

P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Becoming a Successful Student

1



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The day has started off with a bang. Literally. As Jessie Trevant struggles sleepily to turn off her clock radio's continual buzzing at 8:35 a.m., she knocks it off the desk next to her bed. The loud bang it makes not only wakes her fully but also rouses her roommate, who grumbles resentfully.

Struggling out of bed, Jessie reflects on the day ahead. It's one of her most intense class days—four different classes, scattered across the campus. She also must put in several hours of work in the college bookstore, where she has a 15-hour-a-week job, and she knows she'd better get started on her history paper, due next week. And then

there's that biology test that she must take this morning.

After a quick shower, Jessie joins the flood of students making their way to classes. She glances at her biology textbook and feels a wave of anxiety flood over her: Will I do well enough? How will I manage to hold down a job and have enough time to study? Will I make friends here? Will it ever feel like home? Will I make my family proud? . . . *And underlying them all is a single challenge: Will I be successful in college?*



Discussion Prompt: Ask your students to write down their greatest hopes and biggest fears for academic success. Tell them that this will be for personal reflection and possibly class discussion.

LOOKING AHEAD



Whether academic pursuits are a struggle or come easily to you . . . whether you live on campus or commute . . . whether you are fresh out of high school or are returning to school many years after high school graduation—college is a challenge. Every one of us has concerns about our capabilities and motivation, and new situations—like starting college—make us wonder how well we'll succeed.

That's where this book comes in. It is designed to help you learn the most effective ways to approach the challenges you encounter, not just in college, but outside the classroom, too. It will teach you practical strategies, hints, and tips that can lead you to success, all centered around an approach to achieving college success: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

This book is designed to be useful in a way that is different from other college texts. It presents information in

a hands-on format. It's meant to be used—not just read. Write on it, underline words and sentences, use a highlighter, circle key points, and complete the questionnaires right in the book. The more exercises you do, the more you'll get from the book. Remember, this is a book to help you with your coursework throughout college, so it's a good idea to invest your time here and now. If the learning techniques you master here become second nature, the payoff will be enormous.

This first chapter lays out the basics of P.O.W.E.R. Learning. By the time you finish this chapter, you'll be able to answer these questions:

- **What are the benefits of a college education?**
- **What are the basic principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning?**
- **How do expert students use P.O.W.E.R. Learning?**

1

TRY IT!

Why Am I Going to College?

Place a 1, 2, and 3 by the three most important reasons that you have for attending college:

- _____ I want to get a good job when I graduate.
- _____ My parents want me to go.
- _____ I couldn't find a job.
- _____ I want to get away from home.
- _____ I want to get a better job.
- _____ I want to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas.
- _____ I want to improve my reading and study skills.
- _____ I want to become a more cultured person.
- _____ I want to make more money.
- _____ I want to learn more about things that interest me.
- _____ A mentor or role model encouraged me to go.
- _____ I want to prove to others that I can succeed.

Now consider the following:

- What do your answers tell you about yourself?
- Did you think about these reasons when you were applying to college?
- How do you think your reasons compare with those of other first-year students who are starting college with you?

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

■ Why Go to College?

Congratulations. You're in college.

But *why*? Although it seems as if it should be easy to answer why you're continuing your education, for most students it's not so simple. The reasons that people go to college vary from the practical ("I want to get a good job"), to the lofty ("I want to learn about people and the world"), to the unreflective ("Why not?—I don't have anything better to do"). Consider your own reasons for attending college, as you complete **Try It 1**.

Teaching Tip: During the first days, you will be in a position of asking students to discuss personal information. Set the stage for students to respect each other. One way to encourage confidentiality and respect is to shut the classroom door.

P.O.W.E.R. UP: Use these questions as a Forced Choice exercise that will have your students on their feet and talking during class. See the IRM, *Teaching the Text*, Chapter 1.

Surveys of first-year college students show that almost three-quarters say they want to learn about things that interest them, get training for a specific career, land a better job, and make more money (see **Figure 1.1**). And, in fact, it's not wrong to expect that a college education helps people find better jobs. On average, college graduates earn about 75 percent more than high school graduates over their working lifetime. That difference adds up: Over the course of their working lifetimes, college graduates earn close to a million dollars more than those with only a high school degree. Furthermore, as jobs become increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated, college will become more and more of a necessity.

But the value of college extends far beyond dollars and cents. Consider these added reasons for pursuing a college education:

- **You'll learn to think critically and communicate better.** Here's what one student said about his college experience after he graduated: "It's not about

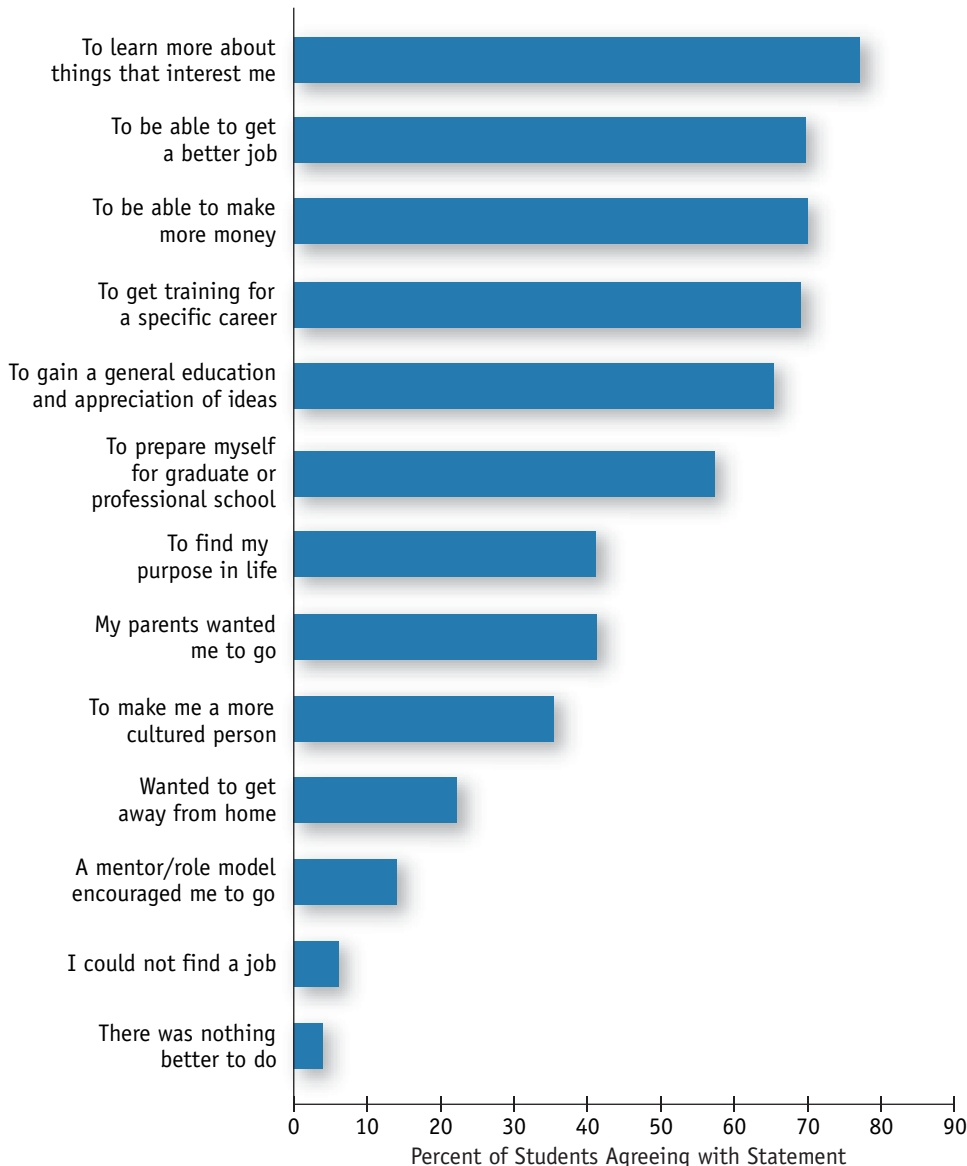


FIGURE 1.1
Choosing College

These are the most frequently cited reasons that first-year college students gave for why they enrolled in college when asked in a national survey.¹

what you major in or which classes you take. . . . It's really about learning to think and to communicate. Wherever you end up, you'll need to be able to analyze and solve problems—to figure out what needs to be done and do it."²

Education improves your ability to understand the world—to understand it as it now is, and to prepare to understand it as it will be.

