

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

Becoming a

MASTER STUDENT

5e

Based on Dave Ellis' *Becoming a Master Student*

What's Inside:

- Power Process
- Discovery Wheel
- Journal Entries



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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

Becoming a **MASTER** **5e** **STUDENT**

Based on Dave Ellis' *Becoming a Master Student*

Contributing Editor:
Doug Toft

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WHAT'S NEW

GLOBAL UPDATES

- A more streamlined design allows articles to flow, and eliminates the distracting clutter in the chapter openers.
- Chapter openers now have a full table of contents for easier navigation.
- Many updates to the Why & How sections and “Do you have a minute?” in the chapter openers.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER UPDATES

Introduction: Getting Involved

- “The Master Student Process” now defines Discovery/Intention/Action.
- Updated Skills Snapshot to include more on building habits.

Chapter 1: Using Your Learning Styles

- Expanded “Using your Learning Style Profile to succeed.”

Chapter 2: Taking Charge of Your Time & Money

- New article “Setting and achieving goals.”
- Reduced number of “Do you have a minute?” boxes in article “Time management essentials” added new one to replace three.
- Heavily revised “Put an end to money worries” to include more suggestions on earning more and spending less.

Chapter 3: Achieving Your Purpose for Reading

- Reorganization of chapter to keep the flow of the “Phase” articles.
- Heavily revised “Phase 3.”
- New sidebar “The magic of metacognition.”

Chapter 4: Participating in Class & Taking Notes

- Expanded “Play with note-taking formats.”

Chapter 5: Maximizing Your Memory & Mastering Tests

- Updated “Be ready for your next test” to include information on digital flashcards, expanded on planning reviews.
- Replaced technique #7 in “12 memory techniques” and added an action to #8.
- Modified “Five things to do with your study group” to be more active around self-testing.
- New closing “Do you have a minute?”

Chapter 6: Developing Information Literacy

- Extensively revised to focus on information literacy, all content is mostly new or revised.

Chapter 7: Thinking Critically & Communicating Your Ideas

- New “Do you have a minute?” following “Becoming a critical thinker.”
- Revised Skills Snapshot.

Chapter 8: Creating Positive Relationships in a Diverse World

- Revised “Thriving in a diverse world” to include reflection on privilege and prejudice.
- Revised “Managing conflict” article to include more about internal motivations.

Chapter 9: Choosing Greater Health

- Heavy revision of “Wake up to health.”
- Updated list of recommendations from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in “Choose your fuel.”
- Revision to “Journal Entry: Asking for help.”

Chapter 10: Choosing Your Major & Planning Your Career

- Replaced Technology skills with Information Literacy skills in “50 transferable skills.”
- Revised Skills Snapshot.

In addition, the accompanying MindTap includes improved grading, additional help tools and assignments, increased flexibility for customizing your course, and more. Visit www.cengage.com for more information. ✎

DISCOVERY & INTENTION STATEMENT

GUIDELINES

DISCOVERY STATEMENTS

- ☐ Record the specifics about your thoughts, feelings, and behavior.
- ☐ Notice your thoughts, observe your actions, and record them accurately.
- ☐ Use discomfort as a signal.
- ☐ Feeling uncomfortable, bored, or tired might be a signal that you're about to do valuable work.
- ☐ Suspend judgment.
- ☐ When you are discovering yourself, be gentle.
- ☐ Tell the truth.
- ☐ The closer you get to the truth, the more powerful your Discovery Statements.

INTENTION STATEMENTS

- ☐ Make intentions positive.
- ☐ Focus on what you want rather than what you don't want.
- ☐ Make intentions observable.
- ☐ Be specific about your intentions.
- ☐ Make intentions small and achievable.
- ☐ Break large goals into small, specific tasks that can be accomplished quickly.
- ☐ Set timelines.
- ☐ Set a precise due date for tasks you intend to do.
- ☐ Move from intention to action.

If you want new results in your life, then take action. ➤



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Getting Involved

what is included ...

- 2 Power Process: Discover what you want
- 3 Making the transition to higher education: Six things you can do now
- 4 Master student qualities
- 6 Get the most out of the Essential Guide Program
- 7 Journal Entry 1: Declare what you want
- 8 The Master Student Process
- 9 Integrity...making time for what matters most
- 10 The Discovery Wheel
- 14 Skills Snapshot

do you have a minute?

Take a minute to make a list of anything about your life that's nagging at you as incomplete or unresolved. Possibilities for this list include:

- Longstanding problems that are still not solved
- Projects that you'd like to finish and haven't yet started
- Tasks that you've been putting off
- Habits that you'd like to stop—or start

Save this list and refer to it as you read and do this chapter. *Everything you wrote down is a clue that something is important to you.* This chapter is filled with strategies for getting clear about what you want and taking immediate steps to get it.

why

You can ease your transition to higher education and set up a lifelong pattern of success by starting with some key strategies.

how

Take a few minutes to skim this chapter. Look at every page. Scan headlines. Notice pictures, forms, charts, and diagrams. Find three suggestions that look especially useful. Highlight or underline them and write a note to yourself about when and where you plan to use them.

what if...

I could use the ideas in this text to consistently get what I want in all areas of my life?



