

1 Building Dreams, Setting Goals



Teachable Moment As you begin this course along with your students, let them know that you are in this together and that it will be an informative and fun course. Make sure you have lots of sticky notes, index cards, markers, and occasional goodies to share. Invite students into the classroom, let them know that you value their input, and ask them to let you know if they have ideas on how to make the course interesting and enjoyable.

Teachable Moment The most successful students are those who take responsibility for their learning, but sometimes it takes a creative teacher to help them see that they can take control. Students must be encouraged to share, ask questions, and make mistakes. As an instructor, your job is to help students understand what they need to do, and hold them accountable, in a way that both challenges and supports them. One major block for students is that sometimes they simply misunderstand what they are supposed to do. Every time an assignment is given, ask a student to repeat what is to be done, and ask another if the summary was correct.

YOU'RE ABOUT TO DISCOVER...

- How this book will help you learn
- What motivates you
- How your attitude can sabotage you
- How your beliefs about your intelligence can affect your college success
- What separates *performers* and *learners*
- What your core values say about you
- Why you should distinguish between dreams and goals
- How to develop goals that work
- What it takes to succeed in college

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

Peter Drucker, management expert (1909–2005)

**FOCUS
CHALLENGE
CASE**

Gloria Gonzales



It was her first day of college. As Gloria Gonzales walked to her first class, “College Success,” she had mixed feelings: excitement, anticipation, anxiety, and apprehension. She wondered if she’d meet any interesting people, if she’d like her instructor, and if she’d learn anything important in this class. After all, she’d gotten good grades in high school without even trying hard. If she just put in some effort, she thought, she’d be successful in college, too. How can you study something like “College Success” for a whole term? she asked herself.

To be honest, Gloria thought she probably already knew most of what there was to learn in this course, and if she didn’t, so what? She knew what she had to do to get good grades—everyone does—but she didn’t always choose to do it, that’s all. School was part of her life, but it wasn’t always her top priority. At least this course would probably be easier than her math course or her composition course with all that writing.

Gloria wasn’t the first person in her family to go to college. Her sister had attempted it, but she’d dropped out after her first term and gotten a job. “College, who needs it?” she’d exclaimed. “I want to start earning good money right away, not years from now!” There were times when Gloria thought her sister might be right. Her sister certainly seemed able to afford some of the things Gloria had always wanted herself. Was college really going to be worth all the time, effort, and expense? But everyone she knew was going to college; it was the right thing to do after high school, and everyone expected it of her.

Gloria’s family didn’t have much money. They were sacrificing to help finance her college education. She’d better perform, they’d said. They’d told her point-blank that her sister had set a bad example, and that her first-term grades had better not include anything lower than a B. Frankly, Gloria was beginning to feel a twinge of performance pressure. Of all the children in her family, her sister had always been considered the smartest, and she’d given up after only one term. If her sister couldn’t do it, how could Gloria? If she were to succeed, exactly what would it take?

Despite her worries as she walked down the hallway toward the classroom, Gloria was sure of one thing: She looked good today—really good. Her sister’s skirt fit perfectly, the new red shirt was definitely her color, and thankfully it was a good hair day. Gloria had always been able to make heads turn.

Beneath it all, Gloria knew what she wanted, anyway. She was going into the fashion industry. She’d dreamed of that since she was ten years old. She wasn’t sure exactly what she’d need to do to make



it, but she'd worked in a clothing store at the mall all through high school, and she was good at it. In fact, the store kept trying to give her more hours because she had such exceptional customer service skills. She thought she'd probably just work her college courses around her thirty-five hours a week there.

Gloria's parents wanted her to major in engineering because they thought it would be a lucrative and stable profession. They were always clipping articles about engineering jobs from the newspaper and giving them to her, but she kept telling them she had no interest. "There'll always be good jobs for engineers," they said. She'd heard it so many times that her usual response now was "Yeah, whatever. . . ." While they talked engineering, she dreamed of becoming a famous fashion designer with her own line of clothing. She was going to call it "Gloria." Her parents had named her after their favorite rock-and-roll song of all time, "G-L-O-R-I-A." Imagine—her own clothing label with her name on it!

As she reached for the classroom doorknob, Gloria couldn't help wondering about the two questions at the forefront of her mind: "What will college really be like?" and "Will I be successful?" She took a deep breath as she opened the classroom door. *This is it*, she thought. Somehow, she felt as if she were outside herself, watching on the big screen—replete with Panavision and DTS sound. *This is real; this is me, starring in my own movie*, she said to herself. And even though it felt good, Gloria had to wonder about the ending. All she could do was hope for the best.

Teachable Moment The students depicted in the case studies throughout this text are fictitious but face challenges that most college students face. Case studies are a good way of discussing issues that students may have in a safe, nonthreatening way. It's easy to talk about someone else, rather than oneself. Take advantage of every opportunity to constructively criticize, challenge, and compliment Gloria, and all of the students you will meet in this text.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research An important EI concept is reality testing. Individuals who are realistic are much more likely to be successful. Ask students if they think Gloria is realistic. Why or why not?

Sensitive Situation Chances are you have students in the class who are considering entering a major that they think would make someone else happy. Share with students that this can happen and that they will have the opportunity to learn about themselves by using a variety of assessment tools and exploring careers in this book.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Now that you've read about Gloria Gonzales, answer the following questions. You may not know all the answers yet, but you'll find out what you know and what you stand to gain by reading this chapter.

1. Describe Gloria's motivation to succeed in college. Is she sufficiently motivated to succeed?
2. Describe Gloria's beliefs about her intelligence. Does she think college is mostly about effort or about ability? Is Gloria a *learner* or a *performer*?
3. Is Gloria's vision of becoming a famous fashion designer a goal or a dream? Why?
4. Identify three things (attitudes, beliefs, fears, and so on) that do not show focus and might cause Gloria to make poor life management choices.
5. Identify three things that do show focus and might help Gloria make good life management choices.
6. What elements of Gloria's situation are similar to your own college experience thus far?
7. Gloria's parents' definition of success in school meant getting good grades. Do you agree with this definition? Why or why not? Could equating good grades with success actually hinder Gloria's ability to succeed? If so, how?



READINESS CHECK

Before beginning to read this chapter, take two minutes to answer the following questions on a scale of 1 to 10. Your answers will help you assess how ready you are to focus.

1 = not very/not much/very little/low

10 = very/a lot/very much/high

Based on reading the “You’re about to discover...” list and skimming this chapter, how much do you think you probably already know about the subject matter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your college success?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your career success after college?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

In general, how motivated are you to learn the material in this chapter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

This book describes four key factors related to intrinsic, or internal, motivation: curiosity, control, career outlook, and challenge. The next four questions relate to these **C-Factors**:

How *curious* are you about the content you expect to read in this chapter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much *control* do you expect to have over mastering the material in this chapter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this chapter might help you develop your *career outlook*?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How *challenging* do you think the material in this chapter will be for you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Before beginning any task, including studying, it’s important to check in with yourself to ensure that you’re physically, intellectually, and emotionally ready to focus. How ready are you, physically, to focus on this chapter? (Are you rested, feeling well, and so on?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How ready are you, intellectually, to focus on this chapter? (Are you thinking clearly, focused on this course, interested in this subject?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How ready are you, emotionally, to focus on this chapter? (Are you calm, confident, composed?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

If your answer to any of the last three questions is below a 5 on the scale, you may need to address the issue you’re facing prior to beginning this chapter. For example, if you’re hungry, get a quick bite to eat. If you’re feeling scattered, take a few moments to settle down and focus.

Finally, how long do you think it will take you to complete this chapter?
 _____ Hour(s) _____ Minutes

“It’s always smart to learn from your mistakes. It’s smarter to learn from the mistakes of others.”

Hillel Segal and Jesse Berst,
computer experts

Sensitive Situation A key to students developing self-insight is to do the “Readiness Check” in each chapter. Don’t skip this section. Also, keep in mind that some students may not want to be completely honest about how they feel about taking this course. Students may feel that they don’t need it and may not be ready to focus. Consider a brief discussion about why it is important to be honest when they fill out this “Readiness Check,” and that the results are only for themselves and not for the instructor.

Who Are You? And What Do You Want?

Imagine this voicemail greeting: “Hi. At the tone, please answer two of life’s most important questions. Who are you? And what do you want?” Beep. Very clever, don’t you think? Can you answer these questions right now? Have you thought much about them? How much do you really know about yourself and what you want from this life of yours?

Don’t worry. These aren’t trick questions and there are no wrong answers. But there are some answers that are more right for you than others. College is a great time to think about who you are and what you want. In addition to learning about biology or history or business—whatever you choose for a major—college will be a time to learn about yourself: your motivation, values, dreams, and goals. College is a time when you’ll make some of the most important choices of your life. Which major will you choose? Which career will you aim for? How many lifelong friends will you make? From this point on, it’s up to you. Have you ever

heard this phrase with ten two-letter words: “If it is to be, it is up to me”? It’s true.

Think about it: a college education is one of the best investments you can make. Once you’ve earned a college degree, it’s yours forever. Someone can steal your car, walk away with your cell phone, or carry off your laptop, but once you’ve earned a college degree, no one can ever take it from you. Your choice to be a college graduate will pay off in many ways. So even if you aren’t sure exactly how you want to spend the rest of your life right now, you can’t go wrong by investing in your future.

This book starts with the big picture: your life. It’s about managing your life, being fully invested in what you’re doing, and using your abilities to their utmost. Notice the phrase “managing your life”—not *controlling* your life. Let’s face it: many things in life are beyond our control. We can’t control international politics, set tuition rates, or advise characters in our favorite movies about what to do next. But you can manage your life by making smart choices, setting realistic goals, monitoring your time and energy, motivating yourself, and ultimately creating your own future. As the title of this book states boldly, it’s about focus.

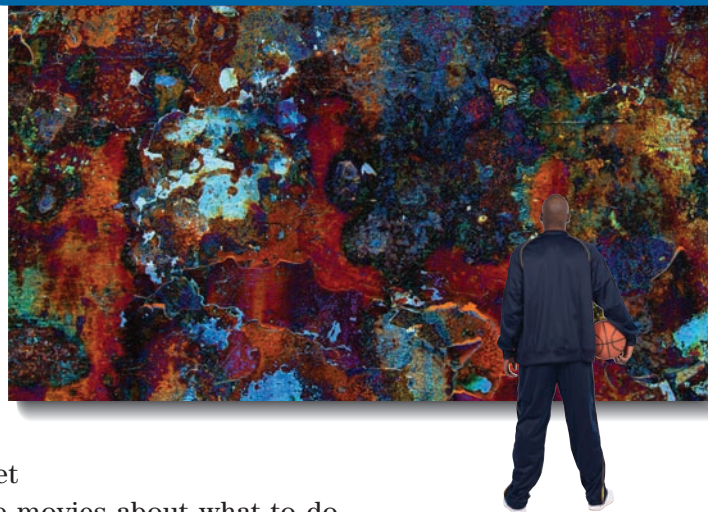
For many of us, focusing is a challenge. We work too many hours, crowd our lives with obligations, and rush from one thing to the next. We’re good at multitasking. We can surf the Internet, listen to a new CD, watch a DVD, and read this chapter—all at the same time! But think about Gandhi’s wise words applied to today’s lifestyle, “There is more to life than increasing its speed.” In short, while we’ve become skilled at multitasking, we may have sacrificed some of the self-discipline required for in-depth study. Multitasking may be a great skill to have when you’re a corporate CEO, running many divisions of a large company, but learning to focus is what most college students need. In fact, recent research indicates that multitasking hurts your brain’s ability to learn, and that what you learn while you’re distracted by other things is harder to use and recall.¹

Ours is a fast-paced society. We expect results quickly. We’ve become accustomed to instant gratification, as it’s called. We want what we want, and we want it right now! In our society, if you don’t want to wait until you can afford something, what do you do? Charge it! But earning a college degree takes time, commitment, and determination. It won’t happen overnight and it won’t happen automatically. Unlike almost anything else you can buy, you must invest more than money to become truly educated.