- **You'll be able to better deal with advances in knowledge and technology that are changing the world.** Genetic engineering . . . drugs to reduce forgetfulness . . . computers that respond to our voices. . . . No one knows what the future will hold, but you can prepare for it through a college education. Education can provide you with the intellectual tools that you can apply regardless of the specific situation in which you find yourself.
- **You'll learn to adapt to new situations.** College is a different world from high school. It presents new experiences and new challenges. Your adjustment to the college culture will prepare you for future encounters with new situations.
- **You'll be better prepared to live in a world of diversity.** The racial and ethnic composition of the United States is changing rapidly. Whatever your ethnicity, chances are you'll be working and living with people whose backgrounds, lifestyles, and ways of thinking may be entirely different from your own.

You won't be prepared for the future unless you understand others and their cultural backgrounds—as well as how your own cultural background affects you.

- **You'll learn to lead a life of community service.** In its broadest sense, **community service** involves making contributions to the society and community in which you live. College provides you with the opportunity to become involved in community service activities, in some cases even getting course credit for it—a process called **service learning**. College also allows you to develop the skills involved in acting towards others with *civility* and respectful, courteous behavior.
- **You'll make learning a lifelong habit.** Higher education isn't the end of your education. Education will build upon your natural curiosity about the world, and it will make you aware that learning is a rewarding and never-ending journey.
- **You'll understand the meaning of your own contributions to the world.** No matter who you are, you are poised to make your own contributions to society and the world. Higher education provides you with a window to the past, present, and future, and it allows you to understand the significance of your own contributions. Your college education provides you with a compass to discover who you are, where you've been, and where you're going.

In short, there are numerous benefits for attending college. To help you attain these benefits, it's time to introduce you to a process that will help you achieve success, both in college and in life beyond: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

Student Alert: Your students' goals for being in college will likely be different than yours are for them. Be prepared to start where they are and take them to where you want them to go.

Teaching Tip: Ask your students to identify their expectations for respectful discussion within your classroom.

Community service

Making contributions to the society and community in which you live

"Civilization is the making of civil persons."

John Ruskin, author,
The Crown of Wild Olive, 1866

Service learning

Courses that allow a student to engage in community service activities while getting course credit for the experience

Discussion Prompt: Ask your students how many courses they are taking that have a service learning component.

My School Experiences

Throughout this book, you will be given opportunities to write out your thoughts. These opportunities—called Journal Reflections—offer a chance to think critically about the chapter topics and record your personal reactions to them. As you create your reflections, be honest, to yourself and to your instructor.

Completing these Journal Reflections provides a variety of benefits. Not only will you be able to mull over your past and present academic experiences, you'll begin to see patterns in the kind of difficulties—and successes!—you encounter. You'll be able to apply solutions that worked in one situation to others. And one added benefit: you'll get practice in writing.

If you save these entries and return to them later, you may be surprised at the changes they record over the course of the term. You can either write them out and keep an actual journal, or create your journal electronically at the P.O.W.E.R. Learning Web site at www.mhhe.com/power.

1. Think of one of the successful experiences you've had so far in all your years in school. What was it?
2. What made the experience successful? What did you learn from your success?
3. Think of an unsuccessful experience or failure you had in school. Why did it occur?
4. How could you have prevented it? What did you learn from it?
5. Based on these experiences of academic success and failure, what general lessons did you learn that could help you to be a more successful student in the future?

Teaching Tip Faculty who have taught with this book believe the use of the P.O.W.E.R. plan is one of the greatest strengths of this text. Encourage your students to make a commitment to using this concept now. A great place to start is with the P.O.W.E.R. Profile.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning

A system designed to help people achieve their goals, based on five steps: Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink

P.O.W.E.R. Learning: The Five Key Steps to Achieving Success

P.O.W.E.R. Learning itself is merely an acronym—a word formed from the first letters of a series of steps—that will help you take in, process, and make use of the information you'll acquire in college. It will help you to achieve your goals, both while you are in college and later after you graduate.

Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink. That's it. It's a simple framework, but an effective one. Using the systematic framework that P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides (and which is illustrated in the P.O.W.E.R. Plan diagram) will increase your chances of success at any task, from writing a college paper to purchasing the weekly groceries.

Keep this in mind: P.O.W.E.R. Learning isn't a product that you can simply pull down off the bookshelf and use without thinking. P.O.W.E.R. Learning is

a process, and you are the only one who can make it succeed. Without your personal investment in the process, P.O.W.E.R. Learning consists of just words on paper.

Relax, though. You already know each of the elements of P.O.W.E.R. Learning, and you may discover that you are already putting this process, or parts of it, to work for you. You've graduated from high school and been accepted into college. You may have also held down a job, had a first date, and registered to vote. Each of these accomplishments required that you use strategies of P.O.W.E.R. Learning. What you'll be doing throughout this book is becoming more aware of these strategies and how they can be used to help you in situations you will encounter in college and beyond.



P.O.W.E.R. Plan

PREPARE

Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that travelers taking a long journey must begin with a single step.

But before they even take that first step, travelers need to know several things: what their destination is, how they're going to get there, how they'll know when they reach the destination, and what they'll do if they have trouble along the way. In the same way, you need to know where you're headed as you embark on the intellectual journeys involved in college. Whether it be a major, long-term task, such as college attendance, or a more limited activity, such as getting ready to complete a paper due in the near future, you'll need to prepare for the journey. To see this for yourself, complete **Try It 2**, "How I Enrolled in College" on page 8.

Setting Goals

Before we seek to accomplish any task, all of us do some form of planning. The trouble is that most of the time such planning is done without conscious thinking, as if we are on autopilot. However, the key to success is to make sure that planning is systematic.

The best way to plan systematically is to use goal-setting strategies. In many cases, goals are clear and direct. It's obvious that our goal in washing dishes is to have the dishes end up clean. We know that our goal at the gas station is to fill the car's tank with gas. We go to the post office to buy stamps and mail letters.

Other goals are not so clear-cut. In fact, often the more important the task—such as going to college—the more complicated may be our goals.

What's the best way to set appropriate goals? Here are some guidelines:

- **Set both long-term and short-term goals.** **Long-term goals** are aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve. **Short-term goals** are relatively limited steps you would take on the road to accomplishing your long-term goals. For example, one of the primary reasons you're in college is to achieve the long-term goal of getting a degree. But in order to reach that goal, you have to accomplish a series of short-term goals, such as completing a set of required courses, taking a series of elective courses, and choosing a major. Even these short-term goals can be broken down into shorter-term goals. In order to complete a required course, for instance, you have to accomplish short-term goals, such as completing a paper, taking several tests, and so on.
- **Recognize that who you are determines your goals.** Goal setting starts with knowing yourself. As you'll see when we focus on understanding

Student Alert: Some of your students will report that they have done goal setting exercises before. Encourage your students to plan anew as they begin their college experience.