Discover what you want

Imagine a man who tries to buy a plane ticket for his next vacation, with no destination in mind. He pulls out his iPad and logs in to his favorite website for trip planning. He gets a screen that prompts him for details about his destination. And he leaves all the fields blank.

"I'm not fussy," says the would-be vacationer. "I just want to get away. I'll just accept whatever the computer coughs up."

Compare this person to another traveler who books a flight to Ixtapa, Mexico, departing on Saturday, March 23, and returning Sunday, April 7—window seat, first class, and vegetarian meals.

Now, ask yourself which traveler is more likely to end up with a vacation that he'll enjoy.

The same principle applies in any area of life. Knowing where we want to go increases the probability that we will arrive at our destination. Discovering what we want makes it more likely that we'll attain it.

Okay, so the example about the traveler with no destination is far-fetched. Before you dismiss it, though, do an informal experiment: Ask three other students what they want to get out of their education. Be prepared for hemming, hawing, and vague generalities.

This is amazing, considering the stakes involved. Students routinely invest years of their lives and thousands of dollars, with only a hazy idea of their destination in life.

Now suppose that you asked someone what she wanted from her education, and you got this answer: "I plan to get a degree in journalism, with double minors in earth science and Portuguese, so I can work as a reporter covering the environment in Brazil." The details of a person's vision offer clues to his or her skills and sense of purpose.

Another clue is the presence of "stretch goals"—those that are big *and* achievable. A 40-year-old might spend years talking about his desire to be a professional athlete someday. Chances are, that's no longer achievable. However, setting a goal to lose 10 pounds by playing basketball at the gym three days a week is another matter. That's a stretch—a challenge. It's also doable.

Discovering what you want helps you succeed in higher education. Many students quit school simply because they are unsure about what they want from it. With well-defined goals in mind, you can look for connections between what you want and what you study. The more connections, the more likely you'll stay in school—and get what you want in every area of life. ■



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Making the transition to higher education:

SIX THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW

People who are new to higher education get a common piece of advice: “You’ll get the hang of being in school. Just give it time.” However, you can often *reduce* your transition time—and your initial discomfort—with the following strategies.

1. Plug into resources. A supercharger increases the air supply to an internal combustion engine. The resulting difference in power can be dramatic. You can make just as powerful a difference in your education if you supercharge it by using all of the resources available to students. In this case, your “air supply” includes people, campus clubs and organizations, and school and community services.

Of all resources, people are the most important. You can isolate yourself, study hard, and get a good education. However, doing this is not the most powerful use of your tuition money. When you establish relationships with teachers, staff members, fellow students, and potential employers, you can get a *great* education.

Accessing resources is especially important if you are the first person in your family to enter higher education. As a first-generation student, you are having experiences that people in your family may not understand. Talk to your relatives about your activities

at school. If they ask how they can help you, give specific answers. Also ask your instructors about programs for first-generation students on your campus.

2. Meet with your academic advisor. One person in particular—your academic advisor—can help you access resources and make the transition to higher education. Meet with this person regularly. Advisors generally know about course requirements, options for declaring majors, and the resources available at your school. Peer advisors might also be available.

3. Show up for class. The amount that you pay in tuition and fees makes a powerful argument for going to classes regularly. In large part, the material that you’re tested on comes from events that take place in class.

Showing up for class occurs on two levels. The most visible level is being physically present in the classroom. Even more important, though, is showing up mentally. This kind of attendance includes taking detailed notes, asking questions, and contributing to class discussions.

4. Be willing to rethink how you learn. Many students arrive in higher education with study skills that were

honed for high school. They underestimate how long it takes to complete assignments and prepare for tests. These students get an unpleasant surprise when their grades take a hit.

To avoid this fate, embrace new strategies for learning. Don’t prepare for tests by simply memorizing isolated facts. Instead, relate facts to the big ideas in your courses. State those ideas in your own words. Give examples based on personal experience whenever possible, and explain how you would apply the ideas. The strategies presented in this text can help you do all of these things.

5. Take the initiative in meeting new people. Realize that most of the people in this new world of higher education are waiting to be welcomed. You can help them and help yourself at the same time. Introduce yourself to classmates and instructors. Just before or after class is a good time.

6. Admit your feelings—whatever they are. School can be an intimidating experience for new students. People of diverse cultures, adult learners, commuters, and people with disabilities may feel excluded. Feelings of anxiety, isolation, and homesickness are common among students.

Those emotions are common among new students, and there's nothing wrong with them. Simply admitting the truth about how you feel—to yourself and to someone else—can help you cope. And you can almost always do something constructive in the present moment, no matter how you feel.

If your feelings about the transition to higher education make it hard for you to carry out the activities of daily life—going to class, working, studying,

and relating to people—then get professional help. Start with a counselor at the student health service on your

campus. The mere act of seeking help can make a difference. ✦

do you have a
MINUTE?

Make a list of questions you want to ask your advisor and rank them by priority. When you're in the meeting, be sure to start with your most important question.

Master student QUALITIES

This text is about something that cannot be taught. It's about becoming a master student.

