AILET

Learning How to Learn: How to Ace Any Entrance Test

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Live as if you were to die tomorrow, learn as if you were to live forever

Mahatma Gandhi

When Mahatma Gandhi said this, he did not mean procrastination. This is where the majority loses out in the competition. Although ideally learning should be devoid of competition but let's not discuss utopia.

Our lives revolve around examinations, they start at school and usually do not leave us until the mid 20's. For some, it is a lifetime affair.

This article is about learning how to learn with respect to acing entrance tests. The method we should use to conquer these entrance tests is research. In this article, we will discuss research among other ways to ace entrance tests.

The Problem

The biggest problem aspirants face with learning how to learn is not being able to decide what to study and how to study. There are a billion options and a trillion ways to deal with entrance tests out there. Instead of helping, they tend to confuse the student and the end result is inevitable.

The problem is that students jump into preparation without chalking out a blueprint for the preparation. They work hard but in all four directions and end up going nowhere.

So how do we solve this problem?

Here we discuss some tips that aspirants can use to ace entrance examinations

Choose your battles

Do not jump into the preparation of any entrance test. Especially if the reasons are one of the following

- My friend is taking it so am I
- My uncle suggested it because his son is taking it
- Everyone in my family took this test

Think hard and think very hard before choosing to dive into preparation for an entrance test.

Make sure the following make sense to you

- The subjects in the test interest you
- You want to pursue the course that the test offers
- Your passion and dream agree with the test
- It is your personal desire to take the test

At least one of these should be on the list, then move forward. Otherwise, spot the red flags and put on the thinking cap.

Dig for Information

There is no such thing as *too much information*.

It is strongly advised to have as much information as possible about the test before you venture out to take it and qualify. I am not saying there is absolutely no chance you won't qualify without a lot of information, it will simply make the journey easy and the result better.

How to search for information on an entrance test?

1. Talk to your teachers: It does not get more simple than this. It is practically their job to answer your questions and they are powerhouses of information.
2. Talk to your seniors: Yes, do not hold that grudge or ego. Just because he is a year older, he does not know better, right? WRONG. A year of experience is worth a lot, something you will learn later in life. Do not shy away from taking the help.
3. Internet: This is the DUH moment. Yes, the internet is not just for Facebook and Twitter (90's kid so that's where I draw the line). Search all there is to know about the entrance test. Forums like Quora also have some very good answers about entrance tests, make sure you see

the profile of the person who posted the answer. There are guidance websites, college websites and a lot more just for this purpose. P.S: CLATalogue has a section dedicated to advising for the aspirants. Check it out

4. Call: Cannot get the information you seek? Nothing on any of the above platforms? Google the telephone number of the helpdesk of that test and call them up. YES, that is exactly what I am asking you to do. They will be happy to help and trust me not many students do this.

Chalk out a routine

This sounds simple. You have heard it a million times. That does not mean it is not useful.

It is always wise to plan your course of action before you start, it is even wiser to plan every step of the way. Most of you live with your parents, have school, friends, and other engagements that require a part of your time. How do you manage them along with studies?

See this video on being organised by Thomas Frank's Youtube Channel

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We all have only 24 hours a day so make sure your routine marks the number of hours for studies early on. Consider your day is only in the free hours beyond your study routine. Do not just make a routine for the sake of pasting it on your wall. Follow it religiously.

If you decide on getting a chapter done before school in the morning, make sure you wake up in time. To wake up in time you need to sleep early and to sleep early you will have to give up on that series you have planned to watch or the chatting session with your crush.

All that has to wait until you complete your study hours, do everything but do it in your time, the remainder of your day.

Don't skip

This is a weird subheading, right? *Don't Skip? SKIP WHAT?*

Don't skip anything. That is the point.

- Do not skip on that easy chapter you have left for later.
- Do not skip a day of study because it's your friend's birthday, if you arrive late at the party, he/she will understand.

- Do not skip meals to study, 10 mins will not hamper your studies so just make sure you follow your routine. You need your carbs and protein to study tirelessly.
- Do NOT skip sleep. Pulling an all-nighter, sleepless elite, and insomniac are all cool words for a Whatsapp status (Again, 90's kid so that's where I draw the line)but they harm your nerve cells. Sleep is important because it rests your brain, if your brain is not well-rested, it will not learn things at full capacity so the hours will be pointless.
- Do not skip having fun in your leisure period. Do not be THAT guy. If you have allowed yourself an hour of TV a day, make sure you avail that. Keep your mind fresh for the upcoming study sessions.

Avoid Distractions

I need my phone for the clock.

I study well with the music.

I can watch a tv show and study simultaneously.

These are some of the voices in your head. SHUT THESE VOICES.

There are several distractions around us in our daily lives. Some are common like our phones, computer, or tv. Some a little more complex like a weird sound coming from the street, the smell of chicken (or Paneer or Tofu: Vegetarian or Vegan) from your kitchen.

It is empirical that when you study, you are beyond the reach of these distractions. The easiest way to do so is to inform your loved ones about your routine and that you will be unavailable/locked in these particular hours.

Then close the door and STUDY. NO… Do not think about that sweet pillow and blanket. Sleep will come to you but you have to earn it.

Mix it up

Mix up difficult subjects and easy ones in your routine. Mix up lengthy topics with short ones. Try studying a boring topic after your favourite subject. They are all important. You need to study them all.

If you mix them well enough and in a good/balanced combination, the study hours will never get monotonous or boring.

Test yourself every day

This is the most important piece of advice. Studying is important but learning is a process and one of the steps in testing. Before the big test itself, train with smaller ones of your own. Live the final day a million times over in your mind before it actually arrives.

Before you sleep, allocate at least 30 mins for a daily test about the things you studied that day. Make a similar space on weekends but it should be minimum of 2 hours to test the whole week.

It is important that you retain most of what you studied as well as ready for the time-bound pressure. Practice every day for the final fight and you will not be surprised.