Long-term goals

Aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve

Short-term goals

Relatively limited steps toward the accomplishment of long-term goals

Teaching Tip: Students will begin to discover differences in each classmate's learning styles as they share the way they set goals.

2

TRY IT!

How I Enrolled in College

Academic journeys are similar to other major trips you may have taken, and they require a significant amount of preparation. Consider, for instance, the steps you followed to enroll in the college you're now attending. Think back to how you proceeded, and write in the first column below as many of the preparatory steps as you can remember, in the order you did them. For example, you may have checked the college Web site, talked to a high school counselor, visited the school, and so on.

Actual Order of Steps I Took to Enroll in College	More Logical Order
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now go back and use the second column to number the steps in what might be the most logical order.

- How closely does this logical numbering match the order in which you actually accomplished them?
- If you actually did some of the steps in a less-than-ideal order, how did it hinder or help your attainment of the goal of enrolling in college?

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

“Goal setting, as far as I can see it, is simply a state of mind, a way of thinking about things. A goal setter makes sure he accomplishes what he needs to accomplish.”
 Greg Gottesman, Stanford University³

yourself in Chapter 3, it is self-knowledge that tells you what is and is not important to you, and this knowledge will help you keep your goals in focus and your motivation up when things get tough.

- **Make goals realistic and attainable.** Someone once said, “A goal without a plan is but a dream.” We’d all like to win gold medals at the Olympics or star in rock videos or write best-selling novels. Few of us are likely to achieve such goals.

Be honest with yourself. There is nothing wrong with having big dreams. But it is important to be realistically aware of all that it takes to

achieve them. If our long-term goals are unrealistic and we don’t achieve them, the big danger is that we may wrongly reason that we are inept and lack ability and use this as an excuse for giving up. If goals are realistic

Student Alert: Many students have difficulty writing specific, measurable goals. Give them direct feedback about their goals.

we can develop a plan to attain them, spurring us on to attain more.

- **State goals in terms of behavior that can be measured against current accomplishments.** Goals should represent some measurable change from a current set of circumstances. We want our behavior to change in some way that can usually be expressed in terms of numbers—to show an increase (“raise my grade point average 10 percent”) or a decrease (“reduce wasted time by two hours each week”); or to be maintained (“keep in touch with my out-of-town friends by writing four e-mail messages each month”), developed (“participate in one workshop on critical thinking”), or restricted (“reduce my phone expenses 10 percent by speaking less on the telephone”).
- **Goals should involve behavior over which you have control.** We all want world peace and an end to poverty. Few of us have the resources or capabilities to bring either about. On the other hand, it is realistic to want to work in small ways to help others, such as by becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister or by volunteering at a local food bank.
- **Take ownership of your goals.** Make sure that the goals you choose are your goals, and not the goals of your parents, teachers, brothers and sisters, or friends. If you’re attending college only because others have told you to, and you have no commitment of your own, you’ll find it hard to maintain the enthusiasm—not to mention the hard work—required to succeed.
- **Identify how your short-term goals fit with your long-term goals.** Your goals should not be independent of one another. Instead, they should fit together into a larger dream of who you want to be. Every once in a while step back and consider how what you’re doing today relates to the kind of person that you would ultimately like to be.

To get practice in using these goal-setting principles, consider the goals that underlie taking a particular college class in which you are currently enrolled. You probably have several goals for each course you are taking this term. Completing **Try It 3** on page 10 will give you a chance to evaluate them.

ORGANIZE

By determining where you want to go and expressing your goals in terms that can be measured, you have already made a lot of progress. But there’s another step you must take on the road to success.

The second step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning is to organize the tools you’ll need to accomplish your goals. Building upon the goal-setting work you’ve undertaken in the preparation stage, it’s time to determine the best way to accomplish the goals you’ve identified.

How do you do this? Suppose you’ve decided to build a set of bookshelves for one room in your house. Let’s say that you’ve already determined the kind of bookshelves you like and figured out the basic characteristics of the ones you will build (the preparation step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning). The next stage involves gathering the necessary tools, buying the wood and other building



College is not an end point, but part of a lifelong educational journey.

Course Goals

Think about one of the classes that you are taking this term. List your goals for the class in the first column below:

Goals for Class	Goals in Order of Importance
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The goals you've listed most likely range from the specific ("passing the class with a good grade") to the more general and vague ("becoming educated in the subject matter of the class").

Now, rank order them to determine which are the most important to you. Note that some of these goals may be short-term goals ("get a decent grade") and some represent longer-term goals ("complete all college requirements"). In addition, your goals may be specific ("get an A in the course") or relatively vague ("do well in the class").

Now consider the following:

- What is the difference between those goals that are most important to you and least important to you?
- Are your goals mostly short-term or long-term?
- How specific are your goals?
- What implications might your different goals have for your future success in the course?

Working in a Group:

Compare your goals for the course with those of other students and consider the similarities and differences.

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materials, sorting the construction supplies, and preparing the room for the shelving project—all aspects of organizing for the task.

Similarly, your academic success will hinge to a large degree on the thoroughness of your organization for each academic task that you face. In fact, one of the biggest mistakes that students make in college is plunging into an academic project—studying for a test, writing a paper, completing an in-class assignment—without being organized.



TRY IT!

The Two Kinds of Organization: Physical and Mental

On a basic level is *physical organization* involving the mechanical aspects of task completion. For instance, you need to ask yourself if you have the appropriate tools, such as pens, paper, and a calculator. If you're using a computer, do you have access to a printer? Do you have a way to back up your files? Do you have the books and other materials you'll need to complete the assignment? Will the campus bookstore be open if you need anything else? Will the library be open when you need it? Do you have a comfortable place to work?

Mental organization is even more critical. Mental organization is accomplished by considering and reviewing the academic skills that you'll need to successfully complete the task at hand. You are an academic general in command of considerable forces; you will need to make sure your forces—the basic skills you have at your command—are at their peak of readiness.

For example, if you're working on a math assignment, you'll want to consider the basic math skills that you'll need and brush up on them. Just actively thinking about this will help you organize mentally. Similarly, you'd want to mentally review your understanding of the causes of the American Civil War before beginning an assignment on the Reconstruction period that followed the war.

Why does producing mental organization matter? The answer is because it provides a context for when you actually begin to work. Organizing paves the way for better subsequent learning of new material.

Too often students are in a hurry to meet a deadline and figure they better just dive in and get it done. Organizing can actually *save* you time, because you're less likely to be anxious and end up losing your way as you work to complete your task.

Much of this book is devoted to strategies for determining—*before* you begin work on a task—how to develop the mental tools for completing an assignment. However, as you'll see, all of these strategies share a common theme: that success comes not from a trial-and-error approach, but from following a systematic plan for achievement. Of course, this does not mean that there will be no surprises along the way, nor that simple luck is never a factor in great accomplishments. But it does mean that we often can make our own luck through careful preparation and organization.

Teaching Tip: Share with students how you organize for class.



COURSE CONNECTIONS

Looking at the Big Picture

It's natural to view a college course as a series of small tasks—classes to attend, a certain number of pages to read each week, a few papers due during the term, three quizzes and a final exam to study for, and so on.

But such a perspective may lead you to miss what the course, as a whole, is all about. Using the P.O.W.E.R. Learning framework can help you to take the long view of a course, considering how the class helps you achieve your long- and short-term goals (the *Prepare* step) and what you'll need to do to maximize your success in it (the *Organize* step). By preparing and organizing even before you step foot in the classroom for the first time, you'll be able to consider what it is that you want to get out of the course and how it fits into your education as a whole.