Mastery means attaining a level of skill that goes beyond technique. For a master, work is effortless; struggle evaporates. The master carpenter is so familiar with her tools that they are part of her. To a master chef, utensils are old friends. Because these masters don't have to think about the details of the process, they bring more of themselves to their work.

Often, the result of mastery is a sense of profound satisfaction, well-being, and timelessness. Distractions fade. Time stops. Work becomes play. After hours of patient practice, after setting clear goals and getting precise feedback, the master has learned to be fully in control.

At the same time, he lets go of control. Results happen without effort, struggle, or worry. Work seems self-propelled. The master is in control by being out of control. He lets go and allows the creative process to take over. That's why after a spectacular performance by an athlete or artist, observers



Oliver Clave/Getty Images

often say, "He played full out—and made it look like he wasn't even trying."

Likewise, the master student is one who makes learning look easy. She works hard without seeming to make any effort. She's relaxed *and* alert, disciplined *and* spontaneous, focused *and* fun-loving.

You might say that those statements don't make sense. Actually, mastery does *not* make sense. It cannot be captured with words. It defies analysis. Mastery cannot be taught. It can only be learned and experienced.

Master students share certain qualities. Though they imply various strategies for learning, they ultimately go beyond what people *do*. Master student qualities are values. They are ways of *being* exceptional.

Following is a list of master student qualities. Remember that the list is not complete. It merely points in a direction.

As you read the following list, look to yourself. Put a check mark next to each quality that you've already demonstrated. Put another mark—say, an exclamation point—next to each quality you want to actively work on possessing. This is not a test. It is simply a chance to celebrate what you've accomplished so far—and to start thinking about what's possible for your future.

- ☐ **Inquisitive.** The master student is curious about everything. By posing questions, she can generate interest in the most mundane, humdrum situations.
- ☐ **Able to focus attention.** Watch a 2-year-old at play. Pay attention to his eyes. The wide-eyed look reveals an energy and a capacity for amazement that keep his attention absolutely focused in the here and now. The master student's focused attention has this kind of childlike quality. The world, to a master student, is always new.
- ☐ **Willing to change.** The unknown does not frighten the master student. In fact, she welcomes it—even the unknown in herself.
- ☐ **Able to organize and sort.** The master student can take a large body of information and sift through it to discover relationships.
- ☐ **Competent.** Mastery of skills is important to the master student. When he learns mathematical formulas, he studies them until they become second nature. He also is able to apply what he learns to new and different situations.
- ☐ **Joyful.** More often than not, the master student is seen with a smile on her face—sometimes a smile at nothing in particular other than amazement at the world and her experience of it.
- ☐ **Able to suspend judgment.** The master student has opinions, and he is able to let go of them when appropriate. He can quiet his internal dialogue and listen to opposing viewpoints.
- ☐ **Energetic.** Notice the student with a spring in her step, the one who is enthusiastic and involved in class. When she reads, she often sits on the very edge of her chair, and she plays with the same intensity.
- ☐ **Well.** The master student treats his body with respect. He tends to his health at all levels—body, mind, and spirit.
- ☐ **Self-aware.** The master student is willing to evaluate himself and his behavior. He regularly tells the truth about his strengths and those aspects that could be improved.
- ☐ **Responsible.** There is a difference between responsibility and blame, and the master student knows it well. She is willing to take responsibility for everything in her life—even for events that most people would blame on others. For example, if a master student takes a required class that most students consider boring, she chooses to take responsibility for her interest level. She looks for ways to link the class to one of her goals. She sees the class as an opportunity to experiment with new study techniques that will enhance her performance in any course. She remembers that by choosing her thoughts and behaviors, she can create interesting classes, enjoyable relationships, fulfilling work experiences, or just about anything else she wants.
- ☐ **Willing to take risks.** The master student often takes on projects with no guarantee of success. He participates in class dialogues at the risk of looking foolish. He tackles difficult subjects in term papers. He welcomes the risk of a challenging course.
- ☐ **Willing to participate.** Don't look for the master student on the sidelines. She's in the game. She is a team player who can be counted on. She is engaged at school, at work, and with friends and family. She is willing to make a commitment and to follow through on it.
- ☐ **A generalist.** The master student seeks out experiences that give him a broad range of knowledge. He can apply this knowledge to his special interests, creating new ideas in the process.
- ☐ **Courageous.** The master student admits her fear and fully experiences it. For example, she will approach a tough exam as an opportunity to explore feelings of anxiety and tension related to the pressure to perform. She does not deny fear; she embraces it.
- ☐ **Self-directed.** Rewards or punishments provided by others do not motivate the master student. His desire to learn comes from within, and his goals come from himself. He competes like a star athlete—not to defeat other people, but to push himself to the next level of excellence.