Of course, some people achieve success without a college degree, but by and large, they’re the exception. Even Steven Spielberg, self-made billionaire in the film industry and winner of Academy Awards for *Schindler’s List* and

“What is important is to keep learning, to enjoy challenge, and to tolerate ambiguity. In the end there are no certain answers.”

Martina Horner, former President
of Radcliffe College



FrogStack LLC

Activity Option Take some time here for students to briefly get to know each other. Later in the chapter there will be a getting-to-know-you activity, but it’s important to set the tone of the class early on. One simple activity is for students to write their name, where they are from, and possible major on an index card or piece of paper. Collect and redistribute the index cards. Have students read the card they received and guess who in the class they are describing.

Teachable Moment Have you ever been asked if your students knew more about something than you did? How might you respond? Share with your students that there are probably people in the class who know more about some things than you and how you look forward to learning from them. Set the tone in the classroom that you too are a learner—we are all lifelong learners. Share something that you have learned from your students (i.e., Facebook, MySpace).

Activity Option Before class, write on index cards something that might cause a student to lose focus in school (i.e., your roommate blasts music all day, your grandmother is ill, your books cost more money than you thought, your babysitter’s last day is Friday). Make as many cards as you need for the size and composition of your class. Pass out the cards, one per student, and as each student holds up his or her card, ask the class whether it’s possible to exert some control over the situation, and if so, how.

“Furious activity is no substitute for understanding.”

H. H. Williams, British poet and playwright



Science Faction

Saving Private Ryan, felt the need to finish the college degree he had started more than thirty years before. “I wanted to accomplish this for many years as a ‘thank you’ to my parents for giving me the opportunity for an education and a career, and as a personal note for my own family—and young people everywhere—about the importance of achieving their college education goals,” he said. “But I hope they get there quicker than I did. Completing the requirements for my degree 33 years after finishing my principal education marks my longest post-production schedule.”²

If you read this book carefully and follow its advice, it will help you become the best student you can possibly be. It will give you practical tools to help you manage your life. It will take you beyond college into your career. And most of all, it will encourage you to become a true scholar. That is this book’s challenge to you as you begin your college career.

Sensitive Situation The backgrounds and challenges students face have changed dramatically over the years. Not everyone has an iPod or a DVD player. Some students may be working two jobs to pay for college, while others’ expenses are fully funded by scholarships or parents. Some students are supporting families. Some students may have learning disabilities while others are academically talented. Keep in mind that the challenges may be greater for some students than others. Open the door for students to let you know if they are facing any unusual challenges. Now is a good time to give them your e-mail address, office hours, and any other ways that they might contact you.

Activity Option Be sure that you do Exercise 1.1 along with your students. Remember that they want to get to know you, too. Pair up students and have them share their information with a partner. Have the partner introduce the student to the class and report on two or three items that were really interesting. Another activity you can do is called “You would never guess.” Ask students to write something on an index card that no one would guess about them. Collect the cards and read them aloud. Have students guess who it might be.

EXERCISE 1.1 We’d Like to Get to Know You...

Take a few minutes to finish the following statements. Think about what each sentence says about you. Use your responses to introduce yourself to the class or form pairs, talk over your responses together, and use your partner’s answers to introduce him or her to the class.

1. I’m happiest when _____.
2. I’m disappointed when _____.
3. If I had an extra \$100, I’d _____.
4. The thing I’m most proud of is _____.
5. Once people get to know me, they’re probably surprised to find I’m _____.
6. My family wants me to _____.
7. I’d really like to become _____.
8. My friends enjoy me because _____.
9. I’ve been known to consume large quantities of _____.
10. I’d rather be _____ than _____.
11. When I’m under pressure, _____.
12. My best quality is _____.
13. My worst quality is _____.
14. The academic skill I’d most like to develop is _____.
15. One thing I’d like to figure out about myself is _____.

Spending Time “in the System”

CHALLENGE REACTION

Challenge: How do people learn?

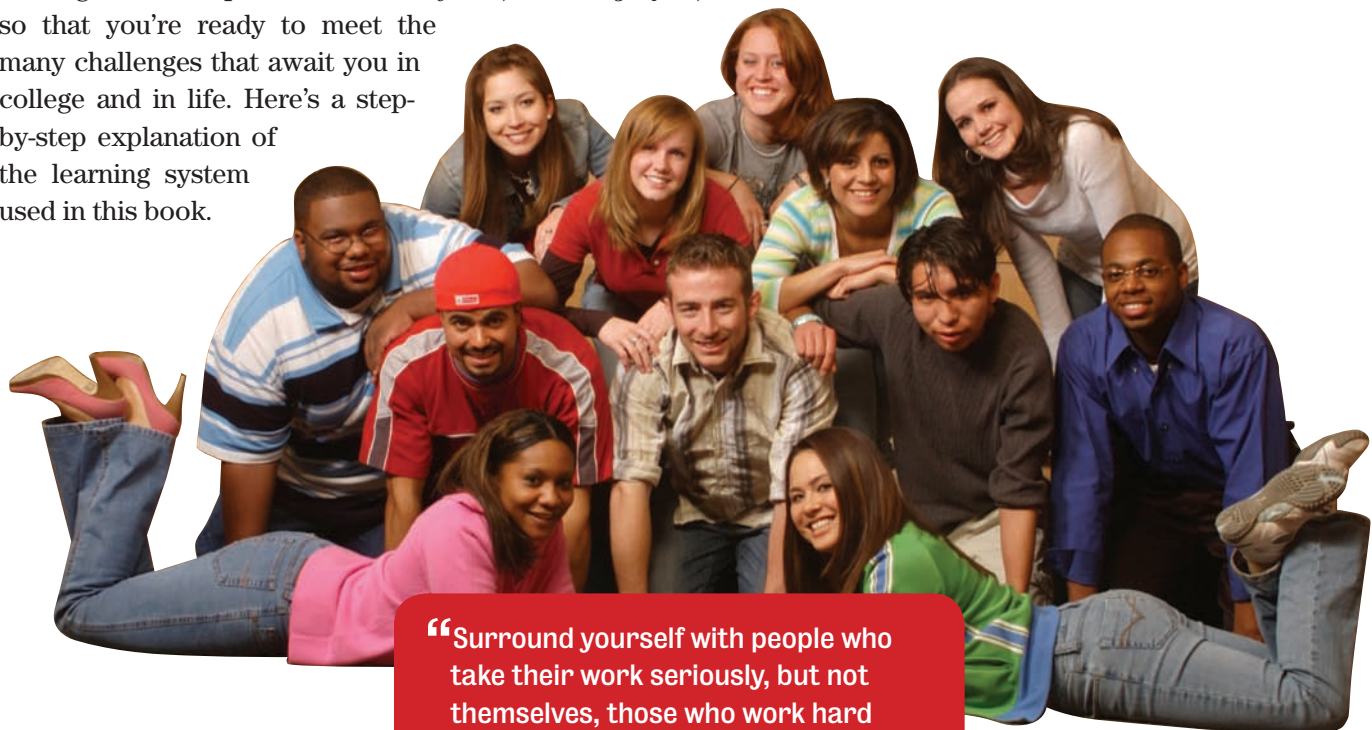
Reaction: _____

Spending time “in the system”? No, being in college isn’t like being in jail—far from it. Many people reflect back on their college days as one of the most enjoyable, active, and interesting times of their lives. Get involved on campus, make lifelong friends, and gain as much as you can from your college experience.

“The system” is the approach used in this book to structure productive learning: the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system. It is based on the work of Dr. John Bransford and his colleagues, who together wrote an influential book called *How People Learn* (2000).

Figure 1.1 summarizes how learning requires focus, and focus involves the four steps in this system. Ideally, it would be interesting to hear the conversation going on in your head as you learn—what’s called metacognition, or knowing how you come to know something. But since that’s impossible, this book asks you to write and discuss things along the way: your reactions, your insights, and the actions you plan to take. You’ll come to realize things about yourself. This book’s goal for you is *transformative learning*: “a process of examining, questioning, validating, and revising [your] perceptions.”³ What you’ll learn by reading it has the potential to *transform*, or *change* you, so that you’re ready to meet the many challenges that await you in college and in life. Here’s a step-by-step explanation of the learning system used in this book.

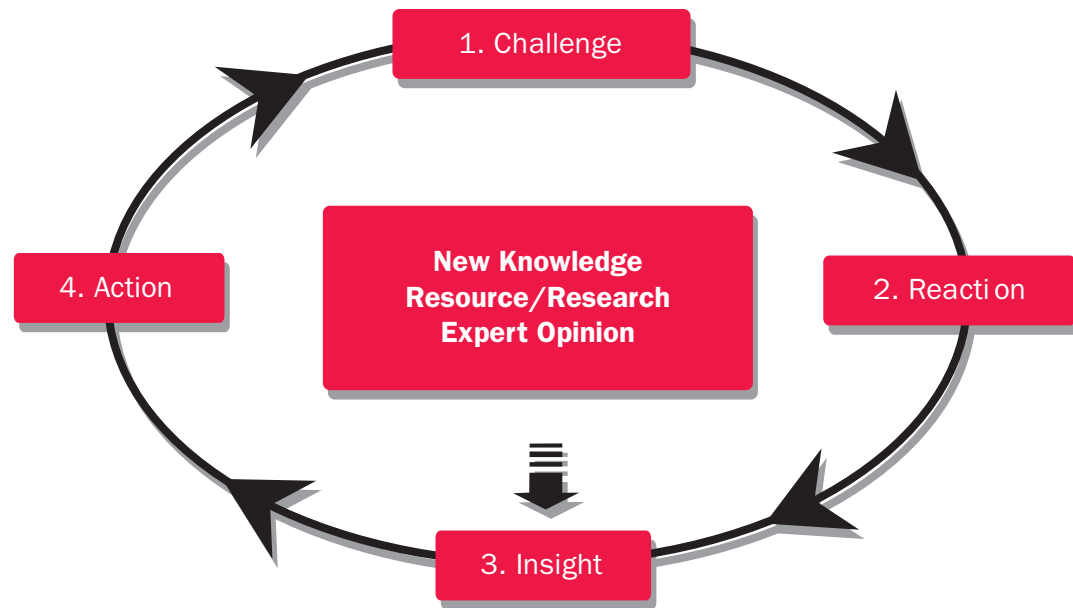
Sensitive Situation Keep in mind that for some students the idea of getting involved and making friends is not a priority. College is an endurance test and they “just want to get out of here.” Remind students that those who are the most successful make academic progress *and* connections to the campus. Working with others and learning from and with them, getting involved—if only minimally—will enrich their college experience. For those who do see “time in the system” as jail time, getting involved and meeting others will make this time in their lives more enjoyable. As an instructor, think of ways you can get your students working together. Your job is to convince students that education is a *process* and not a *product*.