WORK

You're ready. The preliminaries are out of the way. You've prepared and you've organized. Now it's time to get started actually doing the work.

In some ways work is the easy part, because—if you conscientiously carried out the preparation and organization stage—you should know exactly where you're headed and what you need to do to get there.

It's not quite so easy, of course. How effectively you'll get down to the business at hand depends on many factors. Some may be out of your control. There may be a power outage that closes down the library or a massive traffic jam that delays your getting to campus. But most factors are—or should be—under your control. Instead of getting down to work, you may find yourself thinking up “useful” things to do—like finally hanging that poster that's been rolled up in a corner for three months—or simply sitting captive in front of the TV. This kind of obstacle to work relates to motivation.

Finding the Motivation to Work

“If only I could get more motivated, I'd do so much better with my _____” (insert *schoolwork, diet, exercising*, or the like—you fill in the blank).

All of us have said something like this at one time or another. We use the concept of **motivation**—or its lack—to explain why we just don't work hard at a task. But when we do that, we're fooling ourselves. We all have some motivation, that inner power and psychological energy that directs and fuels our behavior. Without any motivation, we'd never get out of bed in the morning.

We've all seen evidence of how strong our motivation can be. Perhaps you're an avid runner and you love to jog in the morning and compete in weekend races. Or maybe your love of music helped you learn to play the guitar, making practicing for hours a pleasure rather than a chore. Or perhaps you're a single mother, juggling work, school, and family, and you get up early every morning to make breakfast for your kids before they go off to school.

All of us are motivated. The key to success in and out of the classroom is to tap into, harness, and direct that motivation.

If we assume that we already have all the motivation we need, P.O.W.E.R. Learning becomes a matter of turning the skills we already possess into a habit. It becomes a matter of redirecting our psychological energies toward the work we wish to accomplish.

In a sense, everything you'll encounter in this book will help you to improve your use of the motivation that you already have. But there's a key concept that underlies the control of motivation—viewing success as a consequence of effort:

Effort produces success.

Suppose, for example, you've gotten a good grade on your midterm. The instructor beams at you as she hands back your test. How do you feel?

You will undoubtedly be pleased, of course. But at the same time you might think to yourself, “Better not get a swollen head about it. It was just luck. If she'd asked other questions I would have been in trouble.” Or perhaps you explain your success by thinking, “Pretty easy test.”

If you often think this way—and you can find out if you do by completing **Try It 4**—you're cheating yourself. Using this kind of reasoning when you

Motivation

The inner power and psychological energy that directs and fuels behavior

Teaching Tip: Using 3 × 5 cards, have your students answer the question “If only I could get more motivated, I'd do so much better with my _____” (insert *schoolwork, diet, exercising*, or the like). Have students work in pairs and come up with possible solutions for each other.

4



PERSONAL STYLES

Who's in Charge?

To get a sense of your ideas of why things happen to you, check the statement from each of the pairs below that best describes your views:⁴

- 1a. In the long run, people get the respect they deserve in this world.
- 1b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he or she tries.
- 2a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
- 2b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their exam results are influenced by accidental happenings.
- 3a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
- 3b. Trusting fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
- 4a. In the case of the well-prepared student, there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair exam.
- 4b. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
- 5a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work; luck has little or nothing to do with it.
- 5b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.
- 6a. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
- 6b. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
- 7a. In my case, getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
- 7b. Many times I might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
- 8a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
- 8b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
- 9a. What happens to me is my own doing.
- 9b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.
- 10a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the marks they give.
- 10b. There is a direct connection between how hard a person studies and the grades he or she gets.

Scoring: Give yourself one point for each of the following answers and then add up your score:

1. a. 2. a. 3. b. 4. a. 5. a. 6. b. 7. a. 8. b. 9. a. 10. b.

Your total score can range from 0 to 10. The higher your score, the more you believe that you have a strong influence over what happens to you and are in control of your life and your own behavior.

The lower your score, the more you believe that your life is outside of your control and what happens to you is caused by luck or fate.

If you score below 5 on this questionnaire, consider how rethinking your views of the causes of behavior might lead to greater success.

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TRY IT!

succeed, instead of patting yourself on the back and thinking with satisfaction, “All my hard work really paid off,” is sure to undermine your future success.

A great deal of psychological research has shown that thinking you have no control over what happens to you sends a powerful and damaging message to your self-esteem—that you are powerless to change things. Just think of how different it feels to say to yourself, “Wow, I worked at it and did it,” as compared with “I lucked out” or “It was so easy that anybody could have done well.”

In the same way, we can delude ourselves when we try to explain our failures. People who see themselves as the victims of circumstance may tell themselves, “I’m just not smart enough” when they don’t do well on an academic task. Or they might say, “Those other students don’t have to work five hours a day.”

The way in which we view the causes of success and failure is, in fact, directly related to our success. Students who generally see effort and hard work as the reason behind their performance usually do better in college. It’s not hard to see why: When they are working on an assignment, they feel that the greater the effort they put forth, the greater their chances of success. So they work harder. They believe that they have control over their success, and if they fail, they believe they can do better in the future.

Here are some tips for keeping your motivation alive, so you can work with your full energy behind you:

- **Take responsibility for your failures—and successes.** When you do poorly on a test, don’t blame the teacher, the textbook, or a job that kept you from studying. Analyze the situation, and see how you could have changed what you did to be more successful in the future. At the same time, when you’re successful, think of the things you did to bring about that success.
- **Think positively.** Assume that the strengths that you have will allow you to succeed and that, if you have difficulty, you can figure out what to do.
- **Accept that you can’t control everything.** Seek to understand which things can be changed and which cannot. You might be able to get an extension on a paper due date, but you are probably not going to be excused from a college-wide requirement.

To further explore the causes of academic success, consider the questions in **Try It 5**, discussing them with your classmates.

E VALUATE

“Great, I’m done with the work. Now I can move on.”

It’s natural to feel relief when you’ve finished the work necessary to fulfill the basic requirements of an assignment. After all, if you’ve written the five double-spaced pages required for an assignment, why shouldn’t you heave a sigh of relief and just hand your paper in to the instructor?

The answer is that if you stop at this point, you’ll almost be guaranteed a mediocre grade. Did Shakespeare dash off the first draft of *Hamlet* and, without another glance, send it off to the Globe Theater for production? Do professional

“The function of the university is not simply to teach bread-winning, or to furnish teachers for the public schools or to be a center of polite society; it is, above all, to be the organ of that fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization.”

W.E.B. DuBois, author,
The Souls of Black Folk, 1903

Teaching Tip: Have students use “I” statements in their goals to reinforce personal responsibility.

Discussion Prompt: Ask students to share their best ideas for staying motivated.

5



WORKING IN A GROUP

Examining the Causes of Success and Failure

Complete this Try It while working in a group. First, consider the following situations:

1. Although he studied for a few hours the night before the test, Jack gets a D on a midterm. When he finds out his grade, he is disgusted and says to himself, "I'll probably never do any better in this course. I'd better just blow it off for the rest of the term and put my energies into my other classes."
2. Anne gets an A- on her history exam. She is happy, but when her instructor tells the class that they did well as a group and that the average grade was B+, she decides that she did well only because the test was so easy.
3. Chen gets a C on his first math quiz. Because he didn't do as well as he expected, he vows to perform better the next time. He doubles the amount of time he studies for the next quiz, but still his grade is only slightly higher. Distressed, he considers dropping the class because he thinks that he'll never be successful in math.

Now consider the following questions about each of the situations:

1. What did each student conclude was the main cause of his or her performance?
2. What effect does this conclusion seem to have on the student?
3. Taking an outsider's point of view, what would *you* think was probably the main cause of the student's performance?
4. What advice would you give each student?