- ☐ **Spontaneous.** The master student is truly in the here and now. She is able to respond to the moment in fresh, surprising, and unplanned ways.
- ☐ **Relaxed about grades.** Grades make the master student neither depressed nor euphoric. He recognizes that sometimes grades are important. At the same time, he does not measure his worth as a human being by the grades he receives.
- ☐ **“Tech” savvy.** A master student defines *technology* as any tool that’s used to achieve a human purpose. From this point of view, computers become tools for deeper learning, higher productivity, and greater success. She knows when to go online—and when to go offline so that she can fully engage with people face-to-face.
- ☐ **Intuitive.** The master student has an inner sense that cannot be explained by logic alone. He trusts his “gut instincts” as well as his mind.
- ☐ **Creative.** Where others see dull details and trivia, the master student sees opportunities to create. The master student is creative in every aspect of her life.
- ☐ **Willing to work.** Once inspired, the master student is willing to follow through with sweat. He knows that deep learning involves persistence and effort. When in high gear, the master student works with the intensity of a child at play.
- ☐ **Willing to be uncomfortable.** The master student does not place comfort first. When discomfort is necessary to reach a goal, he is willing to experience it. He can endure personal hardships and can look at unpleasant things with detachment.
- ☐ **Optimistic.** The master student sees setbacks as temporary and isolated, knowing that she can choose her response to any circumstance. Instead of believing that her abilities are fixed at birth, she sees herself as capable of change, growth, and mastery.
- ☐ **Willing to laugh.** The master student might laugh at any moment, and his sense of humor includes the ability to laugh at himself.
- ☐ **Hungry.** Human beings begin life with a natural appetite for knowledge. The master student taps that hunger, and it gives her a desire to learn for the sake of learning.
- ☐ **Caring.** A master student cares about knowledge and has a passion for ideas. She also cares about people and appreciates learning from others. She collaborates on projects and thrives on teams. She flourishes in a community that values win-win outcomes, cooperation, and love. ✱

Get the most out of the ESSENTIAL GUIDE PROGRAM

The purpose of this text is to help you make a successful transition to higher education by setting up a path to mastery that will last the rest of your life. And this text is worthless—if *reading it is all you do*. You’ll get your money’s worth only if you actively use

the ideas that are presented in these pages.

The author of *Becoming a Master Student* didn’t like traditional textbooks. They put him to sleep. So he chose to create a different kind of book. You’re holding the result in your hands.

Nothing in this text appears by accident. Every element on every page serves as a prompt to take ideas and put them into action.

Articles are the backbone of this text. You’re reading one right now. Articles are important because *The*

Essential Guide to Becoming a Master Student is designed to look like a magazine rather than a textbook.

Most magazines are filled with advertisements. So is this text. The difference is that you won't find any glossy photos of celebrities or consumer products. Instead, the articles are self-contained "advertisements" for tips, tools, strategies, and techniques that you can use immediately. You can read any article from any chapter in any order at any time. If you read each chapter from start to finish, you'll gain the advantage of seeing how the key concepts fit together.

A **Master Student Map** begins each chapter. Think of it as a GPS device for ideas. Each chapter takes you on a journey, and the Master Student Map is your guide. You can orient yourself for maximum learning every time you open this text by asking the four questions listed in the Map: *Why? What? How?* and *What if?* Those four questions are keys to learning anything.

There's a **Power Process** in each chapter. These are suggestions to play with your perspective on the world so that it becomes easier to use the ideas suggested in articles. Students often refer to the Power Processes as their favorite part of the text. Approach them with a sense of possibility.

Journal Entries are just as essential. These are invitations for you to discover what you want in life and how you intend to get it.

A **Skills Snapshot** ends each chapter. These connect with the **Discovery**

Wheel included later in this chapter. Like the Discovery Wheel, the Skills Snapshots invite you to tell the truth in a nonjudgmental way about where you stand today in your path to becoming a Master Student.

One major theme of this book is time management—a challenge for most students who are new to higher education. Fortunately, time management does not have to take much time. Look for **Do you have a minute?** boxes in every chapter for suggestions that take only about 60 seconds to do. ✦

do you have a
MINUTE?

Make a list of questions you want to ask your advisor, and rank them by priority. When you're in the meeting, be sure to start with your most important question.

DISCOVERY STATEMENT

journal entry 1

Declare what you want

Review the articles you have read so far in this chapter. Then use this Journal Entry to start experiencing the master student process—the ongoing cycle of discovery, intention, and action.

Brainstorm many possible ways to complete this sentence: *I discovered that what I want most from my education is . . .* When you're done, choose the ending that feels best to you and write it down.

I discovered that what I want most from my education is . . .

The Master Student PROCESS

Success is no mystery. Successful people have left clues—*many* clues, in fact. There are thousands of articles and books that give tools, tips, techniques, and strategies for success. Do an Internet search on *success* and you'll get over 300 million results.

If that sounds overwhelming, don't worry. Success is simply the process of setting and achieving goals. And the essentials of that process can be described in three words: *Discovery. Intention. Action.* They work together in phases:

- Discovery—observing your thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and current circumstances
- Intention—choosing new outcomes that you'd like to create
- Action—following through with your intentions with new behaviors

Throughout this text are Journal Entries. These are invitations to reflect and write. They are also your chance to personally experience success through the cycle of discovery, intention, and action.

WRITE DISCOVERY STATEMENTS

The first stage is a Discovery Statement. These often begin with a prompt, such as “I discovered that . . .” Here is an opportunity to reflect on “where you are.” Discovery Statements describe your current strengths and areas for improvement. Discovery Statements can also be descriptions of your feelings, thoughts, and behavior. Whenever you get an “aha!” moment—a flash of insight or a sudden solution to a problem—put it in a Discovery Statement. To write effective Discovery Statements, remember the following.

