

MAKING THE
DAYS COUNT

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Study group benefits
- Effective study group tips
- How to form a study group
- The cone of learning and memory

Key Words

How to, study groups, knowledge retention, independent learner, tips ; learning

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iAspire Student Support

Study Groups—Join One Today

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Large Classrooms

University large classrooms and the typical one directional teaching style leaves little time for answering everyone's questions. It is for this reason students need to work on learning subject material in class as well as outside of the classroom. The formation of study groups has been found to improve a students' learning experience.



Study Group - Benefits

Answer Questions

- Clarify confusing and difficult subject material by taking turns to explain it to each other which will build your confidence and enhance your learning.
- Strength in numbers – what's the old saying 'two heads are better than one'?
- If no one understands, you can seek professional help as a group.

Developing Self Discipline

- By joining or setting up a study group and adhering to the agreed-upon times you are developing self discipline.

- Self discipline is a big part of taking responsibility for your learning.

- There's less inclination to procrastinate when working in a study group.

Learning Problem-Solving Skills

- Working together to solve difficult questions will improve your problem-solving abilities and build your confidence.

- Group members provide a variety of viewpoints and strengths that can get great results in a short period of time.

Learning Teamwork Skills

- Teamwork skills are very important to career success – Being able to work in a team is an invaluable skill that can really only be learned by doing it. Teamwork can be challenging but the results outweigh the challenges.

- Sharing study tips within a group will improve your study method and preparation methods while you're making friends.

Do you belong to a study group?



Why Students Avoid Study Groups

Students typically avoid study groups for the following reason:

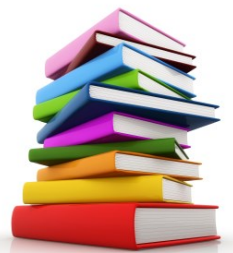
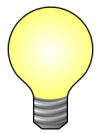
The misconception that an isolated environment is better for concentration. This is only true if you are confident what is important to study and are memorizing it. If you want to understand what you are studying, the interactive approach is best. Once you understand the what and why, learning and remembering becomes easier.

Most people are aware of this but refuse to admit it and feel vulnerable about facing the things they are not knowledgeable about. This is probably the number one reason why students don't join a study group. Isn't it better to know what you don't know before you rock-up to an exam and then find out? Remember if you already knew all this material you wouldn't be studying it and if you already know most of it, it's a great opportunity to take your knowledge to the next level.



Effective Study Group Tips

Active Learning



“Hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard.”
- Kevin Durant
(basketball player)

Not all study groups are created equal. Choose your study group members carefully for an effective group.

- Work with people that inspire and motivate you rather than those that are looking for an easy fix and just want a passing grade.
- Work with those that are alert, focused and participate in class.
- Bigger is not better. The ideal study group size is 3-4 people. Any bigger and it becomes complicated to coordinate meetings

and to communicate.

- Preparation is key for a successful study group meeting. All members need to do the necessary reading and prep before meetings to increase understanding and to maximize the use of time.
- If you are unhappy in a particular study group find another one.

Choose wisely and studying can actually be fun!



Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do. Don't be afraid to share it.



How to Form a Study Group

To form a successful study group you will need to establish group rules and guidelines to keep everyone on track. Here are some tips:

- Limit group size to 3-5 members maximum. If you have more than 5 members, form two groups and swap members from time to time. This will avoid hurt feelings and stronger or weaker groups forming. It also gives you a great opportunity to find people you really work well with.
- Don't just study with your friends because you are friends. Pick smart people that participate in class and do their assignments on time particularly if you want to improve your grades.
- Establish regular meeting times and places you will meet to make it easier so meetings will become a habit.
- Choose a study group name. This will help create identity and a sense of belonging (i.e. "the brain trust").
- First group meeting have each member introduce themselves, maybe even play an icebreaker game.
- Take turns being group monitor to keep conversations on topic. The monitor is to keep study focus should conversations diverge.
- Have a friendly word to use when a member is slacking off. This will serve as a friendly reminder.
- Create a code word or secret handshake. I know it sounds dorky but it could be fun. Have prizes for good ideas. Everyone likes recognition and a pat on the back.
- Quiz each other and try to predict test questions.
- Know your preferred learning style (i.e. audio, visual, tactile or a combination of these) and group members' learning styles. This will be very useful for studying together.
- Last but not least, if you are in a study group and it's not working for you, choose another one. It is very important that the group dynamic works for each group member. The study group needs to be a safe and nurturing environment for everyone to feel comfortable to share and learn.

"I see and I forget.

I hear and I remember.

I do and I understand."

—Confucius

The Cone of Learning and Memory

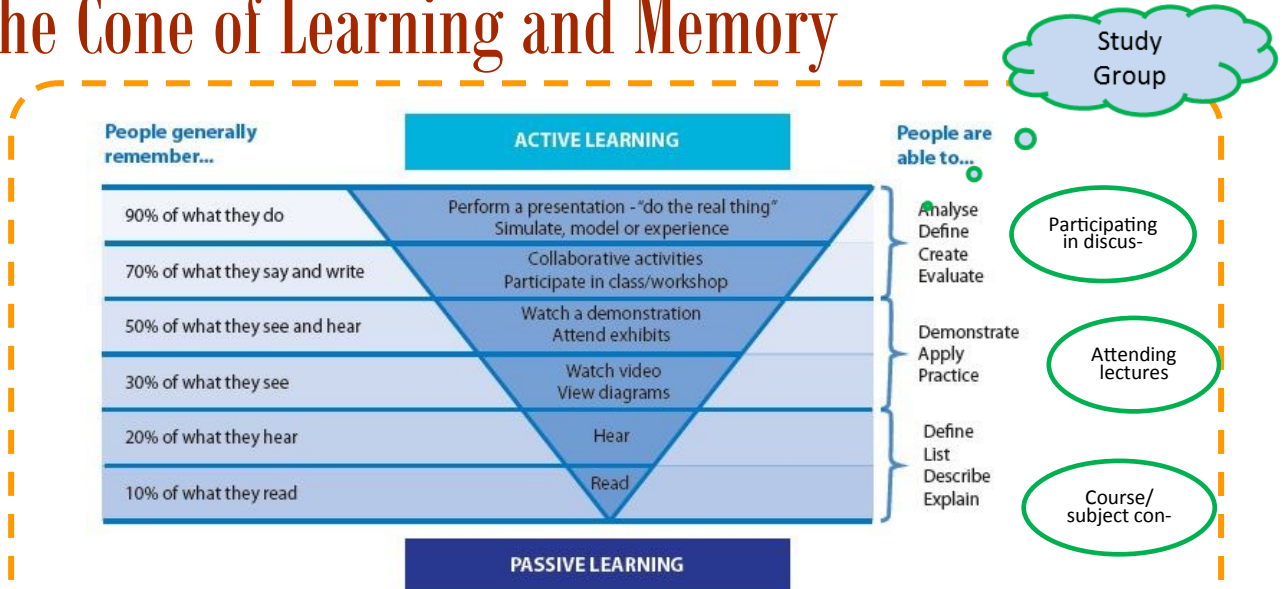


Figure 1: Passive vs Active Learning and the potential results. Adapted from: https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/267178/Getting_started_with_blended_learning_guide.pdf ; <http://www.edutechie.ws/2007/10/09/cone-of-experience-media/> Based on the educationalist Edgar Dale's original cone of experience theory.