Now consider these broader questions:

1. What are the most important reasons why some students are more academically successful in college than others?
2. How much does ability determine success? How much does luck determine success? How much do circumstances determine success?
3. If someone performs poorly on an exam, what are the possible reasons for his or her performance? If someone performs well on an exam, what are the possible reasons for his or her performance? Is it harder to find reasons for good compared with poor performance? Why?

To Try It online, go to www.mhhe.com/power.

TRY IT!

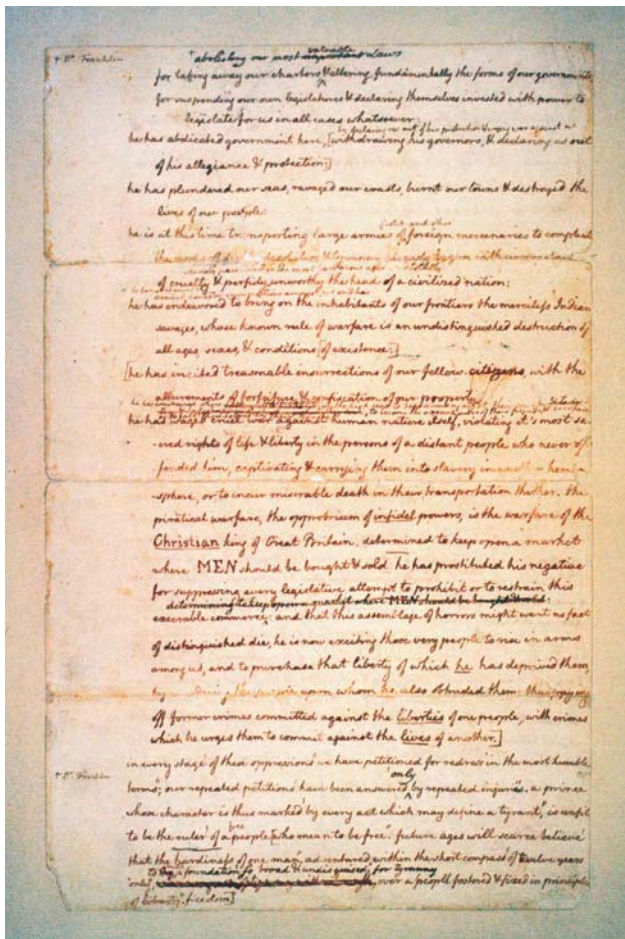
athletes just put in the bare minimum of practice to get ready for a big game? Think of one of your favorite songs. Do you think the composer wrote it in one sitting and then performed it in a concert?

In every case, the answer is no. Even the greatest creation does not emerge in perfect form, immediately meeting all the goals of its producer. Consequently, the fourth step in the P.O.W.E.R. process is **evaluation**, which consists of determining how well the work we have produced matches our goals for it. Let's consider some steps to follow in evaluating what you've accomplished:

- **Take a moment to congratulate yourself and feel some satisfaction.** Whether it's been studying for a test, writing a paper, preparing a review sheet, or

Evaluation

An assessment of the match between a product or activity and the goals it was intended to meet



Even the Declaration of Independence underwent revisions before the final version was signed.

Teaching Tip: Ask students to bring in all of their course syllabi and identify the different ways they will be evaluated in all of their classes.

It's as counterproductive to be too hard on yourself as it is to be too easy. Stick to a middle ground, always keeping your final goal in mind.

- **Based on your evaluation, revise your work.** If you're honest with yourself, it's unlikely that your first work will satisfy you. So go back to *Work* and revise what you've done. But don't think of it as a step back: Revisions you make as a consequence of your evaluation bring you closer to your final goal. This is a case where going back moves you forward.

RETHINK

They thought they had it perfect. But they were wrong.

In fact, it was a \$1.5 billion mistake—a blunder on a grand scale. The finely ground mirror of the Hubble space telescope, designed to provide an unprecedented glimpse into the vast reaches of the universe, was not so finely ground after all.

Despite an elaborate system of evaluation designed to catch any flaws, there was a tiny blemish in the mirror that was not detected until the telescope had been launched into space and started to send back blurry photographs. By then, it seemed too late to fix the mirror.

reading an assignment, you've done something important. You've moved from ground zero to a spot that's closer to your goal.

- **Compare what you've accomplished with the goals you're seeking to achieve.** Think back to the goals, both short-term and long-term, that you're seeking to achieve. How closely does what you've done match what you're aiming to do? For instance, if your short-term goal is to complete a statistics problem set with no errors, you'll need to check over the paper carefully to make sure you've made no mistakes.
- **Have an out-of-body experience: Evaluate your accomplishments as if you were a respected teacher from your past.** If you've written a paper, reread it from the perspective of that teacher. If you've completed a worksheet, think about what comments you'd write across the top if you were that teacher.
- **Evaluate what you've done as if you were your current instructor.** Now exchange bodies and minds again. This time, consider what you're doing from the perspective of the instructor who gave you the assignment. How would he or she react to what you've done? Have you followed the assignment to the letter? Is there anything you've missed?
- **Be fair to yourself.** The guidelines for evaluation will help you to determine just how much further work is necessary and, even more important, what work is necessary. Don't go too far, though:

Or was it? NASA engineers rethought the problem for months, devising, and then discarding, one potential fix after another. Finally, after bringing a fresh eye to the situation, they formulated a daring solution that involved sending a team of astronauts into space. Once there, a space-walking Mr. Goodwrench would install several new mirrors in the telescope, which could refocus the light and compensate for the original flawed mirror.

Although the engineers could not be certain that the \$629 million plan would work, it seemed like a good solution, at least on paper. It was not until the first photos were beamed back to Earth, though, that NASA knew their solution was A-OK. These photos were spectacular.

It took months of reconsideration before NASA scientists could figure out what went wrong and devise a solution to the problem they faced. Their approach exemplifies—on a grand scale—the final step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning: rethinking.

To *rethink* what you've accomplished earlier means bringing a fresh—and clear—eye to what you've done. It involves using **critical thinking**, thinking that involves reanalyzing, questioning, and challenging our underlying assumptions. While evaluation means considering how well what we have done matches our initial goals, rethinking means reconsidering not only the outcome of our efforts, but also reconsidering our goals and the ideas and the process we've used to reach them. Critically rethinking what you've done involves analyzing and synthesizing ideas, and seeing the connections between different concepts.

Rethinking involves considering whether our initial goals are practical and realistic or if they require modification. It also entails asking yourself what you would do differently if you could do it over again.

We'll be considering critical thinking throughout this book, examining specific strategies in every chapter. For the moment, the following steps provide a general framework for using critical thinking to rethink what you've accomplished:

- **Reanalyze, reviewing how you've accomplished the task.** Consider the approach and strategies you've used. What seemed to work best? Do they suggest any alternatives that might work better the next time?
- **Question the outcome.** Take a “big picture” look at what you have accomplished. Are you pleased and satisfied? Is there something you've somehow missed?
- **Identify your underlying assumptions; then challenge them.** Consider the assumptions you made in initially approaching the task. Are these underlying assumptions reasonable? If you had used different assumptions, would the result have been similar or different?
- **Consider alternatives rejected earlier.** You've likely discarded possible strategies and approaches prior to completing your task. Now's the time to think about those approaches once more and determine if they might have been more appropriate than the road you've followed.
- **What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to try things again?** It's not too late to change course.



The daring mission to repair the Hubble space telescope was the culmination of months of rethinking how to fix the flaw in the telescope. It worked: A new time-lapse movie of images taken by the telescope showed the seasonal changes on Uranus, as well as other celestial wonders.