Record the specifics about your thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Thoughts include inner voices. We talk to ourselves constantly in our head. When internal chatter gets in the way, write down what you tell yourself. If this seems difficult at first, just start writing. The act of writing can trigger a flood of thoughts.

Thoughts also include mental pictures. These are especially powerful. Picturing yourself flunking a test is like a rehearsal to do just that. One way to take away the power of negative images is to describe them in detail.

Also notice how you feel when you function well. Use Discovery Statements to pinpoint exactly where and when you learn most effectively.

In addition, observe your emotions and actions, and record the facts. If you spent 90 minutes chatting online with a favorite cousin instead of reading your anatomy text,



write about it. Include the details—when you did it, where you did it, and how it felt.

Use discomfort as a signal. When you approach a hard task, such as a difficult math problem, notice your physical sensations. These might include a churning stomach, shallow breathing, and yawning. Feeling uncomfortable, bored, or tired can be a signal that you're about to do valuable work. Stick with it. Write about it. Tell yourself you can handle the discomfort just a little bit longer. You will be rewarded with a new insight.

Suspend judgment. As you learn about yourself, be gentle. Suspend self-judgment. If you continually judge your behaviors as “bad” or “stupid,” your mind will quit making discoveries rather than put up with abuse. For your own benefit, be kind to yourself.

Tell the truth. Suspending judgment helps you tell the truth about yourself. “The truth will set you free” is a saying that endures for a reason. The closer you get to the truth, the more powerful your Discovery Statements. And if you notice that you are avoiding the truth, don't blame yourself. Just tell the truth about it.

WRITE INTENTION STATEMENTS

Intention Statements can be used to alter your course. They are statements of your commitment to do a specific task or achieve a goal. Discovery Statements promote awareness, whereas Intention Statements are blueprints for action. The two processes reinforce each other.

Make intentions positive. The purpose of writing Intention Statements is to focus on what you *do* want rather than what you *don't* want. Instead of writing “I will not fall asleep while studying chemistry,” write, “I intend to stay awake when studying chemistry.” Also avoid the word *try*. Trying is not doing. When we hedge our bets with *try*, we can always tell ourselves, “Well, I *tried* to stay awake.”

Make intentions observable. Rather than writing “I intend to work harder on my history assignments,” write, “I intend to review my class notes daily and make summary sheets of my reading.”

Integrity . . . making time for what matters most

Living with integrity is a challenge. For example, people might tell you that they're open-minded—and then get angry when you disagree with them. Students might say that they value education—and then skip classes to party. When our words and actions get out of alignment, then we stop getting the results that we want.

One solution is to define your values as high-priority activities. In your journal, brainstorm ways to complete this sentence: *It's extremely important that I make time for . . .* Then use your answers to set goals, schedule events, and write daily to-do lists. This strategy translates your values into plans that directly affect the way you manage time.

For example, perhaps it's important for you to stay healthy. Then you can set goals to exercise regularly and manage your weight. In turn, those goals can show up as items on your to-do list and calendar—commitments to go to the gym, take an aerobics class, and include low-fat foods on your grocery list.

The ultimate time management skill is to define your values and align your actions.

Make intentions small and achievable. Break large goals into small, specific tasks that can be accomplished quickly. Small and simple changes in behavior—when practiced consistently over time—can have large and lasting effects.

When setting your goals, anticipate self-sabotage. Be aware of what you might do, consciously or unconsciously, to undermine your best intentions. Also be careful about intentions that depend on other people. If you intend for your study group to complete an assignment by Monday, then your success depends on the students in the group. Likewise, you can support your group's success by following through on your own stated intentions.

Set time lines. For example, if you are assigned a paper to write, break the assignment into small tasks and set a precise due date for each one: "I intend to select a topic for my paper by 9 a.m. Wednesday."

ACT NOW!

Carefully crafted Discovery Statements are a beauty to behold. Precise Intention Statements can inspire awe. But neither will be of much use until you put them into action. This is where the magic happens.

Life responds to what you *do*. Successful people are those who consistently produce the results that they want. And results follow from specific, consistent behaviors. If you want new results in your life, then take new actions.

Get physical. This phase of the process is about moving from thinking to doing. Translate goals into physical actions that would show up on a video recording. Get your legs, arms, and mouth moving.

Welcome discomfort. Changing your behavior might lead to feelings of discomfort. Instead of going back to your old behaviors, befriend the yucky feelings. Taking action has a way of dissolving discomfort.

When you get stuck, tell the truth about it. As you become a student of human behavior, you'll see people expecting new results from old behaviors—and then wondering why they feel stuck. Don't be surprised if you discover this tendency in yourself. Just tell the truth about it, review your intentions, and take your next action.

REPEAT THE CYCLE

The process of discovery, intention, and action is a continuous cycle. First, you write Discovery Statements about where you are now. Next, you write Intention Statements about where you want to be and the specific steps you will take to get there. Follow up with action—the sooner, the better.

Then start the cycle again. Write Discovery Statements about whether you act on your Intention Statements—and what you learn in the process. Follow up with more Intention Statements about what you will do differently in the future. Then move into action and describe what happens next.