“Surround yourself with people who take their work seriously, but not themselves, those who work hard and play hard.”

Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State

Figure 1.1
How People Learn



Source: Based on J. Bransford, et al. (2000). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Activity Option Have students add up the cost of their tuition, room, board, books, and any other expenses related to school and divide that total by the number of hours they are in school (number of weeks multiplied by the number of hours they are supposed to be in class). Students will then see how much money each class costs them—and the cost of missing class! (See Staley, 2003, “Spending Time,” p. 54.)

Teachable Moment The Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system is a very important feature of this text. The cycle is to react to a presented challenge, find out how much you already know, use the new knowledge provided to gain insight, and then turn that insight into action. Keep reminding students about this chain reaction.

STEP 1: Accept the *FOCUS* challenge. Every time you study a new subject or take a new course, you are challenged, right? Within each chapter of this book, you’ll be presented with challenges, beginning with a case study about a college student—perhaps someone like you or a friend—who is experiencing something new and difficult. Research shows that people can learn more from examples of things going wrong than they can from examples of things going perfectly smoothly. As you continue to read, you’ll be presented with additional challenges related to the chapter’s content to pique your curiosity, motivate you to keep reading, and start a learning chain reaction. Don’t skip over this step; it’s an important part of the learning process. Challenge yourself!

STEP 2: React to the challenge. Whenever you’re learning something new, the best place to start is by identifying what you think you already know—your gut reaction. You’re a novice to any new field you’re studying, not an expert, but you bring with you to the learning process a set of preconceptions, assumptions, sometimes biases or misperceptions, and of course, all your previous experiences. Your reaction to each challenge will tell you what you think you already know. If you come across an unfamiliar term, look it up in the dictionary. Of course, you won’t know everything there is to know in reacting to the challenge yet. But you’ll find out what you do know and what you don’t, and by the end of the chapter, you’ll know more about all the challenges you’ve encountered throughout your reading. The goal of this book is to help you become a deep learner, as opposed to skimming the surface and simply rushing on to the next assignment and the next course—as many college students do. It will ask you to pause, take stock, focus, and think.

STEP 3: Use new knowledge to gain insights. After your initial reaction, you must pay attention to your inner voice—insights you’ve gained from new knowledge. “Insight → Action” activities will help you keep track of them. Your instructor

may ask you to record your answers online or in a notebook, or you may discuss these questions in class. Let's say, for example, that you read later in this chapter about goal setting. When you first thought about it, the whole idea of setting goals seemed simple, but after reading about it, you decide you really hadn't thought about it very deeply and had only vague notions about setting your own goals. The difference between step 2 (whatever reaction you provided to the challenge) and step 3 (the insights you've gained) demonstrates that learning is taking place.

STEP 4: Use your insights to propel you toward action. Insights have no impact unless they become integrated into your life, unless they lead to change. Decide how an insight affects your existing beliefs, how it changes them, and therefore, what you've learned. Your insights may lead you to change your behavior, develop an informed opinion, or make choices about your education, your job, your family, or your life. The bottom line is: You must use your insights to take action. Think of this comparison. One day you feel sluggish, you notice that your clothes are tight, and you are suddenly aware that you're out of shape. You realize that you must make healthier food choices and exercise more. But if you don't take action, it won't happen. You've just gained an insight. You can do nothing about it, or you can use your insight to take action. To become real, new knowledge must lead to personal insights that result in action.

Each step in this four-part system is important. For example, if you skip step 2, *react to the challenge*, by identifying what you *think* you know, you may assume you already know all the new information you're reading or hearing. You may think, "Sure, of course, that makes sense. I already knew that," when you really didn't. In truth, the French philosopher Voltaire was right: "Common sense is not so common." Realizing there's a gap between steps 2 and 3—what you thought you knew and the insights you've gained from new knowledge—is important. And actually putting the insights you gain into real, live, honest-to-goodness action is vital.

As you work through this book, the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system will continue cycling back to step 1, presenting you with new challenges. If you follow the system built into this book and integrate it into your other academic pursuits, you can become a lifelong learner. Thinking in terms of the learning cycle will become ingrained. Someone once said that change is accelerating in such mind-boggling ways today that "Learning is what most adults will do for a living in the 21st century." Life management is about knowing how to learn.

INSIGHT ↔ ACTION

1. What do you think about the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system? Does it make sense? Do you understand how it works? Write a few paragraphs describing it in your own words.
2. Are you committed to using it throughout this book to validate its effectiveness? If so, write down exactly what will be required of you.

Chapter Crossover Look ahead to Chapter 11 on emotional intelligence (EI). Strong emotional intelligence enables individuals to take control over their lives as opposed to letting emotions and reactions to situations take over.

Teachable Moment Another important part of helping students understand the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system is to stress the importance of reflection (thinking about a situation—what happened?) and self-assessment (what did I do? why and how might I do it differently?). Insight that leads to new action or changed action is key to college success.

Activity Option Have students respond to the following challenge: It's Friday, and a student has a ten-page paper due on Monday. His roommate has invited him home for the weekend and the student wants to go. What are the possible reactions, insights, and actions related to this situation?

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research In relation to the "Activity Option," what strong EI skills would the student who chooses to stay home and get the paper done demonstrate? What about the student who chooses to do it at the last minute? This is a good time to discuss impulse control. In the famous marshmallow challenge done by Walter Mischel in the 1960s, four-year-olds were given marshmallows and told to wait 15 to 20 minutes before they could eat them. The same students were followed 12–14 years later. Those who couldn't wait and grabbed the marshmallows were the same people years later that had a somewhat troubled life and were still unable to put off gratification.

How Motivated Are You and How Are You Motivated?

Teachable Moment Although the majority of the statements in this “Challenge → Reaction” activity are “I” statements, consider pairing students with a study buddy. For example, the responses to question 3, “I determine my career goals,” may vary. Some students think that a strict teacher should determine students’ goals when they don’t pass a math class. Study buddies keep each other on task and help each other solve problem situations. According to J. W. Atkinson, “Achievement is a *we* thing, not a *me* thing, always the product of many heads and hands.” Ask students how *we*, the class, can help each other succeed. Make a list and agree on some things the class, and you, can do to help each other.

CHALLENGE → REACTION

How intrinsically motivated are you? Read each of the following statements and circle the number beside each statement that most accurately represents your views about yourself.

	Completely Not True	Somewhat Not True	Neutral	Somewhat True	Completely True
1. I have academic goals.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am confident I can complete my degree.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I determine my career goals.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I enjoy solving challenging, difficult problems.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I work on an assignment until I understand it.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am confident I will graduate from college.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I determine the quality of my academic work.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am pursuing a college degree because I value education.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel good knowing that I determine how my academic career develops.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have high standards for academic work.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Staying in college is my decision.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I study because I like to learn new things.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I enjoy doing outside readings in connection to my future coursework.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am intrigued by the different topics introduced in my courses.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I study because I am curious.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I look forward to going to class.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am excited to take more courses within my major.	1	2	3	4	5

	Completely Not True	Somewhat Not True	Neutral	Somewhat True	Completely True
18. I enjoy learning more within my field of study.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I like to find answers to questions about material I am learning.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I enjoy studying.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have pictured myself in a profession after college.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am excited about the job opportunities I will have when I graduate.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have pictured myself being successful in my chosen profession.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I believe I will make a substantial contribution to my chosen profession.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I feel good knowing I will be a member of the professional community in my area of study.	1	2	3	4	5

Total each column, then _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ =
add your scores across. _____ OVERALL SCORE

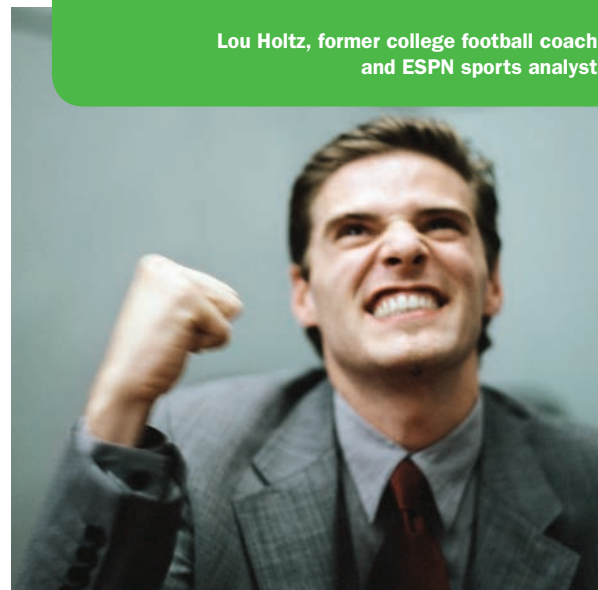
Continue reading to find out what your overall score means.

Let's get serious. When it comes to getting a college education, where does motivation come into the picture? In general, motivation is your desire to engage and put forth effort, even when the going gets rough. The word *motivation* comes from Medieval Latin, *motivus*, meaning "moving or impelling." What moves you to learn? There are many ways to define motivation, and different people are motivated by different things.

How motivated would you be to learn something difficult, such as a new language, one you'd never studied before? Let's say that you were offered a chance to learn Finnish, a challenging language that is not related to English. For example, in Finnish *Kiitoksia oikein paljon* means "thank you very much." Finnish would be a challenge to learn. To determine your level of motivation, it would help to know your attitude toward Finland and Finnish people, whether you needed to learn Finnish for some reason, how you felt about learning it, if you thought you could learn it successfully, if you were reinforced in some way for learning it, and just how stimulating you found the learning process to be.⁴ In other words, your motivation level depends on many factors, right?

"Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it."

Lou Holtz, former college football coach and ESPN sports analyst



PhotoAlto

Teachable Moment: Motivation and optimism are connected. If you are not very optimistic about the outcome of something and have an “I can’t” attitude, motivation will be minimized. Why do something if you think you will fail? Make sure students understand this relationship, and focus on their control of their own learning.

You’d probably be more motivated to learn Finnish if these sorts of things were part of the picture: (a) you were going to visit relatives in Finland and were excited about it, (b) you’d always excelled at learning foreign languages and you expected to learn this one easily, (c) your boss was planning to transfer you to Helsinki as part of a big promotion, or (d) you enjoyed your Finnish language class, thought the instructor was a gifted teacher, and found the other students to be as motivated as you were. So, whose job is it to motivate you? Your instructor’s? Your parents’? This book’s? Yours? *Can* anyone else besides you motivate you? This book will ask you: how motivated *are* you to succeed in college? And *how* are you motivated?

To assess your own motivation, it’s important to understand the difference between *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* motivation. People who are *extrinsically*, or externally, motivated learn in order to get a grade, earn credits, or complete a requirement, for example. They are motivated by things outside themselves. You could be motivated to learn Finnish to earn three credits, or to get an A, or to avoid getting an F, or to meet a foreign language requirement. People who are *intrinsically*, or internally, motivated learn because they’re curious, fascinated, challenged, or because they truly want to master a subject. They are motivated from within. You could be motivated to learn Finnish for the challenge, because you’re curious about it, or because you find it fascinating. Let’s be realistic, however. Extrinsic motivation is real and important. You need a particular number of credit hours to graduate. You’d rather get A’s than F’s. But how intrinsically motivated you are in college will have a great deal to do with just how successful you are. The motivation to become truly educated must come from within you.