Critical thinking

A process involving reanalysis, questioning, and challenge of underlying assumptions

Discussion Prompt: When have students seen the idea of “rethinking” used by their parents? Their local, state or national governments?

- **Finally, reconsider your initial goals.** Are they achievable and realistic? Do your goals, and the strategies you used to attain them, need to be modified? Critically rethinking the objectives and goals that underlie your efforts is often the most effective route to success.

Completing the Process

The rethinking step of P.O.W.E.R. Learning is meant to help you understand your process of work and to improve the final product if necessary. But mostly it is meant to help you grow, to become better at whatever it is you've been doing. Like a painter looking at his or her finished work, you may see a spot here or there to touch up, but don't destroy the canvas. Perfectionism can be as paralyzing as laziness. Keep in mind these key points:

- **Know that there's always another day.** Your future success does not depend on any single assignment, paper, or test. Don't fall victim to self-defeating thoughts such as "If I don't do well, I'll never graduate" or "Everything is riding on this one assignment." Nonsense. There is almost always an opportunity to recover from a failure.
- **Realize that deciding when to stop work is often as hard as getting started.** Knowing when you have put in enough time studying for a test, have revised a paper sufficiently, or have reviewed your answers adequately on a worksheet is as much a key to success as properly preparing. If you've carefully evaluated what you've done and seen that there's a close fit between your goals and your work, it's time to stop work and move on.

Discussion Prompt: Striving to be perfect—when does it help and when does it hurt?



CAREER CONNECTIONS

P.O.W.E.R. Learning Meets the World of Work

Although the focus of the P.O.W.E.R. Learning system is on developing school success, its applications extend well beyond the classroom. In particular, the principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning are useful in the world of work, and your ability to use them will provide you with keys to success in the workplace.

Skeptical? In *Career Connections* boxes in future chapters we'll explore how the principles we're discussing can help you choose an appropriate career and excel in the workplace. For now, though, take a look at the following "help wanted" advertisements, which illustrate the importance of the components of P.O.W.E.R. Learning in the workplace.

Prepare

CLINICAL DOCUMENTS SPECIALIST
 clinical trials experience required. **Job Code: ECD**
 Prepare clinical documents including integrated clinical/statistical reports, statistical reports, journal articles and integrated summaries of efficacy and safety for FDA submissions. Duties include interpreting clinical and statistical data, researching clinical materials, writing reports and supervising report collation. Two years experience as a medical writer in the pharmaceutical industry. Advanced word processing skills and knowledge of FDA report guidelines required.

Organize

KNOWLEDGE SKILL AND CAPABILITY
 such knowledge in the administration and state-wide engineering programs; the ability to read and interpret engineering plans and specifications; and to approve or reject the work of a staff engineer. **Job Code: ECD**
CLINICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE II
 principles and practices of environmental engineering. Such knowledge in the administration and state-wide engineering programs; the ability to read and interpret engineering plans and specifications; and to approve or reject the work of a staff engineer. **Job Code: ECD**
 This individual will gather, analyze, evaluate and process information on debt, equity and real estate investments. Responsibilities will include verifying cash availability, processing security or cash transactions, periodic reconciliation of securities with custodians and investment managers, and monitoring trade invoices, preparing financial statements and processing entries in the general ledger system for the investment properties. This individual will assist in the preparation of investment reports for the Investment Directors.

Work

We're an international human resources consulting firm specializing in benefits, providing top quality services to a growing list of top quality clients. We are currently seeking experienced professionals for our Walnut, CA office. As a member of our team, you'll find **success** among colleagues who are bright, **very hard working**, and interested in functioning in a **highly supportive atmosphere**.

Rethink

High-energy, detail-oriented administrative assistant needed to support two Creative Directors in a fast-paced international environment. You must be able to multi-task (think and rethink) on your feet, act independently and change priorities while maintaining a positive attitude. Solid administrative and communication skill mandatory.

Evaluate

- **Use the strategies that already work for you.** Although the P.O.W.E.R. Learning framework provides a proven approach to attaining success, employing it does not mean that you should abandon strategies that have brought you success in the past. Using multiple approaches, and personalizing them, is the surest road to success.

■ Are You Ready for College Success?

Teaching Tip: Successful students know their faculty members' names by the second week of class. Challenge your students to know all of their faculty by name.

Maybe you're asking yourself why you should bother with P.O.W.E.R. Learning and the techniques that will be described in this book. You may believe that because you did OK in high school, you'll be just fine in college without changing the way you did things there.

But college isn't high school.⁵

In high school, you were probably told what you needed to learn from assignments; in college, it will be up to you to read and understand assignments on your own. You'll be tested on material in college that the professor may never once have mentioned in class.

High school teachers monitored your class attendance and graded all homework; in college, professors may not take attendance and may not look at every bit of homework—although they expect you to be in class and do all homework. And while you may be used to frequent tests in high school, in college you may have only a few exams, covering large chunks of material.

In high school, your time was mostly structured by others; in college, you have to manage it yourself. In a broader sense, in high school, you were told what your responsibilities were, while in college you're viewed as an adult who needs to figure out on your own what your responsibilities are.

In addition to differences in the style of instruction between high school and college, you're different, too. Whether you finished high school a few months ago or you deferred college and are returning after a lapse of many years, you are not the same person you were in high school. College offers a fresh start, with instructors who have no predetermined expectations about who you are.

But in order to get that fresh start, you need to have a clear sense of your own strengths and weaknesses. Accurately knowing who you are, and your own competencies, can help you focus on those strategies presented in future chapters that will be most beneficial to you. To get a more objective sense of your own strong and weak points, complete **Try It 6**.

Ultimately, to become an accomplished student, you must be open to change in yourself and to embrace success. The techniques for doing this are in this book, but only you can implement them. The road to success may not be simple or direct (see the *Speaking of Success* interview with Lev Sviridov later in the chapter for a glimpse of one student's real-life journey), but there are few goals that are more important than attaining a college education.

Teaching Tip: Understanding why students are in college and what skills they believe they have are crucial to academic success. TRY IT 6 is an especially effective exercise.

IRM Link: The Boundary Breaking exercise should be done during the first or second week of class. See *Teaching the Text*, Chapter 1, Sections IV and VIII.



Creating a P.O.W.E.R. Profile

Are you the student you aspire to be?

Before you can even think about answering that question, you need to know the kind of student you are—right now, at this very moment. Only by frankly facing your current strengths and weaknesses as fully as possible will you be able to know what direction you should be heading in.

To help you get a better understanding of who you are as a student, Try It 6 will take you through the steps of constructing your own **P.O.W.E.R. Profile**. The P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a way for you to take stock of where you stand in relation to the major topics that we'll be discussing in *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*—the characteristics that are most important for college success.

The P.O.W.E.R. Profile outlines key aspects of who you are. The Profile is just one of many possible profiles that could be drawn to describe you. For instance, you have a personality profile, a buying profile, a dating profile, a technology profile, and a variety of others. There is no “ideal” P.O.W.E.R. Profile; there are no right or wrong answers involved in creating one. Instead, as shown in the example in **Figure 1.2**, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a look at someone in relation to the 14 dimensions involved with student success (and, not so coincidentally, the key dimensions covered in *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*).

The best way to maximize the usefulness of your P.O.W.E.R. Profile is to create one now, before you've gone beyond the first chapter of this book. Then, by completing a P.O.W.E.R. Profile at the end of the term, you can judge how much your profile has changed and in what directions. If you take to heart what you learn in your class and work carefully through the Try Its in the book and exercises, your profile will undoubtedly change in a positive direction. In the meantime, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile will give you an objective idea of where you stand right now on each of these dimensions.

