

Organizational skills

ACE - Grow Your Skills



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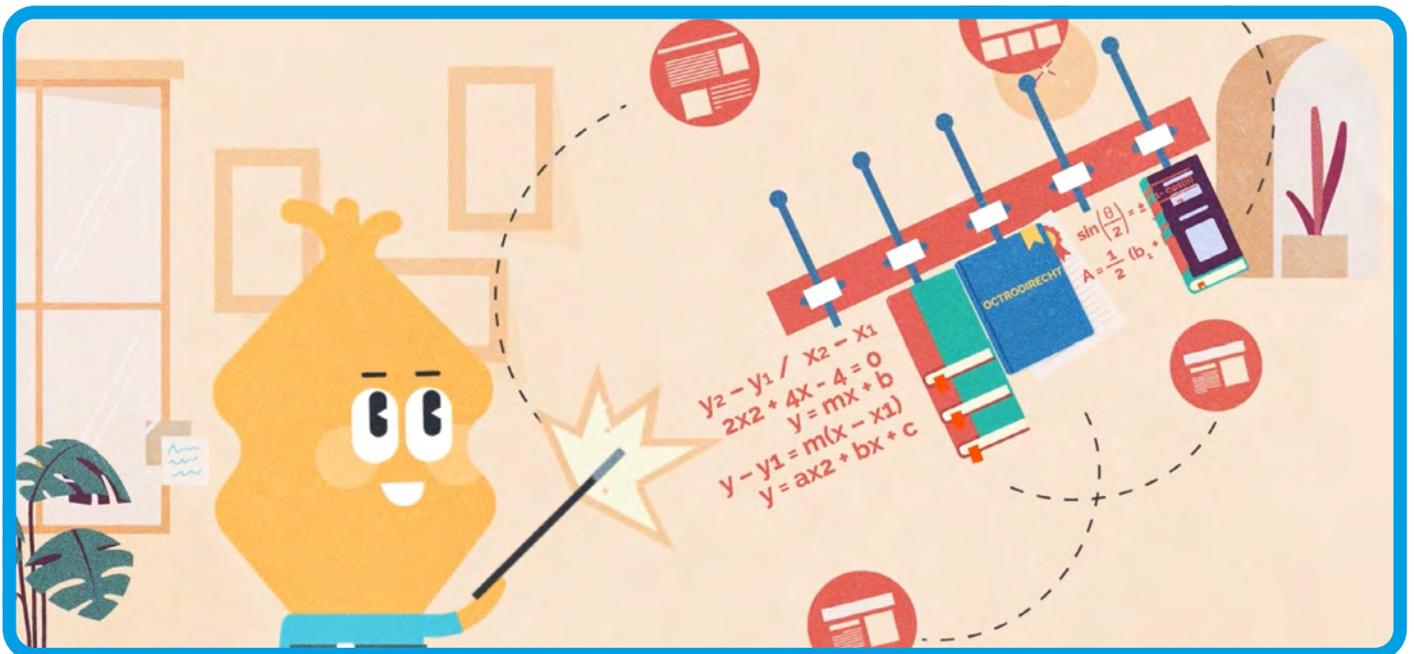
Organizational skills

Organizing the learning material and thus making it comprehensible (e.g. distinguishing main and secondary issues through mind mapping).

Description

The following strategies can help categorize, rank, underline or summarize learning in tables, flow charts and other graphical and schematic representations. Structuring information in a clear way makes it easier to store information in your memory. The structure is like the coat rack of memory where information can be "hanged".

- **Distinguishing primary and secondary issues:** Explain the main and side issues in the learning material.
- **Graph or table:** Based on the subject matter, create a graph or table.
- **Common thread:** Articulate concisely what the main theme of the subject matter is. Shorten a text without losing the common thread.
- **Summarizing:** Make a drawing or mind map of the study material and summarize it in this way.
- **PowerPoint presentation:** Create a PowerPoint presentation containing key words to support a presentation.
- **Objects:** Sort objects based on a common characteristic, such as colour or shape.



Watch this video



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Tips

- To recognize structure in texts, the following tips help:
- Look at the existing structure. Read titles, subheadings, words in bold and review images.
 - Read the introduction and the first and last sentence of each chapter.
 - Then read the text in detail and ask yourself the **W** questions for each paragraph: who, what, where, why, when, how?.