This process never ends. Each time you repeat the cycle, you get new results. Your actions become a little more aligned with your intentions, and your intentions more accurately reflect your discoveries. Over time, these small corrections add up. Your life shifts in significant ways as you move in the direction of your dreams. ✦

do you have a
MINUTE?

Write an Intention Statement to create a new habit. Make it small—a 60-second task such as flossing one tooth after you brush your teeth or doing one yoga stretch after you get out of bed in the morning. You'll find that such behaviors tend to expand naturally once you turn them into habits.

The Discovery Wheel

The Discovery Wheel is an opportunity to tell the truth about the kind of person you are—and the kind of person you want to become.

This tool is based on a fundamental idea: Success in any area of life starts with telling the truth about what is working—and what isn't—in our lives right now. When we acknowledge our strengths, we gain an accurate picture of what we can accomplish. When we admit that we have a problem, we free up energy to find a solution. It's that simple.

The Discovery Wheel gives you an opportunity to sit back for a few minutes and think about yourself. This is not a test. There are no trick questions. There are no grades. The answers you provide will have meaning only for you.

HOW THE DISCOVERY WHEEL WORKS

By doing the Discovery Wheel, you can gain awareness of your current behaviors—especially the kinds of behaviors that affect your success in school. With this knowledge, you can choose new behaviors and start to enjoy new results in your life.

During this exercise, you fill in a circle similar to the one shown in Figure I.1. The closer the shading comes to the outer edge of the circle, the higher your evaluation of a

5 points	This statement is always or almost always true of me.
4 points	This statement is often true of me.
3 points	This statement is true of me about half the time.
2 points	This statement is seldom true of me.
1 point	This statement is never or almost never true of me.

specific skill. In the example below, the student has rated her reading skills low and her note-taking skills high.

The terms *high* and *low* are not positive or negative judgments. When doing the Discovery Wheel, you are just making observations about yourself. You're like a scientist running an experiment. You are just collecting data and

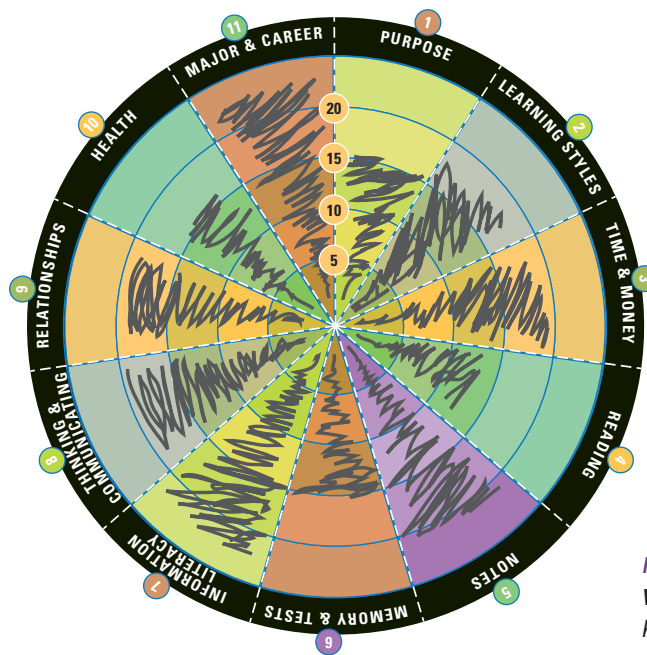


Figure I.1 Sample Discovery Wheel. Notice how this student has rated her reading skills low and her note-taking skills high.

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recording the facts. You're not evaluating yourself as good or bad.

Remember that the Discovery Wheel is not a permanent picture of who you are. It is a picture of what you're doing right now. You'll do this exercise again, near the end. Also, the Skills Snapshot at the end of each chapter is like a mini-Discovery Wheel that allows you to update your self-evaluations.

In short, you will have many chances to measure your progress. So be honest about where you are right now.

To succeed at this exercise, tell the truth about your strengths. This is no time for modesty! Also, lighten up and be willing to laugh at yourself. A little humor can make it easier to tell the truth about your areas for improvement.

To begin this exercise, read the following statements and give yourself points for each one, based on the point system described. Then add up your point total for each category and shade the Discovery Wheel to the appropriate level.

1 Purpose

- _____ I can clearly state my overall purpose in life.
- _____ I can explain how school relates to what I plan to do after I graduate.
- _____ I capture key insights in writing and clarify exactly how I intend to act on them.
- _____ I am skilled at making transitions.
- _____ I seek out and use resources to support my success.
- _____ **Total Score: Purpose**

2 Learning Styles

- _____ I enjoy learning.
- _____ I make a habit of assessing my personal strengths and areas for improvement.
- _____ I monitor my understanding of a topic and change learning strategies if I get confused.
- _____ I use my knowledge of various learning styles to support my success in school.
- _____ I am open to different points of view on almost any topic.
- _____ **Total Score: Learning Styles**

3 Time & Money

- _____ I can clearly describe what I want to experience in major areas of my life, including career, relationships, financial well-being, and health.
- _____ I set goals and periodically review them.
- _____ I plan each day and often accomplish what I plan.
- _____ I will have enough money to complete my education.
- _____ I monitor my income, keep track of my expenses, and live within my means.
- _____ **Total Score: Time & Money**