You completed the Academic Intrinsic Motivation Scale (AIMS) in the previous “Challenge → Reaction,” which is designed to measure your intrinsic, or internal, motivation to succeed in college in terms of these four C-Factors:

- 1. Curiosity.** Do you want to acquire new knowledge? Are you truly interested in what you’re learning? Do you ask questions? Do you allow your curiosity to propel your learning?
- 2. Control.** Do you think the academic investment you make will lead to successful outcomes? Do you believe you can control how successful you’ll be?
- 3. Career outlook.** Are you goal oriented? Are you future oriented? Can you imagine yourself graduating and getting a job you want?
- 4. Challenge.** Does your college coursework challenge you appropriately? Too much challenge can cause you to become frustrated and give up. Not enough challenge can cause you to lose interest.⁵

If your overall score on the AIMS was 100–125, you’re intrinsically motivated at a high level. If you scored between 75 and 99, you’re intrinsically motivated at a moderate level, but increasing your intrinsic motivation may help you achieve more. If you scored below 75, a lack of intrinsic motivation could interfere with your college success. If you’re intrinsically motivated, you’ll accept challenges, react to them by identifying what you already know, seek insights from new knowledge, and take action based on what you’ve learned.

Like the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system, the Academic Intrinsic Motivation Scale’s C-Factors reappear throughout the book to boost your intrinsic motivation:

Sensitive Situation Some students in your class may have low AIMS scores. Debriefing this activity is important because these students may be losing hope. Consider having students write a journal entry to you, a private conversation, in which they reflect on their scores and speculate on why they are low. Ask students to consider if they would like their scores to be different than what they are, and whether they have any ideas about what they will do to improve their scores.

C CULTIVATE Your Curiosity Each chapter includes a short article based on current research, a *New York Times* bestseller, a workplace application, or a new way of looking at what is required for college success. You'll read cutting-edge information that may pique your curiosity and lead you to consider exploring the original source or related material on your own.

C CONTROL Your Learning You are encouraged throughout this book to apply the content covered to your most challenging class this term and to take charge of your own learning. The challenge in your chosen class may be the level—either too high-level because the material is extremely difficult (a killer course) or too low-level (a no-brainer, boring course). This book will help you succeed in your chosen class by prompting you to work with your instructor through an office hour visit or e-mail, for example. Taking charge of your own learning is vital to college success.

C CREATE A Career Outlook Each chapter includes a “Focus on Careers” interview with a professional who specializes in the skills described in the chapter. As you read these interviews, think about the interviewees’ stories, their success, and ask yourself whether you have the interest and motivation required to get where they are. Following the interview, you’ll read some quick facts in a section called “Create a Career Outlook” to see how this career might fit you.

C CHALLENGE Yourself Quizzes In general, if a course is too challenging, you may be tempted to give up. If it’s too easy, you may lose interest. Adjusting the level of challenge to one that’s right for you is key to keeping yourself motivated to learn. Online quizzes for each chapter will challenge you so that you can work at your best.

For more practice online, go to <http://www.thomsonedu.com/collegesuccess/staley> to take the Challenge Yourself online quizzes.

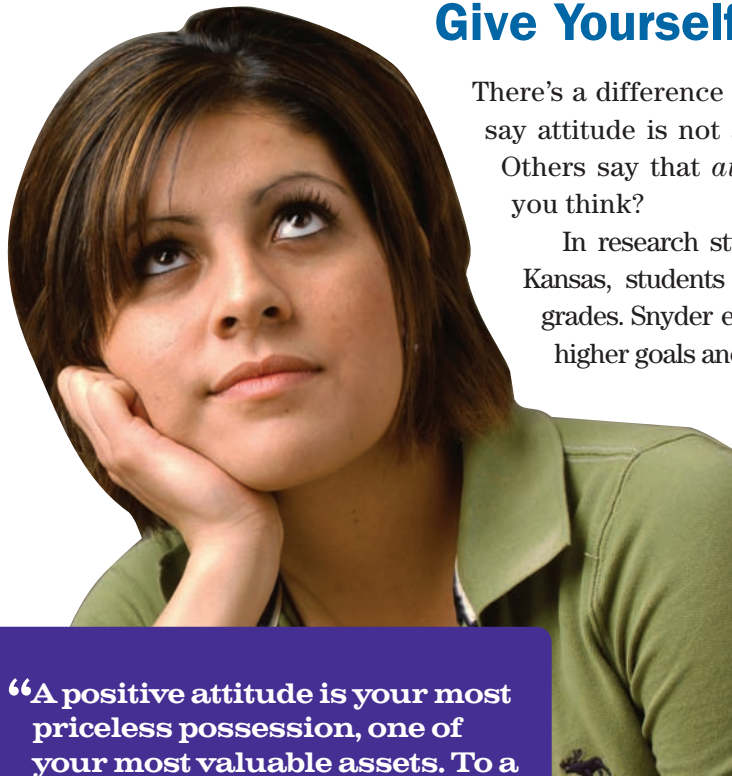
INSIGHT ACTION

1. Describe a time when you succeeded in learning something. Perhaps you wanted to learn to work on your own car, play the flute, or cook an exotic meal. What was the learning experience like? Were you extrinsically or intrinsically motivated? Why?
2. Now describe a situation in which you failed to learn something. What were you trying to learn, and what was the experience like? Were you extrinsically or intrinsically motivated? Why?
3. What types of things fascinate you and fire up your intrinsic motivation?
4. What actions can you take to help you think more deliberately about your motivation and how it affects your learning?

EXERCISE 1.2 The Ideal Student

Create your own personal top-ten list of the characteristics of an ideal student. Bring your completed list to your next class session where everyone can read their lists, and begin to add, delete, merge, and create a master list to which everyone can subscribe. Put your initials next to each of the ten items on the master list that you promise to do throughout the term. Your personal top-ten list, which your instructor may discuss with you individually at a later time, will become your learning contract for the course.

Activity Option Give each student ten sticky notes. Ask students to write one word on each note to fill in the blank: Successful students _____. Repeat this phrase ten times, each time giving the students only seconds to fill in the blank. On the board, write “Student has control” on one side and “Student has no control” on the other. Have students put each sticky note under the heading they believe is true of their statement. Some students believe that they have no control on issues that they really do. Let students lead the discussion.



Give Yourself an Attitude Adjustment

There's a difference of opinion on the subject of attitude. Some people say attitude is not all that important. Attitude-schmattitude, they say. Others say that *attitude* is more important than *aptitude*. What do you think?

In research studies conducted by Rick Snyder at the University of Kansas, students who scored high on a measure of hope got higher grades. Snyder explained that students with high hopes set themselves higher goals and know how to work hard to attain them.

Quick quiz. How many times in the past week did you catch yourself saying “Whatever...,” rolling your eyes when someone—perhaps a teacher, parent, or friend—offered you feedback or suggestions that you didn't want to hear? Be honest now. Think of all of those moments. Whatever-ness—an attitude of cynicism, apathy, disdain, or impatience—takes a lot less effort than optimism, respect, kindness, or any other positive response. Whether you realize it or not, whatevers chip away at your motivation, and they can contribute to self-sabotaging your opportunities to succeed in life. When it comes to

your college education, one good thing you can do for yourself is to purge the word *whatever* from your vocabulary. Your education is much too important for whatevers—and so are you.

“A positive attitude is your most priceless possession, one of your most valuable assets. To a great extent, it determines the overall quality of your life.”

Keith Harrell, from
Attitude Is Everything

FOCUS ON CAREERS: ERIC SWEEN, Psychologist

Courtesy of Eric Sween

FPO

Q1: What do you do in your work?

My specialization is in the psychological field known as narrative therapy—in other words, how people make meaning of the events in their lives. In my private practice I see both individuals and couples. People come into therapy for a wide variety of reasons, for example, when they feel stuck with something in their lives—some with unemployment, or relationships, or divorce. Others come to therapy because they feel too

anxious, or because someone close to them has died. My responsibilities include listening, understanding people's perspectives, and helping them set and reach their goals. I especially value working with people who are at some sort of turning point in their lives.

Q2: What are the three most important skills you need to do well in this career?

First, a therapist needs to be able to listen really well and appreciate another person's perspective. Second, a therapist must be genuinely curious about people and try to understand what is most meaningful to them. And finally, it's important to be flexible and tailor what you do with each person you are working with. Some people need problem solving and concrete steps. Some need to be really heard and empathized with. And some need information and a connection to

additional resources. The key is to know the difference in what clients need in order to reach their goals.

Q3: What is the most challenging aspect of your work? How do you deal with it?

I care about the people I work with and what happens to them. Sometimes I take that home with me. Over time, I've gotten better at drawing a line between my work life and my home life. But I don't want to lose my compassion. It's difficult when people are going through hard things. What helps me is to make sure my own life stays in balance—getting enough time for exercise, friends, and creative projects.

Q4: How important is goal setting in your work?

Setting goals is crucial. How are we going to know we've arrived at “the destination,” unless we are specific about what the destination is? Many people don't realize it is the small steps that get you to the big dreams. When someone is feeling depressed or dealing with a lot of stress, they can forget about how important it is to break goals down into manageable chunks.

Q5: How important is motivation in your work—for both you and your clients?

Motivation gets me out of bed in the morning. I think motivation is essential for everyone. But it comes in more than one flavor. There are

Eight Ways to Adjust Your Attitude

The good thing about attitude is that you can change it yourself. In fact, you can give yourself an overall attitude adjustment, which can lead to better control over your learning and deeper investment in your own education. As you think about benefits of fine-tuning your attitude, keep these eight recommendations in mind:

1. **Know that you always have choices.** Regardless of circumstances—your income, your background, or your prior academic record—you always have a choice, even if it's limited to how you choose to perceive your current situation.
2. **Take responsibility for your own outcomes.** Coach Vince Lombardi used to have his players look in a mirror before every game and ask themselves, “Am I looking at the person who is helping me win or the one who is holding me back?” Blaming others simply diminishes your own power to work toward constructive responses to challenges.
3. **Convert turning points into learning points.** Instead of beating yourself up when things don't go well, figure out why. See what you can learn from the experience and then move on. As Henry Ford once said, “Failure is the opportunity to begin again, more intelligently.”
4. **Choose your words carefully.** “Can't” and “won't” are two of the biggest inhibitors to a healthy attitude. Also pay attention to how you describe things. Is the cup half empty or half full? State things in the positive rather than the negative (for example, “stay healthy” rather than “don't get sick”). Language is a reflection of attitude.

things we do because we *love* to and things we do because we *have* to. But the critical element to anything is how much meaning it holds for us. I see many people who lack motivation because they aren't doing what is meaningful to them. I also find that people are motivated by different things at different times in their lives. That's completely natural.

Q6: How important is it to understand personal values in your work?

Critical. If I don't explore and understand my clients' personal values, I tend to impose my own. That never works out well because people are so different. When people are stuck in their lives, it is often because they have lost touch with their personal values and goals, so I ask a lot of questions to try and help them clarify these things.

Q7: What advice would you give college students who are interested in exploring a career in psychology or psychotherapy?

Earn that degree, and beyond that, continue your schooling. If you are interested in any career that involves psychology, spend time with people. People are endlessly interesting. Talk to people who are different than you. See if you can understand another person's worldview so that it really makes sense to you. If you enjoy doing these things, then you might enjoy a career similar to the one I've chosen.

Chapter Crossover Chapter 2 includes information on learning styles. Since students may not yet have taken the instruments included there, give them a quick introduction to how certain personality tendencies fit certain careers better than others.

