

Effective Learning

If there is a starting point it is “wanting” to learn

Wanting

Although we do learn without wanting to, for example phobias are learnt behaviour, effective learning usually requires motivation and the desire to learn.

Doing

Experiential learning is all about learning by doing. Therefore if you are to learn effectively then you need to actually do something - paddle a canoe.

Doing is just another word for practice.

Practice doesn't make perfect. It makes permanent. Suppose you practice the wrong thing!

Doing the same thing over and over again without thinking about what you are doing does not guarantee that you will learn how to do it better. There is one thing that repetition increases the probability of ... REPETITION!

Digesting

Effective learning needs time for reflection and thinking. People who are good at learning ask themselves questions like: “How did that go?” “What worked” “What didn't” “How could I do that better next time?”

Digesting like the physiological process requires quiet relaxed time. You wouldn't digest a heavy meal by rushing around. Perhaps you need to think about learning in the same way.

Feedback

Integral to effective learning is feedback. We all like to know how well we are doing. Research indicates that one of the most enjoyable aspects of learning is getting feedback from friends and colleagues.

There are two types of feedback: intrinsic and extrinsic. (think internal & external)

Intrinsic feedback is feedback from within. What did you notice about the learning experience? Why did the car stall? Why did you fall off your bike?

Extrinsic feedback is feedback from others. Ideas from colleagues, lecturers, bosses. The evidence suggests that effective learning requires both intrinsic and extrinsic feedback.