4 Reading

- _____ I ask myself questions about what I'm reading.
- _____ I preview and review reading assignments.
- _____ I relate what I read to my life.
- _____ I select strategies to fit the type of material I'm reading.
- _____ When I don't understand what I'm reading, I note my questions and find answers.
- _____ **Total Score: Reading**

5 Notes

- _____ When I am in class, I focus my attention.
- _____ I take notes in class.
- _____ I can explain various methods for taking notes, and I choose those that work best for me.
- _____ I distinguish key points from supporting examples.
- _____ I put important concepts into my own words.
- _____ **Total Score: Notes**

6 Memory & Tests

- _____ The way that I talk about my value as a person is independent of my grades.
- _____ I often succeed at predicting test questions.
- _____ I review for tests throughout the term.
- _____ I manage my time during tests.
- _____ I use techniques to remember key facts and ideas.
- _____ **Total Score: Memory & Tests**

7 Information Literacy

- _____ I choose appropriate topics for research projects.
- _____ I translate topics into questions that effectively guide my research.
- _____ I find credible sources of information to answer my questions.
- _____ I think critically about information that I find.
- _____ I translate the results of my research into effective speaking and writing.
- _____ **Total Score: Information Literacy**

8 Thinking & Communicating

- _____ I use brainstorming to generate solutions to problems.
- _____ I can detect common errors in logic and gaps in evidence.
- _____ When researching, I find relevant facts and properly credit their sources.
- _____ I edit my writing for clarity, accuracy, and coherence.
- _____ I prepare and deliver effective presentations.
- _____ **Total Score: Thinking & Communicating**

9 Relationships

- _____ Other people tell me that I am a good listener.
- _____ I communicate my upsets without blaming others.
- _____ I build rewarding relationships with people from other backgrounds.
- _____ I effectively resolve conflict.
- _____ I participate effectively in teams and take on leadership roles.
- _____ **Total Score: Relationships**

10 Health

- _____ I have enough energy to study, attend classes, and enjoy other areas of my life.
- _____ The way I eat supports my long-term health.
- _____ I exercise regularly.
- _____ I can cope effectively with stress.
- _____ I'm in control of alcohol or other drugs I put in my body.
- _____ **Total Score: Health**

11 Major & Career

- _____ I have a detailed list of my skills.
- _____ I have a written career plan and update it regularly.
- _____ I use the career-planning services at my school.
- _____ I participate in internships, extracurricular activities, information interviews, and on-the-job experiences to test and refine my career plan.
- _____ I have declared a major related to my interests, skills, and core values.
- _____ **Total Score: Major & Career**

Using the total score from each category, shade in each section of the blank Discovery Wheel in Figure I.2. If you want, use different colors. For example, you could use green for areas you want to work on.

REFLECT ON YOUR DISCOVERY WHEEL

Now that you have completed your Discovery Wheel, spend a few minutes with it. Get a sense of its weight, shape, and balance. How would it sound if it rolled down a hill?

Next, complete the following sentences. Just write down whatever comes to mind. Remember, this is not a test.

The two areas in which I am strongest are . . .

The two areas in which I most want to improve are . . .

Finally, take about 15 minutes to do a “textbook reconnaissance” much like the preview you did for this chapter. First,

