No. 3:** Read with the intent to remember—and you will remember. Read with the intent to hold yourself responsible for what you've read as soon as you finish reading—then do so!

...**because** most forgetting takes place rapidly—right after initial learning unless some effort is made immediately to use the new information or recall and "store" the information for later review and use. **SUGGESTION No. 4:** Always take the few extra moments required at the time of initial learning to stop and recall at periodic intervals what you have just read. Immediate recall of newly-learned information is the keynote to later memory of it.

...**because** you spend most of your study time just passively re-reading and "looking over" the material to be learned. **SUGGESTION No. 5:** Most of your study time, more than 50% of it, should be spent recalling what you've read and testing yourself in various ways to see if you know it and can use it. Many students fool themselves into thinking that because they've looked over the material again that they "know" it. . .leave lots of time to test yourself and prove that you know it.

...**because** when you've finally grasped a concept and think you "know" it, you are satisfied and turn to something else. . .instead of "overlearning" to insure against the panic often caused by naturally higher anxiety levels during examinations. **SUGGESTION No. 6:** Having once learned and immediately tested yourself by trying to recall the information, continue to test yourself—over and over—at periodic intervals of decreasing frequency. Expose as many senses as possible to newly learned information (i.e., write it, speak it, hear it, look at it).

...**because** of "interference" from somewhat similar materials and ideas--especially when one is not learned perfectly before going on to the next. **SUGGESTION No. 7:** Learn one topic thoroughly—indeed "overlearn it"—before attempting to learn a similar one. Familiar, well-learned things assume identities of their own and are not likely to confuse, or be confused by, somewhat similar things.

...**because** you learn the material but don't practice using it in the form which will be required on an examination. **SUGGESTION No. 8:** Once you "know" the information, practice using it by actually composing and writing answers to typical test questions, doing problems, etc.