To get started with your P.O.W.E.R. Profile, read each statement and judge how well it describes you, using these numbered descriptions:

- 1 = Doesn't describe me at all
- 2 = Describes me only slightly
- 3 = Describes me fairly well
- 4 = Describes me very well

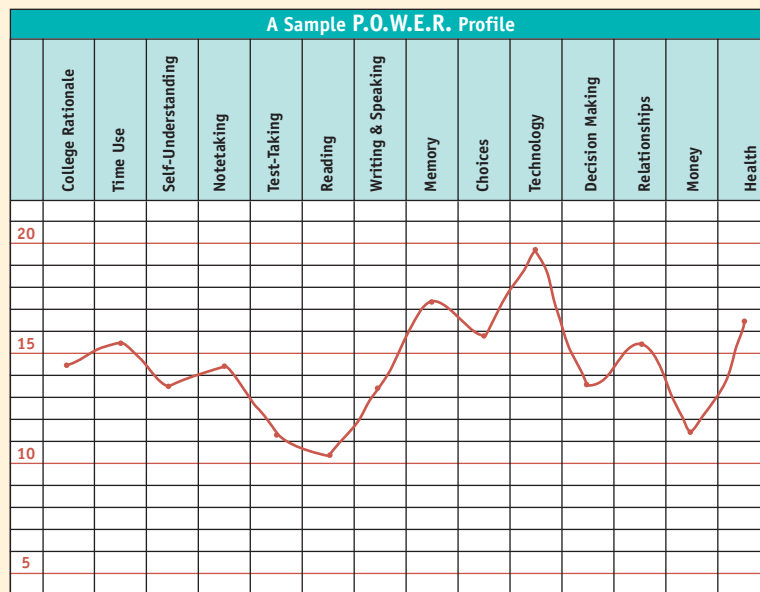


FIGURE 1.2
Sample P.O.W.E.R. Profile

Place your response on the line next to each of the questions. Take your time, answer the questions thoughtfully and, above all, truthfully. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember that the profile is not a test; it is for your own enlightenment only.

Dimension 1: College Rationale

- a. I understand why attending college is important to me. _____
- b. I have clear short-term and long-term goals. _____
- c. My course selections are related to my goals. _____
- d. I know how to organize myself and get my work done. _____
- e. I accept that success or failure is in my own hands. _____

College Rationale Total _____

Dimension 2: Time Use

- a. I know how to manage my time effectively. _____
- b. I understand how to set priorities for my time. _____
- c. I know how to say no to time wasters. _____
- d. I understand how to avoid procrastination. _____
- e. I consider myself to be a good time organizer. _____

Time Use Total _____

Dimension 3: Self-Understanding

- a. I understand how I learn most effectively. _____
- b. I know how learning styles can affect academic success. _____
- c. I have a clear self-concept and understand who I am. _____
- d. I have a good sense of self-esteem. _____
- e. I know how to use a personal mission statement to guide important decisions. _____

Self-Understanding Total _____

Dimension 4: Notetaking

- a. I take good notes during class lectures and discussions. _____
- b. My notes capture the speaker's main points. _____
- c. I know how to use active listening to focus in class. _____
- d. I can take good notes on what I read for my courses. _____
- e. I review my notes soon after I have written them. _____

Notetaking Total _____

Dimension 5: Test-Taking

- a. I generally go to tests well prepared and reasonably calm. _____
- b. I understand how to tackle different kinds of test questions. _____
- c. I know how to control anxiety before and during testing. _____
- d. I usually leave time at the end of a test to check my work. _____
- e. I know how to use test results to improve my future test-taking. _____

Test-Taking Total _____

Dimension 6: Reading

- a. I know my personal reading style and understand how it affects my reading. _____
- b. I understand how to use advance organizers in my reading. _____
- c. I know my attention span and understand how to stay focused. _____
- d. I know how to check for understanding while I read. _____
- e. I understand the importance of rereading and rethinking. _____

Reading Total _____

(continued)

Creating a P.O.W.E.R. Profile (concluded)

Dimension 7: Writing & Speaking

- a. I know how to use the writing process to start and maintain the flow of my writing. _____
- b. I understand the importance of considering my audience in writing. _____
- c. I know how to outline, write a first draft, and revise my writing. _____
- d. I have strategies to overcome my fear of speaking in public. _____
- e. I have a good system for impromptu, unprepared oral presentations. _____

Writing & Speaking Total _____

Dimension 8: Memory

- a. I know my preferred memory style and use it to help me study. _____
- b. I know about rehearsal and overlearning and use them in my studies. _____
- c. I know how to link new information to information that I already possess. _____
- d. I am familiar with several memorization techniques. _____
- e. I know how to consolidate my memories to improve test performance. _____

Memory Total _____

Dimension 9: Choices

- a. I understand the options and choices available to me at my college. _____
- b. I know where I stand in terms of completing my course requirements. _____
- c. I know exactly what to do if there's a problem with my course selections or records. _____
- d. I am satisfied that my course choices are moving me in the right direction. _____
- e. I am confident that I will choose a major that makes sense in terms of my life goals. _____

Choices Total _____

Dimension 10: Technology

- a. I understand how to use computer applications effectively for my college work. _____
- b. I know how to use the Internet for communication, staying up to date, and research. _____
- c. I understand distance learning and know whether or not it's right for me. _____
- d. I know how to use library resources and the World Wide Web to gather information. _____
- e. I know how to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of information I have found. _____

Technology Total _____

Dimension 11: Decision Making

- a. I use a structured process for making important decisions. _____
- b. I know how to identify my goals and generate alternatives. _____
- c. I am good at assessing alternatives and making decisions I am happy with. _____
- d. I use an array of strategies for solving problems. _____
- e. I understand the most common obstacles to effective critical thinking. _____

Decision Making Total _____

Dimension 12: Relationships

- a. I understand the importance of diversity on campus and in the broader society. _____
- b. I have good relationships with people of many different backgrounds. _____
- c. I understand cultural competence and consider myself culturally competent. _____
- d. I know what it takes to build good relationships. _____
- e. I know how to handle conflict in my relationships. _____

Relationships Total _____

Dimension 13: Money

- a. I know my short- and long-term financial goals. _____
- b. I understand where my money comes from and where it goes. _____
- c. I know how to prepare a realistic budget and stick to it. _____
- d. I am realistic about the advantages and disadvantages of credit cards. _____
- e. I know where to go if I need financial aid for college. _____

Money Total _____

Dimension 14: Health

- a. I understand stress and know how to cope with it. _____
- b. I understand the importance of a good diet, exercise, and rest. _____
- c. I have strategies for avoiding the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. _____
- d. I am responsible about my sexuality and know how to stay sexually healthy. _____
- e. I know where to go to get help with all aspects of my health. _____

Health Total _____

Now you're ready to construct your P.O.W.E.R. Profile. Add up the numbers on each line to derive a total for each dimension. This total will range from a low of 5 to a high of 20. Finally, place a dot in each appropriate box on the chart in **Figure 1.3** corresponding to your score, and connect the dots to form your P.O.W.E.R. Profile.

There—it's done. But it's really just a start. Your P.O.W.E.R. Profile is an objective way to mark the beginning of your journey through college. Its shape will continue to change and evolve the more years of school you have under your belt.

After taking some time to study your P.O.W.E.R. Profile and to maximize its usefulness, consider the following:

- Does your profile seem like an accurate reflection of your strengths and weaknesses as a student? Were there any surprises?
- To be a successful student, what do you think the "ideal" profile would look like?
- Most important, how can you use the results of the P.O.W.E.R. Profile to help you in the future? What are the most important areas for improvement? What strategies might you use to bring about those improvements?