Activity Option Ask students to work in groups to decide what a student might do in this situation described by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (1994): Although you set yourself a goal of getting a B, when your first exam worth 30 percent of your final grade is returned, you received a D.

Teachable Moment Pose the following question to your students: Is psychology a good career choice for everyone? Why or why not? Consider this activity for every career that is described throughout the book to get students thinking about skills and career choices.

CREATE A Career Outlook

PSYCHOLOGIST

Have you ever considered a career as a psychologist or counselor? Here are some facts about this career to consider and some questions about yourself to ponder.

Facts to Consider

Academic preparation required: a master's or doctoral degree

Future workforce demand: growth projected at a faster rate than the average job category through 2014, particularly for highly trained specialists

Work environment: four of ten psychologists are self-employed; the rest work in clinics, hospitals, schools, nonprofit agencies, or industrial settings

Most common psychological type: extraverted (and to a lesser degree, introverted), intuitive, feeling, perceiving⁶

Essential skills: listening, communicating, analyzing, rapport building (for clinical psychologists), and research and statistical skills (for experimental psychologists)

Questions to Ponder

1. Do you have (or could you acquire) the skills this career requires?
2. What would you find most satisfying about this type of career?
3. What would you find most challenging about this type of career?
4. Are you interested in a career like this? Why or why not?

For more information, see U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2006–2007 Edition*.⁷

For more career activities online, go to <http://www.thomsonedu.com/collegesuccess/staley> to do the Team Career exercises.

5. **Fill your mind with messages about the attitude you want to have.** The old adage, “garbage in, garbage out,” applies to attitudes as well. There are numerous books, CDs, and films that offer positive, motivating messages. Paying attention to role models whose traits you admire is also a great way to bolster your outlook.
6. **Remember that negative experiences can be great teachers.** Have you ever watched someone do something so badly that you’ve said to yourself, “I’m never going to do that! I’m going to do it differently!”? You can also choose to learn from your own mistakes and setbacks. They all offer some sort of lesson—be it greater clarity, personal growth, or a new vision—even if it takes a bit of distance from the event to see what you can learn. It’s hard to believe, but Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. He once observed, “I’ve failed over and over again in my life. That is why I succeed.”
7. **Offer help without expecting something in return.** Give freely of yourself, with no expectations of *quid pro quo*, and life will reward you in unexpected ways—not the least of which is a positive outlook. Offer to help someone study for a test or suggest that a classmate practice a presentation for class in front of you, for example. Engage in random acts of kindness; it’ll do amazing things for your attitude.
8. **Acknowledge your blessings.** Taking time at the end of each day to recognize and feel gratitude for the blessings in your life—no matter how large or small—is a great way to amplify a positive attitude.

Activity Option Divide students up so that at least two students are assigned to each of the eight ways to adjust attitude. Ask students to describe a real-life example related to the numbered point they have been assigned.

Statements That Ought to Be Outlawed in College ... and Why

Since words reflect attitudes (and help shape them), listen for statements like these escaping from your mouth. They can negatively affect your attitude and therefore your learning:

- **“I thought college classes would be more interesting than they are.”** Some students, especially those who didn’t find high school classes particularly interesting, expect something different in college. *Interesting* is in the mind of the beholder. You may not, but your professors think chemistry, calculus, and psychology are the most interesting things on the planet. It’s up to *you* to generate your own enthusiasm for learning, rather than expecting your instructors to do it for you. Not all college classes will be naturally interesting to you; you’ll have your favorites. But you’ll be much more successful if you decide to learn all you can, regardless of the wow factor.
- **“I didn’t learn a thing in that class.”** This statement may say more about you than it does about the quality of the instructor, teaching assistant, or course content. Actively search for what you can take away from a class, even if it didn’t quite meet your expectations. When you play the blame game, you lose.
- **“The textbook is really dull. Why bother reading it?”** This question is about personal responsibility, too. Hey, it’s your college experience. If you choose

not to learn because the written material doesn't meet your entertainment criteria, how sad is that?

- **“The professor is soooo-o-o boring.”** Again—it's your choice. Life isn't all Comedy Central. In your career, you'll be interacting with an array of personalities, so it's good to begin now to appreciate that different people communicate differently. Get beneath the surface and you'll be amazed at how much you can learn.
- **“Why do I have to take this required course? What's the point?”** The point is to broaden your horizons, expand your skills as a critical thinker, and become a lifelong scholar. Care enough to give yourself every opportunity to do your best. And, yes, every class, every situation in life, is an opportunity. You're worth it.⁸

EXERCISE 1.3 Your Academic Autobiography

Write a three-page academic autobiography describing your preparation for college. Describe the quality of your primary, middle, and high school learning experiences. Did they prepare you for what you're experiencing now in college? What do you think will be your strengths and weaknesses as a college student? Look back at your academic self throughout your schooling and look ahead to the kind of student you're planning to be in college, then write your academic autobiography. Or as an alternative, create a presentation answering these questions for your classmates.

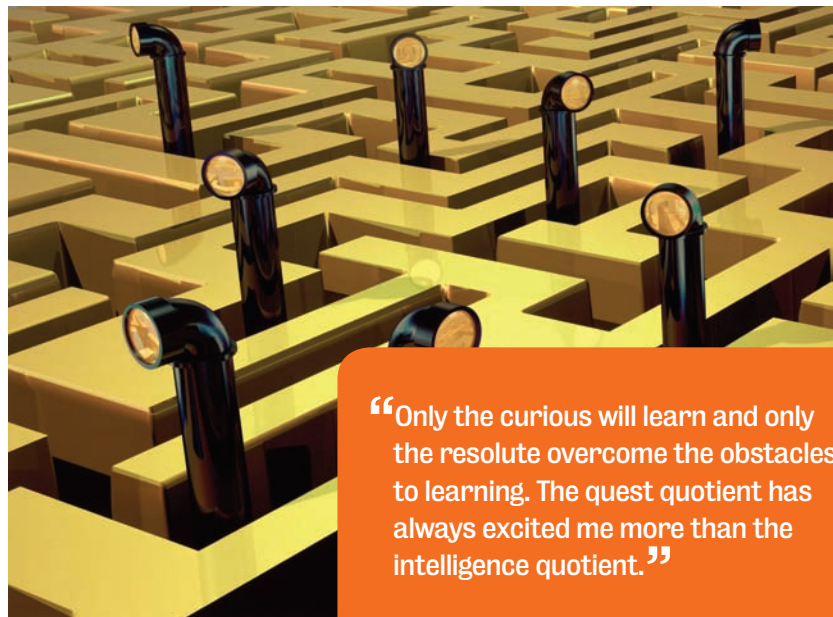
Teachable Moment Choosing an alternative to writing can also indicate the student's preferred way of communicating. Early in the semester it is good to give students choices. Students who choose to write their academic autobiography are probably somewhat comfortable with writing. Other students might be more comfortable presenting. One way to tap into another learning strength is to allow students to draw or use clip art to describe their learning paths. Students can present this to the class, or simply turn it in.

Ability versus Effort: What's More Important?

Successful people have several things in common: they love learning, seek challenges, value effort, and persevere even when things become difficult.⁹ They demonstrate both ability and effort. These two things are the basic requirements for success. College is about both.

We could focus on ability, but most all of your classmates have considerable ability, right? That's why they're in college. In one recent study, 47 percent of college freshmen reported that they graduated from high school with an A average.¹⁰ Nearly half!

That said, think about some of the possible combinations of ability and effort. If you have high ability and exert great effort, you'll most likely succeed. If you have high ability and exert little effort, and still succeed, you've just proved how smart you must be! But if you have high ability and exert little



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“Only the curious will learn and only the resolute overcome the obstacles to learning. The quest quotient has always excited me more than the intelligence quotient.”

Eugene S. Wilson, former Dean of Admissions,
Amherst College

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research In a study by James Flynn in *Asian-American Achievement Beyond I.Q.* (1991), Flynn reports that Asian-American students with similar IQs to their Caucasian counterparts do better in school. He attributes this to higher motivation and persistence. In part, effort may be a culturally derived variable.

effort and fail, you can always claim you didn't have the time to invest or you didn't care, right? You can always maintain that you could have done well if you'd tried harder. "I could have been another J. K. Rowling; I'm a great writer." If you had really tried for that kind of success, you wouldn't have been able to say that. That's a dangerous strategy, one that's called "self-handicapping."¹¹ Some college students actually consciously or unconsciously apply this strategy. They exert little effort, perhaps because they have no confidence in themselves or because they fear failure, and then they rationalize when they don't do well.

CHALLENGE ↔ REACTION

What is intelligence? Are people born with a certain amount? Or can it be cultivated through learning? Using the following scale, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by writing the number that corresponds to your opinion in the space next to each statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

Theories of Intelligence Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Research shows that what you *believe* about your own intelligence—your *mindset*—can make a difference in how successful you'll be in college. At first glance this statement seems absurd. After all, you're either smart or you're not, right? Wrong.

The scaled questions demonstrate that there are two basic ways to define intelligence. Some of us are *performers*, who agree with statements 1 and 2, while others of us are *learners*, who agree more with statements 3 and 4. *Performers* believe that intelligence is a fixed trait that cannot be changed. From the moment you're born, you have a certain amount of intelligence that's been allotted to you, and that's that. *Learners*, on the other hand, believe you can grow your intelligence if you capitalize on opportunities to learn. Whenever you tackle a tough challenge, you learn from it. The more you learn, the more intelligent you can become. Understanding which view of intelligence you endorse will make a difference in how you approach your college classes, as well as the outcomes—both positive and negative—that you'll achieve.

These two contrasting views of intelligence have been revealed through the research of Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University, her graduate students, and other social psychologists. Some of their original work began with children, who were first asked to agree or disagree with questions similar to those you just answered to determine which view of intelligence they held. Afterward, they were given eight conceptual problems to solve, problems that were appropriate for their grade level. As they worked on the problems, the researchers asked them to talk aloud about whatever was on their minds, even if it was unrelated

to the actual problems. After they had solved the first eight problems successfully, they were given four additional problems that were far too difficult for them to solve. This is where their views about the nature of intelligence made a difference.

As they tried to tackle the problems that were too difficult for them, the *performers* talked about feeling helpless. They became discouraged and anxious, forgot that they had solved the first eight problems successfully, and told themselves they weren't very smart. The *learners*, on the other hand, coached themselves on how to do better, remained optimistic, and actually improved their problem-solving strategies. They wanted to master what they were working on. To *learners*, academic challenges were opportunities for growth; to *performers* academic challenges were threats that might reveal their deficiencies. Performance is about measuring ability, "trying to convince yourself and others that you have a royal flush when you're secretly worried it's a pair of tens."¹² Learning is about investing the effort required to master new things: "Why waste time proving over and over how great you are, when you could be getting better?"¹³

Sometimes students who are highly confident are *performers*. They've always been told they're smart, and they have an image to protect. They become focused on the possibility of failure, which they need to avoid at all costs, instead of developing strategies to help them succeed. If you believe you only have a certain amount of intelligence, whether you realize it or not, your goal in college may be to prove you have enough. When you come to a tough course, you think, "If I have to work hard at this, I must not be very good at it." But if you believe you can develop your intelligence through learning, your goal will be to increase your ability: "If I have to work hard at this, eventually I'll become *very* good at it." Note that the research is not claiming that everyone is equally intelligent. That's not true, but what is true is that for any given individual, intellectual capacity can be increased with effort and guidance. Think of college as your opportunity to do that. According to Dweck, just learning about the importance of mindset can make a difference.