Assignment 1 Learning to memorize better

Creating a visual diagram.

Create a visual diagram of material you need to study. Go through the steps below.

Step 1: Write down **all the words about a topic that come to mind.**

Step 2: **Rank** them from abstract to concrete.

Step 3: Group **related concepts** together.

Step 4: Write down each concept in a circle on a large sheet of paper.

Step 5: Connect the nearby circles with a line and think of a statement for each line that indicates the relationship between the two concepts.

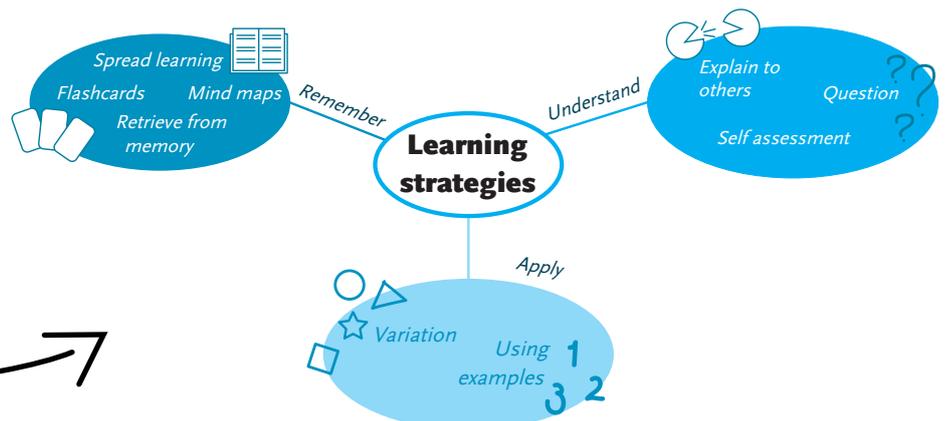
Some suggestions to enhance a visual diagram

- When a relation exists, you can indicate a direction by using an arrow. For example, think of a cause-and-effect relationship, or a sequence.
- The symbol, word or short text accompanying a relationship should express a meaningful connection.
- Particularly when when using a mind map while summarizing, visual is preferred over textual. Make use of illustrations, drawings or cartoons as much as possible and write down your text in key words only.
- Use shapes like squares, circles, triangles, etc. to mark similar areas or concepts. For example: in a problem analysis, mark all problems with a red triangle and all possible solutions with a green circle.
- Use colours to mark similar ideas (questions orange, answers green) or to mark learning objectives and deeper questions.
- Use a particular colour or symbol to highlight concepts you still need to work on. Or add a question or learning objective to the concept map.
- Also indicate relationships between concepts that are far apart in your mind map. For example, draw a large arrow in a different colour.

General tips

- Leave plenty of room in the beginning so you can easily add ideas and connections later.
- Write the terms in capital letters. By doing so, you encourage yourself to keep it short. Also, text in capitals is easier to read in a diagram.
- Create a visual diagram quickly, without pauses and without immediately judging what you write down. In doing so, you promote creative and nonlinear thinking. The primary goal is to visualize key concepts and connections, not to write a logical and linear argument.
- When an idea comes up, ask the questions: Why? How? What? Where? Who? When? This will naturally give you new ideas.

An example of a visual diagram on learning strategies



Literature

- 1 Dijkstra, P. (2019). *Effectiever studeren. Leerstrategieën voor het hoger onderwijs*. Amsterdam: Boom.
- 2 Rotterdamse samenwerkingsverband vo-ho: samen werken aan betere aansluiting (2022). Het Rotterdamse vaardighedenraamwerk vo-ho inclusief rubrics. Geraadpleegd op 26-4-2023, van <https://aansluiting-voho010.nl/nieuws-en-agenda/rotterdams-vaardighedenraamwerk-vo-ho-incl-rubrics-nu-beschikbaar>
- 3 Weinstein, C. E., Husman, J., & Dierking, D. R. (2000). Self-regulation interventions with a focus on learning strategies. In *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 727-747). Academic Press.
- 4 Weinstein, C.E., Jung, J, & Acee, T.W. (2010). Learning Strategies. In V.G. Aukrust (Ed.). *Learning and cognition in education* (pp.137-143). Oxford: Academia Press.