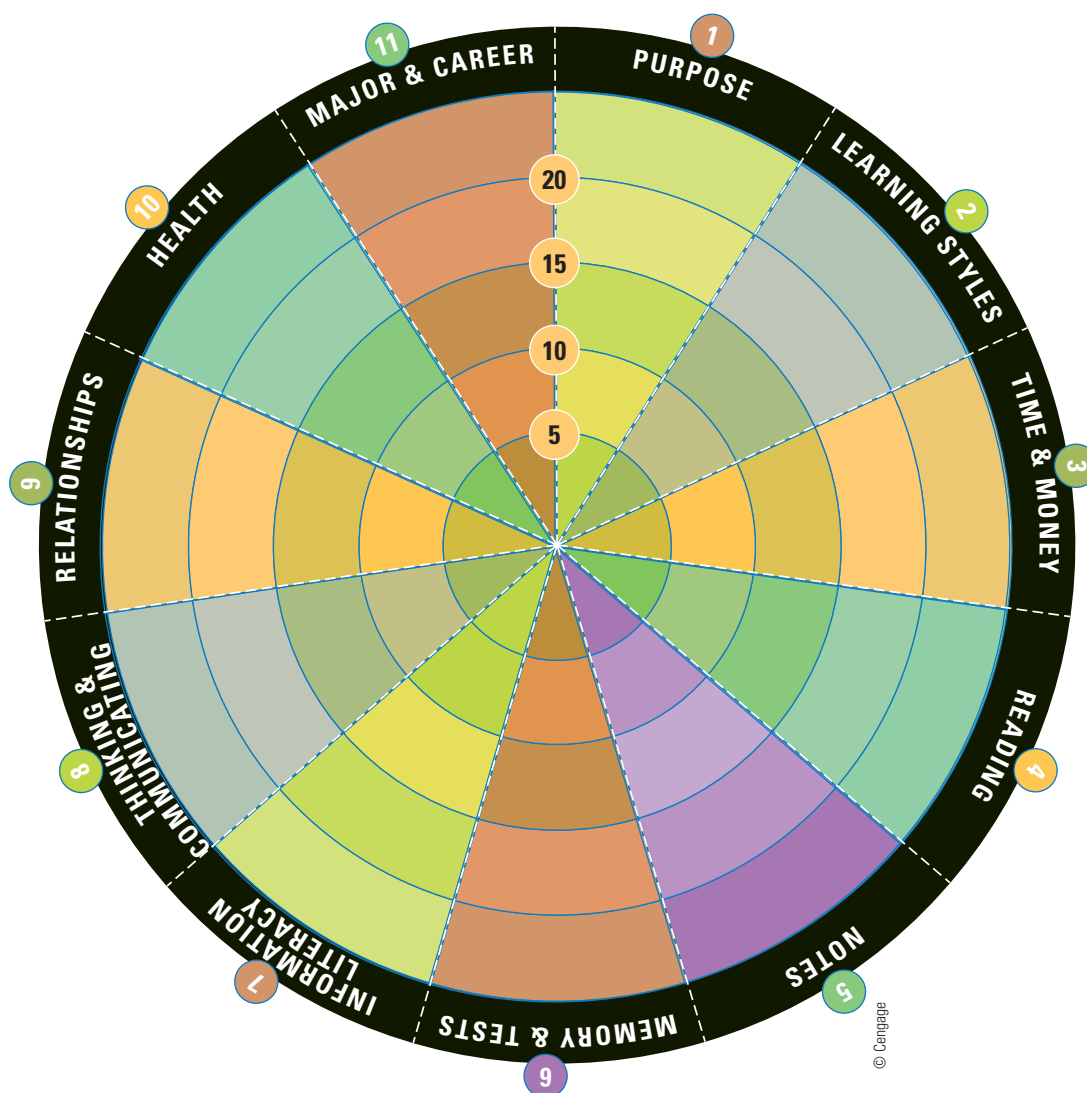
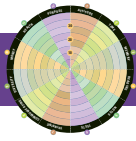


Figure 1.2 Your Discovery Wheel.

scan the Table of Contents. Next, look at every page. Move quickly. Skim the words in bold print. Glance at pictures. Look for suggestions that can help with behaviors you want to change. Find five such suggestions that look especially interesting to you. Then write a short description of each idea and a page number or location in the text where you can find out more.



SKILLS *snapshot*

Introduction

Introduction

To get the most value from this text, take the suggestions that work for you and turn them into habits. In his book *The Power of Habit*, Charles Duhigg explains that any habit has three elements:¹

- **Routine.** This is a behavior that we repeat, usually without thinking. Examples are taking a second helping at dinner, biting fingernails, or automatically hitting the “snooze” button when the alarm goes off in the morning.
- **Cue.** Also known as a *trigger*, this is an event that occurs right before we perform the routine. It might be an internal event, such as a change in mood. Or it could be an external event, such as seeing an advertisement that triggers cravings for a chocolate chip cookie.
- **Reward.** This is the payoff for the routine—usually a feeling of pleasure or a reduction in stress.

Taken together, these elements form a habit loop: You perceive a *cue* and then perform a *routine* in order to get a *reward*. Use this Skills Snapshot to test Duhigg’s ideas for yourself.

Step 1: Identify a routine.

Begin by describing one of your current routines. Describe one specific behavior that you’d like to change.

Step 2: Identify the cue.

Describe the cue for the behavior you listed in Step 1.

Step 3: Identify the reward.

Describe the reward that you get from the behavior listed in Step 1.

Step 4: Choose a new routine.

Now choose a *new* routine that you can perform in response to the cue. The challenge is to choose a behavior that offers a reward with as few disadvantages as possible. Instead of eating a chocolate chip cookie, for example, you could eat a small dish of unsweetened applesauce. This snack is naturally sweet with no added sugar. You experience a familiar pleasure with a fraction of the calories.

Describe your new routine here:

After taking action on your intention for at least one week, describe your success in doing the new routine. Also, include any ideas for your next experiment in habit change.

do you have a
MINUTE?

Review the new routine that you just wrote. Is it something that you can do in 60 seconds or less? If not, then rethink it. List your revised routine here.

Using Your Learning Styles

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why

Success starts with telling the truth about what *is* working—and what *isn't*—in your life right now.

how

Skim this chapter for three techniques that you'd like to apply in school or in your personal life during the upcoming week. Highlight those techniques and then write Intention Statements about how and when you will use those techniques.

what if...

I could start to create new outcomes in my life by accepting the way I am right now?

what is included...

- 16** Power Process: Ideas are tools
- 17** Learning styles: Discovering how you learn
- 19** Learning Style Inventory
- 25** Using your Learning Style Profile to succeed
- 26** Journal Entry 2: Choosing success
- 27** Skills Snapshot

do you have a minute?

Take a minute to write down a “baby step”—a task that takes 60 seconds or less—that can help you move toward completing a current project or assignment. For example, brainstorm a list of topics for a paper that you plan to write. If you can spare another minute, then do that task immediately.