Let's admit it: We live in a performance-based society. Getting good grades is what it's all about, we're told. We all want to do well, look good, appear smart, and impress others. Did your previous schooling emphasize the performance mindset? Do you come from a family that overemphasizes grades (like Gloria's in the opening "FOCUS Challenge Case")? Are you from an underrepresented population on campus and because of this you feel performance pressure to succeed? That's normal, but your view of intelligence can be changed, and changing it may be your key to academic success.

There is evidence that students who are taught the value of a learning mindset over a performance mindset can actually achieve more than students who don't.¹⁴ In one study, college students' views of intelligence predicted the goals students valued in college. *Performers* were more likely to want to give up in challenging situations; learners wanted to try harder. Over their years at the university, *performers*, who had originally entered with higher SAT scores, did not perform better than *learners*, and they had lower self-esteem.¹⁵ In one new study that measured the electrical activity in college students' brains as they performed a difficult task, brain activity showed that *performers* cared most about whether their answers were right or wrong, while *learners* were interested in follow-up information they could learn from.¹⁶ Yet another new study showed that *learners* are more likely to buckle down

Teachable Moment Consider that parents may play a role in the development of performers versus learners; however, instructors can, too. Ask students to describe what they want from professors to help them become learners versus performers. What if professors can't change? What can the students do? This discussion should lead to the fact that despite how the professor may teach, it is still ultimately up to the student to be a learner.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research Daniel Goleman tells us in *Emotional Intelligence* that "whether it be in controlling impulse and putting off gratification, regulating our moods so that they facilitate rather than impede thinking, motivating ourselves to persist and try, try again in the face of setbacks, or finding ways to enter flow and so perform more effectively—all speak to the power of emotion to guide effective effort" (95).

academically, even when they feel depressed.¹⁷ It's clear: believing you're a *learner* provides advantages in motivation, achievement, enjoyment, and commitment.

Regardless of what you believe about your precise intelligence level, the fact is this: *intelligence can be cultivated through learning*. And people's theories about their intelligence levels can be shifted.

Sensitive Situation Many of the "Insight → Action" examples will be personal. See if there are a few students in the class willing to share one of their examples. Keep in mind that not all students want to share, as some will use this as self-assessment and create an action plan that is private. Consider using "Insight → Action" boxes as journal prompts so that students could keep this private, just between the two of you.

Activity Option Ask students to call out loud the names of their most challenging courses. Make a list of the top five most challenging courses in the group. Ask for suggestions on how the C-Factors and intrinsic motivation apply. Have students share what they plan to do to be motivated in these challenge courses. Remind students that *plan* and *follow-through* are the key words. Success (all A's) doesn't just happen.

INSIGHT ACTION

1. Think of a time in your past when you faced a challenge in school—either with academics or co-curricular activities—that overwhelmed you to the point where you chose not to see the challenge through. Describe the challenge and how you avoided it. How might that experience have ended differently for you if you had adopted a learning perspective toward it? What would you have gained by mastering the challenge?
2. Think of a time in your past when you faced a challenge in school that you saw through to completion. Describe the challenge and how it made you feel to master the task at hand. What temptations to quit did you face along the way? How would you have felt if you hadn't conquered that particular challenge?
3. What actions can you take to become more of a *learner* and less of a *performer*, particularly in your most challenging class this term?

CONTROL Your Learning

YOUR TOUGHEST CLASS

Think about all the courses you're enrolled in this term. Use the following matrix to analyze your C-Factors for these courses. Describe each course in terms of its *challenge* level, your *curiosity* about the subject, how much *control* you believe you have to succeed, and the way each class impacts your *career outlook*. (Keep in mind that many first-year introductory courses are broad-based. They may seem less directly related to your career than later classes in your major, but it's still important to consider what

skills you can gain that will lead to a more successful career.) Once you've determined the levels of challenge, curiosity, control, and career outlook you perceive in your courses, remember that it's *your* responsibility to adjust them. Instructors can't always meet the differing requirements of each student in a class. But *you* can make your own adjustments to gain as much as possible from each of your courses. Take a look at the following example, assess your C-Factors in each of your classes, and consider the adjustments you need to make.

Course Title	Challenge	Curiosity	Control	Career Outlook	Adjustments Required
<i>Composition</i>	<i>Very High: never been good at writing</i>	<i>Very Low: had a discouraging teacher in H.S.</i>	<i>Moderate: probably higher than it feels to me</i>	<i>Will need to know how to write in any job</i>	<i>Need to spend more time pre-writing and going to the campus Writing Center for help</i>

Which of the classes you listed will be your most challenging this term? What is the relationship between the four C-Factors and your intrinsic

motivation to learn in each one of these courses? What can you do to increase your intrinsic motivation and become more successful?

What Drives You?

Values, Dreams, and Goals

CHALLENGE REACTION

What are your core values? Review the following list and check off the items that you value. Don't spend too much time thinking about each one; just go with your initial gut reaction. For each item, ask yourself "Is this something that's important to me?"

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Wealth | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial wealth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness/Physical strength | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence | <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Success | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Balance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social life | <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics | <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality | <input type="checkbox"/> Status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Variety | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful work | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Time spent alone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (list here) |

Now review all of the items you checked off and circle the five that are most important to you at this point in your life. Then rank them by putting a number next to each of the five circled values with number one as your top priority. Finally, take stock. Is this the person you want to be? Is there anything about your values that you would like to change? If so, what's keeping you from making this change?

Teachable moment Students need to understand that individuals have different values. However, if you ask members of the class to list their top five values, you should find some similarities. Research shows that attaining great wealth is important to today's students. Students should discuss why they think this is important to them. What might they be missing?

Before tackling the big questions about what you want to create with your life, it's important to first take a close look in the mirror. Who are you? What makes you tick? What do you value? What are your goals? Where will your dreams take you?

Values at the Core

One way to gain some insights about who you are is to look at your core values. So what do you value in life? By taking time to examine your personal values, managing your life will become easier and make more sense. Values can be intangible concepts such as love or respect, or tangible things such as family or money, and understanding how they motivate you isn't as simple as it might seem. Values can change as you go through life. For example, if you're single now, you may value the freedom to meet a variety of potential romantic partners. Just get to know people and have fun, that's all. Later, however, you may want a committed relationship because you value companionship and stability more than you used to. For this reason, it's important to reassess your values from time to time and reprioritize them.



“Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.”

Lao Tzu, Taoist philosopher

Another complicating factor is that values can conflict with one another. Suppose that you value honesty and kindness, and you are at a party and a friend asks you what you think of her new hair color. You honestly think it's hideous, but telling her so would hurt her feelings, thus violating your value of being kind. How do you respond? That would depend on which value is a higher priority for you. You have to make an on-the-spot decision about which value to tap. Once you define your values, however, they can serve as guideposts in helping you make choices every day—everything from the insignificant day-to-day choices to more significant ones such as which major to pursue in college.

In the Challenge → Reaction → Insight → Action system, knowing your values in life is key to understanding your reaction. Once you've defined your values, you can use them in your daily life to guide your actions. For example, if academic achievement is one of your top values, the next time you have the urge to cut class, consider the impact that choice would have on your value system. There is a great inner satisfaction that comes from living a life tied to core values.

Activity Option Ask students to answer the following question: "If I could spend one day with someone who has died, who would it be?" Have students share their choice and explain why. This activity demonstrates what values really seem to be important to that individual. Suggest reading Mitch Albom's book *For One More Day* (2006).

Chapter Crossover Students often hear the term *reality check*. Reality testing is an important EI skill (Chapter 11), and Gloria's lack of realism was evident in the FOCUS Challenge Case when she described how much she could work while going to school. Ask students to take a quick reality check. Ask them, "Can you be anything you want to be?"

Dreams versus Goals

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "I can be anything I want to be"? If you are like most students, people have probably told you this frequently. Your parents and teachers all want you to have positive self-esteem, and certainly there are many career options available today. But is it true? Can you be *anything* you want to be? What's the difference between a dream and a goal?

As a college student, you may dream of being a famous doctor or a famous athlete or just plain famous. That's the beauty of dreams—you can imagine yourself in any career, any circumstances. When you're dreaming, you don't even have to play by the rules of reality. Dreams are fantasy-based—you in a perfect world. But when it's time to come back to reality, you discover that there are, in fact, rules. You may have dreamed of becoming a top-earning NBA player or a top fashion model when you were a child, but you have grown up to be the same height as Uncle Al or Aunt Sue—and that's not tall enough.



“Self-knowledge is far more important than self-confidence.”

Simon Cowell, *American Idol* judge, from *I Don't Mean to Be Rude, But . . .*

Dreams alone are not enough when it comes to “creating the future.” As professional life coach Diana Robinson says, “A dream is a goal without legs.” And without legs, that goal is going nowhere. Dreaming is the first step to creating the future you want, but making dreams come true requires planning and hard work. Gloria Gonzales wanted to become a fashion designer because she liked clothes and people always told her she looked good. As she continues through college, however, she will come to understand the nuts and bolts of the fashion design business. Perhaps she’ll learn that famous fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent got his first fashion designer job with Christian Dior after winning an International Wool Secretariat design competition. The fashion industry might be challenging to break into, but that doesn’t mean she should abandon her dream. Instead, she must realize that dreams and goals are not the same thing. She must find a reality-based path to help her turn her dreams into goals. Just dreaming isn’t enough.

Dreams are exciting; you can let your imagination run wild. Goals are real; you must work out how to actually achieve your dreams. Goal setting is an important part of the life management skills this book will help you develop. Your goals may not seem at all clear to you right now, but the important thing is to learn that there’s a right way and a wrong way to go about goal setting. The best way to ensure that the goals you set will serve you well is to make sure you *FOCUS*. Here’s a brief overview of what that means.

- F Fit.** Your goal must fit your values, your character, and who you are as a person. Goals that conflict with any of these things will not only be difficult to accomplish, but they just won’t work. If your goal is to become a writer for a travel magazine because you love adventure, but you have a fear of flying, you’re in trouble.
- O Ownership.** You must own your goals. In other words, you’ve got to see it, taste it, want it! It must be your goal, not someone else’s goal for you. Ask yourself: Does the thought of achieving this goal get me fired up? Do I genuinely own this goal or do I feel I ought to have this goal because it sounds good or pleases someone else?
- C Concreteness.** For any goal to be effective, it must be real. In other words, you must be able to describe your goal—and its ultimate outcome—in complete and specific detail, including your deadline for accomplishing it. “To run a mile in less than six minutes by March 4th” is much more concrete than “to eventually run faster.” The more concrete, the better.
- U Usefulness.** Goals must have utility, or usefulness. They must serve a purpose, and that purpose should be tied to your long-term vision of the person you want to become. For example, if you want to work for an international corporation some day, it would be useful to begin studying a foreign language now.
- S Stretch.** In the business world, people talk about stretch goals. These are goals that require employees to stretch beyond their predictable limits to achieve something more challenging. The key to stretching is to find a good balance between being realistic and being challenged. Realistic goals are those whose outcomes are within your control. (Winning the lottery, for example, is beyond your control, and therefore not a very realistic goal.) Goals must be based in reality, but also offer you a chance to grow beyond the person you currently are.

Goals should be set for different time frames in your life to include both short- and long-term goals. Once your long-term goals are set (though they may shift over time as *you* shift over time), you will then want to set some short-term goals, which act as intermediate steps to achieving your long-term goals.

Activity Option Put students in groups of three or four and assign each group two letters of the word *FOCUS*. Ask students to think of successful student behaviors that begin with the letters they are assigned. Ask them how these behaviors connect to goal-setting.

Activity Option Have students write a letter to themselves, their parents, loved ones, or a friend listing their goals for the semester and what they will do to meet them. Provide envelopes for students and seal their letters and return these to your students at the end of the term to see if they met their goals. Have them write a paragraph about why they did or did not meet their goals upon return of the envelopes.

Long-Term Goals What do I want to accomplish...	Short-Term Goals What do I want to accomplish...
In my lifetime?	This year?
In the next twenty years?	This month?
In the next ten years?	This week?
In the next three to five years?	Today?

INSIGHT ACTION

- Briefly describe one of your dreams for the future.
- Now list several goals that, when accomplished, would help you create the dream you listed in question 1. First think of long-term goals, followed by short-term goals. Next to each goal, write the time frame (that is, 10 years, 3–5 years, within 1 year, within a month, and so on).

- Select one of your goals listed. Run it through a quick check to ensure that it's a *FOCUS* goal. Circle the appropriate answer:

- Does this goal **fit** me? Yes No
- Do I really want this goal?
Do I **own** it? Yes No
- Does my goal have **concrete**
details and deadlines? Yes No
- Is this goal **useful** to me?
Does it serve a purpose? Yes No
- Does this goal **stretch** me?
Is it challenging, yet achievable? Yes No

If you answered “no” to any of the previous questions, your goal needs to be more *FOCUS*ed.

- Pick one of the short-term goals from your list in question 2. What could you do today to work toward accomplishing that goal? List one to three to-do items.
- Pick one of the items on your to-do list from question 4 and do it now. It may be something seemingly insignificant, or you may be tempted to tell yourself that you could easily do it tomorrow. But doing it today—*now*—will not only put you one step closer to your dream, but it will help you accomplish something concrete.



Digital Vision

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.”

Zig Ziglar, Motivational speaker, writer, and trainer

**KNOW THYSELF!
HOW HARD CAN THAT BE?**

Knowing yourself doesn't sound like much of a challenge, does it? After all, you've lived with yourself for a long time. You know every freckle, every dimple, every quirk. Or do you?

Socrates advised many centuries ago, "Know thyself." But David Dunning, professor of psychology at Cornell University and author of *Self-Insight: Roadblocks and Detours on the Path to Knowing Thyself* (2005), says that most of us really don't know ourselves as well as we think we do. In fact, when we're asked to predict how well we'll do at something, and that prediction is compared to our actual performance afterward, most of us are off base. In one study, college students were given a pop quiz to test their logical reasoning skills. After they finished, they were asked to compare their performance with that of their peers, and to predict the number of items they got right.

Dunning and his research colleague, Justin Kruger, split the test-takers into four quarters: students who performed in the bottom quarter, the second, third, and top quarter. Then they compared how students actually performed with how well they thought they'd done.

In general, students who thought they did best often performed in the bottom quarter, and students with the highest scores sometimes underestimated their performance. Take a look at Figure 1.2, which summarizes the typical pattern uncovered in Dunning's research to date. In particular, compare participants in the bottom quarter with those in the top one, and you'll see that the participants who did the worst were the ones who were the most optimistic!

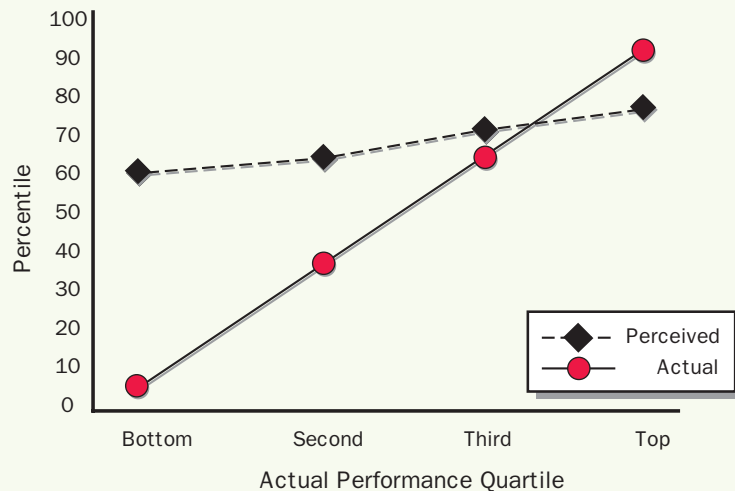
To be fair, when it comes to overestimating abilities, college students aren't the only culprits. Elderly people see themselves as better drivers than others their age. Grocery store cashiers see themselves as better than other cashiers at spotting underage alcohol purchasers. Bungee jumpers think they're less likely to plummet than the average bungee jumper.

If Dunning's research is right, why is this so? Why aren't we all right on the mark? Specifically, why can't people tell when they're not doing a good job? One

hypothesis Dunning offers is that people can't be expected to recognize when they're not performing adequately. Because they *don't* know how to do what they're doing (and therefore they aren't doing it well), they're simply not in a position to know. The skills they need in order to *do* a good job are the exact same skills they need to *recognize* whether they are doing a good job. So they hope for the best. And while optimism isn't a bad thing—in fact, it's generally a good thing—realism is critical, too, in college and in life.

That's why it's important to seek input from your instructors about the quality of your work. Assessing it is their job! Work with other students so that you can observe their skill levels compared with your own. Learn from self-assessment instruments. Use your classes as an opportunity to gather all the self-knowledge you can. Rather than simply hoping for the best, do all you can to get to know yourself better and give college your best shot.

Figure 1.2
Typical Relationship Found Between Perceived and Actual Performance



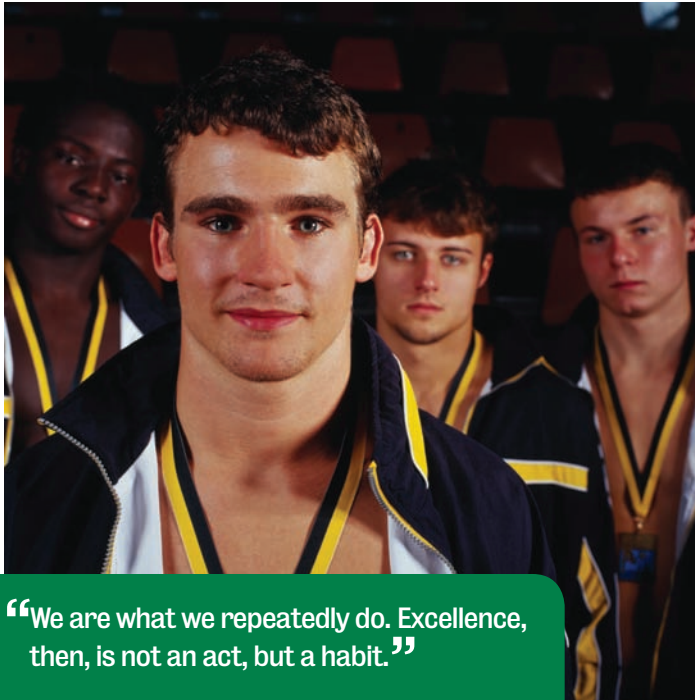
Source: D. Dunning. (2005). *Self-Insight: Roadblocks and Detours on the Path to Knowing Thyself*. New York: Psychology Press, p. 18.

College Success: You Make the Call

What does it mean to succeed? Actually, success is difficult to define, and different people define success differently. Right now in college, you may think of success in terms of your future income. But is success simply about material wealth? Is it about fame? Status?

According to motivational author Robert Collier, "Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out." Perhaps to you, success is somewhere off in the distant future, and it happens more or less suddenly, like winning the lottery. Actually, success begins right now. You should be the one to define what success will look like in your life, but generally, success is *setting out to do something that's personally meaningful, and then being fully engaged while*

Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research In 1988, Olympic swimmer Matt Biondi lost his first race only to win the gold in the next five. Martin Seligman, a psychologist from the University of Pennsylvania, had tested Biondi earlier that year and discovered that even when given negative feedback, Biondi went on to perform well. Seligman defines optimism by the way people describe their successes and failures.



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“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

Aristotle, Greek philosopher (384–322 B.C.)

doing it. It’s that simple. And it applies to your college experience as well. It starts now.

In order to understand your own definition of success in college, first you need to ask yourself why you’re here. Why *did* you come—or return—to college, anyway? Do you want to develop into a more interesting, well-rounded, educated human being? Are you working toward a degree that leads to a specific career? Do you have children and want an education in order give them a better life? Did your mom or dad tell you that college wasn’t optional?

We will assume that part of your definition of succeeding in college includes *graduating* from college. This book will provide you with an honest look at what that takes, including numerous opportunities to assess yourself in these areas. It will also offer an array of tools you can use throughout your college career and in your life beyond college.

Graduating from College: What It Takes

Teachable Moment Students should take a moment to reflect and honestly answer the question “why did I come to college?” Remind students that there is a strong connection between reasons for coming to college and success. If the reason for coming to college is to have fun and meet people, then that reason alone is not enough. The most successful students are those who enjoy college *and* are academically motivated.

CHALLENGE ↔ REACTION

Many factors (besides past grades and entrance test scores) impact your success in college. Read down this list and ask yourself how you measure up in each of these areas. Mark an honest response from 1 to 7. If you’re just beginning college and you’re unsure about how you’ll do, use your habits in the past to gauge your responses.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NO!	NO	No	Maybe/Sometimes	Yes	YES	YES!

_____ **Ability to adapt.** Are you the type of person who thrives in new environments? Do you enjoy meeting new classmates, new professors, and new counselors? In general, do you like—and do well—with change?

_____ **Attitude.** Do you have a positive attitude toward your education? Do you want to be here? Are you motivated to learn and grow? Are you confident that you can learn and do well in school? Are you willing to do the hard work involved in earning a college degree? Are you respectful of your instructors, your fellow students, and yourself?

_____ **Maturity.** Are you emotionally mature? Are you willing to display the level of maturity required to manage your college education over time and earn a degree?

_____ **Class attendance.** Do you have a good track record of attending class in the past? Are you willing to commit to attending each of your college classes regularly, regardless of whether or not you actually *feel* like attending on a particular day? Did you know that class attendance is a major predictor of college success?

_____ **Study Habits.** Do you spend enough time studying? Do you study until you understand the material or do you simply study until you’re out of time or need to move on to the next thing? Are you willing to make the necessary commitment to time spent studying?

_____ **Note-taking skills.** Note-taking is not an ability we're born with. It's a skill that must be learned and can be taught to just about anyone. Regardless of the fact that you may not be an auditory learner, many of your professors will expect you to learn through lectures. How complete and comprehensive are your notes? Do you work with them *after* class (color-coding, retyping, and so on)? Do you work with your notes so that they're useful aids at exam time?

_____ **Academic support services.** Do you know what resources are available on campus to help you with academic issues? Have you visited any offices that provide support services on your campus to familiarize yourself with them? Are you willing to use a tutor to help with a particular course that overwhelms you?

_____ **Personal support system.** How strong is your personal support system? Who cares about your success in college? Do you have parents, siblings, and friends who support you, encourage you, and ask how you're doing? How often do you see or e-mail these people? How willing are you to make friends on campus who also value academic success?

_____ **Faculty connections.** Do you plan to interact with your instructors? Are you interested in knowing more about your instructors, their backgrounds, and their academic interests beyond the particular class you're taking with them? Are you willing to visit your instructors during their office hours if you are having difficulty with a class? Would you consider finding a mentor among your instructors?

_____ **Campus connection.** Are you connected to people and events on your campus? Are you involved in any co-curricular activities in which you interact with others? Do you plan to participate in or attend on-campus events? Sometimes students unknowingly fall prey to the PCP (parking lot, class, parking lot) syndrome. They're only on campus for their classes, and as soon as they get out of class, they're outta there. Believe it or not, connecting to your campus, other students, and your instructors is critical to your success.

_____ **Time management skills.** Are you capable of managing your time effectively so that the important things—not necessarily just the urgent or exciting, fun things—get completed? Have you ever purposefully learned a system of time management? Are you willing to learn these skills? Do you understand that *time* management is really about *energy* management?

_____ **Money management skills.** How good are you at managing your money? Are you currently debt-free aside from any student loans required to attend college? Some students fall into the trap of using their school loans or grants to pay off credit card debt. Or they work far too many hours, which takes time away from their studies and makes academic success difficult to achieve. While managing your money isn't an academic skill, per se, not knowing how to do it can substantially impact your college career.

Now add up your scores on each item for a final tally. While this list isn't exhaustive, these factors are vital to college success. If your score was 60 or higher, you're in good shape. If not, take a close look at the areas that could affect your college success, read more about them in this book, and develop insights that lead to more effective action.

Some students think obtaining a college degree is merely a financial transaction. Think about this analogy: If you want to buy a gallon of milk, you go to the supermarket, select the kind of milk you want—whole milk, two percent, or nonfat—take it to the cashier, slide your debit card, and the milk is yours. Some students think a college education should work the same way. They think if they select the kind of degree they want—sociology, English, or geography—and pay tuition, the degree is theirs. Not so. There's much more to it than that.



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“Students’ expectations must match reality, they must be challenged, and they must make connections with their teachers and their peers.”

Dr. Vincent Tinto, expert on higher education

A college education requires more than a financial commitment. It requires you to invest your ability, your intellect, your drive, your effort—and yourself.

Many people falsely assume that the best indicator of whether or not you will graduate from college has to do with the brain matter found between your ears. Wrong! Brains alone—especially brains measured by your high school grade point average or even your SAT or ACT scores—are no guarantees that you’ll earn a college degree. What does it take?

Did you notice that none of the things listed in the “Challenge → Reaction” are innate talents that you’re simply born with? That’s the good news. All of these factors that support your goal of graduating from college are things you can become better at if you are committed to doing so. And in making commitments to improving these factors *now*, you are making a commitment to graduate from college *later*.

INSIGHT ↔ ACTION

1. Why did you choose to attend college? Be as specific as you can in listing the reason(s). Review your list and put an asterisk next to the positive, goal-oriented reasons to attend college.
2. Imagine that you are at the end of your college career and you are successful. What does that look like? Describe in detail what you have accomplished, the person you are, and the journey you’re about to embark on as you leave college. What specific actions were required to get where you now are?

The Bad News: Obstacles along the Way

Getting accepted to college is a good thing! You should feel proud. But a major national report indicates that “college attendance in the United States has grown so rapidly over the past four decades that now 75 percent of high school graduates get some postsecondary education within two years of receiving their diplomas. Student aspirations are even loftier, with nearly 90 percent saying they hope to attend college. Older adults, too, have recognized the benefits of college study and account for more than one-third of matriculants [new students].... Possession of a college degree today ... is the passport to most careers, and without it, people can find themselves trapped in unrewarding jobs.”¹⁸ While

everybody's doing it, or so it seems, not everyone is doing it successfully. Only 28 percent of American adults have college degrees, and nearly one of three Americans in their mid-twenties drop out of college.¹⁹ Gloria Gonzales in the "FOCUS Challenge Case" was going on to college because all her friends were, and everyone expected her to. While these are common reasons, they may not motivate her enough to continue and fulfill her dreams.

Realistically, the distance between getting accepted to college and graduating from college is considerable, and the journey can be both exhilarating and discouraging at times. Of all the college students who began as first-year students in 1992, only two-thirds had graduated eight years later.²⁰

Risk factors include working more than thirty hours per week, going to school part-time, being a single parent or having children at home, and being a first-generation college student.²¹ The important thing to keep in mind as you think about risk factors is that they alone cannot determine your ultimate level of success. Don't throw in the towel now if you had a child at age sixteen or are working thirty-five hours per week off campus. These factors are presented merely as information to assist you on your journey. They are simply *predictors*—not *determiners*. Only you can determine your outcomes in life, and that includes college.

It's worth taking a close look at these success inhibitors now, rather than becoming a statistic yourself later. Your effort, attitude, and willingness to get any help you need to succeed are all vital. Henry Ford was right: "Whether you think you can or you can't, you're right."

Sensitive Situation Be aware that you may have students in your class right now who have some of the predictors for being at risk. Emphasize to these students that while these are predictors and that they may need to be a little more careful and conscious of their choices about school, they can succeed.



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“It's never too late—in fiction or life—to revise.”

Nancy Thayer, novelist

The Good News: Benefits at the End of the Road

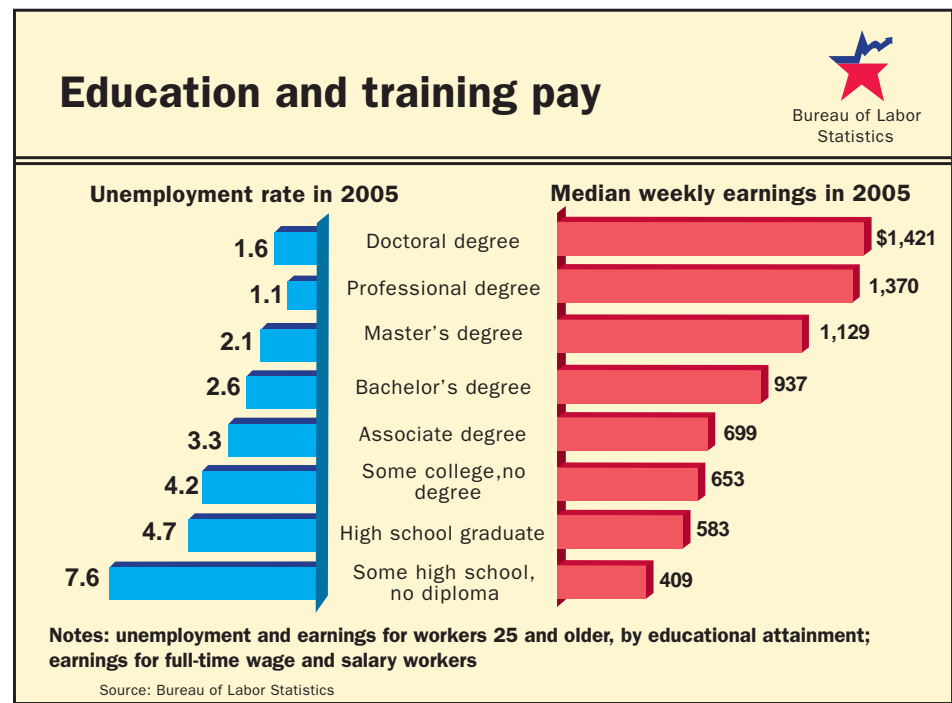
Regardless of how you choose to define success as it pertains to your college experience, it's a fact that there are plenty of benefits to graduating from a college or university. Here's a quick look at some of them:

1. **Higher Earning Potential.** On average, college graduates earn twice as much income as their peers with only a high school diploma (see Figure 1.3).²²
2. **Lower Unemployment Rates.** College graduates are more employable than their non-degreed peers. This is especially helpful during cyclic downturns in the economy, when many people—even talented and committed employees—find themselves out of work.
3. **Wisdom.** College students have the opportunity to gain understanding about a broad array of topics—politics, sociology, and current affairs to name a few. A well-educated person knows Sigmund Freud's contribution to psychological theory, Charles Darwin's contribution to evolutionary theory, and Adam Smith's contribution to economic theory. But beyond theories, facts, and dates, a well-educated person knows how to think critically, contribute to society, and manage his or her life.
4. **Insight.** College students have the opportunity to understand themselves better as they participate in the academic, social, and co-curricular opportunities of higher education.
5. **True Scholarship.** College students have the opportunity to become lifelong learners. True scholarship is not about making the grade. It's about becoming the best student-learner you can be—inside or outside of the classroom. The value of this benefit is beyond measure and will serve you throughout your life.

Chapter Crossover In Chapter 12 students will have the opportunity to take an in-depth look at majors and careers. They will begin to piece together their values, interests, and skills and see how they might connect to a career they will enjoy.

Figure 1.3

Education, Earnings, and Employment: The Quantifiable Value of a College Degree



Source: Education and Training Pay. (2005) U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics. Available: <http://www.bls.gov/emp/emped05.pdf>

6. **Lifelong Friendships.** Many college graduates report that some of their strongest lifelong relationships were formed during their time at college. Choosing to attend college and choosing a specific major puts you in touch with a network of people who share your specific interests.

This Course Has a Proven Track Record

If you're reading this book, there's a good chance you're enrolled in a first-year seminar course. It may be called "Freshman Seminar," "First-Year Forum," "University 101," "First-Year Experience," "College Success," "A Learning Community," or any of a host of other names. These courses are designed to introduce you to college life, familiarize you with your own campus, and help you refine your academic skills. Do they work? According to experts, "In short, the weight of evidence indicates that FYS [first-year seminar] participation has statistically significant and substantial, positive effects on a student's successful transition to college. . . . And on a considerable array of other college experiences known to be related directly and indirectly to bachelor's degree completion."²³ Of course, you have to keep your part of the bargain, but in general, students who participate in first-year seminars complete more credit hours, adjust to college more quickly, become more involved in campus life, view themselves and their skills more accurately, enjoy and appreciate their college experience, and ultimately, graduate. That's what this course is about. Your instructor and your classmates are rooting for you. Now it's up to you!

For more practice online, go to <http://www.thomsonedu.com/collegesuccess/staley> to take the Challenge Yourself online quizzes.



"You are never given a wish without the power to make it come true. You may have to work for it, however."

Richard Bach, from *Illusions*



NOW WHAT DO YOU THINK?

At the beginning of this chapter, Gloria Gonzales, an excited but anxious student, was about to begin her college career. Now after reading this chapter, would you respond differently to any of the questions you answered about the "FOCUS Challenge Case"?



REALITY CHECK

On a scale of 1 to 10, answer the following questions now that you've completed this chapter.

1 = not very/not much/very little/low 10 = very/a lot/very much/high

In hindsight, how much did you *really* know about this subject matter before reading the chapter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your college success?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your career success after college?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How long did it actually take you to complete this chapter (both the reading and writing tasks)? _____ Hour(s) _____ Minutes

Take a minute to compare these answers to your answers from the "Readiness Check" at the beginning of this chapter. What gaps exist between the similar questions? How might these gaps between what you thought before starting the chapter and what you now think after completing the chapter affect how you approach the next chapter in this book?

To download mp3 format audio summaries of this chapter, go to <http://www.thomsonedu.com/collegesuccess/staley>.