Your P.O.W.E.R. Profile														
	College Rationale	Time Use	Self-Understanding	Notetaking	Test-Taking	Reading	Writing & Speaking	Memory	Choices	Technology	Decision Making	Relationships	Money	Health
20														
15														
10														
5														

FIGURE 1.3
P.O.W.E.R. Profile

SPEAKING OF SUCCESS



Name: Lev Sviridov

School: The City College of New York,
New York, NY

For Lev Sviridov, a senior at the City College of New York, the road to success was a roundabout one. In one sense it began after the Chernobyl nuclear power plant exploded when he was a young boy in the former Soviet Union. The accident triggered a deep interest in science and research.

Sviridov and his mother fled the Soviet Union in 1993, fearful of arrest because his mother, a journalist, had exposed some government officials as KGB agents. Coming to the United States with no money, Sviridov needed not only to learn a new language, but to help support himself. In the early years, he picked through garbage cans to find bottles and cans, and he was homeless for a time. But he credits his poverty with creating motivation to succeed.

“The fact that I was broke and working at so many jobs—gardening, moving furniture, tutoring, working in the laboratory—paved the way for having great credentials,” said Sviridov.⁶

Sviridov not only became successful academically in college, earning extraordinary grades, but he was involved in a variety of activities. He served as president of his college student government and



was a member of a Russian human rights organization. He also conducted research in computational biophysical chemistry. His academic credentials were so strong that he won one of the highest of academic awards: a Rhodes Scholarship that will support graduate school study.

But even for an excellent student like Sviridov, studying presents challenges. For example, he

says, “I consider myself to be a slow reader, so I have to compensate for that.”

In addition, it is easier for him to absorb information through the spoken word. “I feel that study groups are important,” he said. “The only time you really know something is when you can explain it to somebody else. I’m always putting together study groups for this purpose.”

How does he maintain his busy schedule and remain successful academically? Sviridov follows a basic strategy.

“My approach is that if you do the work that is required of you at a steady pace through the semester, you will be fine,” he said. “I just pace myself, go slowly, and make sure I understand the material.”

What are the benefits of a college education?

- The reason first-year college students most often cite for attending college is to get a better job, and college graduates do earn more on average than nongraduates.
- College also provides many other benefits. These include becoming well-educated, learning to think critically and communicate effectively, understanding the interconnections between different areas of knowledge and our place in history and the world, practicing community service, and understanding diversity.

Teaching Tip: Use these questions as an open-ended review of the chapter material.

What are the basic principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning?

- P.O.W.E.R. Learning is a systematic approach people can easily learn, using abilities they already possess, to acquire successful habits for learning and achieving personal goals.
- P.O.W.E.R. Learning involves **p**reparation, **o**rganization, **w**ork, **e**valuation, and **r**ethinking.

How do expert students use P.O.W.E.R. Learning?

- To *prepare*, learners set both long-term and short-term goals, making sure that their goals are realistic, measurable, and under their control—and will lead to their final destination.
- They *organize* the tools they will need to accomplish those goals.
- They get down to *work* on the task at hand. Using their goals as motivation, expert learners also understand that success depends on effort.
- They *evaluate* the work they've done, considering what they have accomplished in comparison with the goals they set for themselves during the preparation stage.
- Finally, they *rethink*, reflecting on the process they've used, taking a fresh look at what they have done, and critically rethinking their goals.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Community service (p. 5)
 Service learning (p. 5)
 P.O.W.E.R. Learning (p. 6)
 Long-term goals (p. 7)

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RESOURCES

On Campus

Every college provides a significant number of resources to help its students succeed and thrive, ranging from the activities coordination office to a multicultural center to writing labs. You can check them out on your college's Web site or catalog or phone directory.



For example here's a list of some typical campus resources, many of which we'll be discussing in future chapters:

- Activities/Clubs Office
- Adult and re-entry center
- Advising Center
- Alumni Office
- Art gallery
- Bookstore
- Career Center
- Chaplain/religious services
- Child Care Center
- Cinema/theater
- Computing center/computer labs
- Continuing education
- Disability Center (learning or physical disabilities)
- Financial aid
- Fitness center/gymnasium
- Health Center
- Honors program
- Housing Center
- Information Center
- Intramural sports
- Language lab
- Learning Center
- Lost and found
- Math lab
- Multicultural Center
- Museum
- Online education (distance learning) office
- Off-campus housing and services
- Ombudsman/conflict resolution
- Photography lab
- Police/campus security
- Post office
- Printing center
- Registration Office
- Residential Life Office
- School newspaper
- Student Government Office
- Student Affairs Office
- Study abroad/exchange programs
- Testing Center
- Volunteer services
- Work-Study Center
- Writing lab

If you are commuting to school, your first “official” encounters on campus are likely to be with representatives of the college’s Student Affairs Office or its equivalent. The Student Affairs Office has the goal of maintaining the quality of student life, helping to ensure that students receive the help they need. Student Affairs personnel often are in charge of student orientation programs that help new students familiarize themselves with their new institution.

If you are living on campus, your first encounter may be with representatives of the residence halls, often called the Residential Life Office. Their job is to help you settle in and orient you to campus. Your residence hall also probably has student residential advisors living on every floor; they can give you an insider’s view of college life.

Whatever college representatives you deal with during your first days of college, remember that their job is to help you. Don’t be shy about asking questions about what you may expect, how to find things, and what you should be doing.

Above all, if you are experiencing any difficulties, be certain to make use of your college’s resources. Starting college is one of the biggest transitions that you’ll ever experience in life, and it’s a time when you should make use of whatever support your college offers.

In Print



Navigating Your Freshman Year (Students Helping Students Series) (Prentice Hall, 2005), offers a wealth of information on college life from a student’s vantage point.

For a variety of views of what it takes to be a successful college student, read *How to Survive Your Freshman Year: By Hundreds of College Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors Who Did*, published by Hundreds of Heads Books (2006).

Finally, to learn more about who your first-year classmates are across the United States, take a look at John Pryor and colleagues’ *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 2006* (Higher Education Research Institute, 2007). The book provides a comprehensive look at the attitudes and opinions of first-year college students, based on the results of a national survey.

On the Web

The following sites on the Web provide the opportunity to extend your learning about the material in this chapter. Although the Web addresses were accurate at the time the book was printed, check the P.O.W.E.R. Learning Web site [www.mhhe.com/power] for any changes that may have occurred.



- The University of Buffalo (<http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/adjusting.shtml>) Counseling Services offers this site on adjusting to campus life that includes links to relationships, health, and study skills.
- The U.S. Department of Education offers *Preparing Your Child for College: A Resource Guide for Parents* (www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare/index.html). Though geared toward parents' concerns, the publication offers answers to a host of valuable questions such as "Why attend college?" and "What kinds of jobs are available to college graduates?"
- About College (www.aboutcollege.com) is a commercial site that bills itself as a "complete guide to everything you ever wanted to know about college but didn't know whom to ask."

TAKING IT TO THE NET

1

Find out what percent of the population of the United States has received an undergraduate degree. Use the two strategies below. (If you're unfamiliar with search engines on the Web, see Chapter 10 for suggestions that will get you started.)

- Go to Yahoo! (dir.yahoo.com) and click on the category "Reference." From there, click on "statistics" and then again on "education@". From there, click on "Education census" and then again on "Educational attainment." (This procedure will lead you to www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/educ-attn.html, a page on the site of the U.S. Census Bureau.)
- Searching with key words will also give you the answer to the question. For example, a search on www.google.com will lead you to sites that include data that are derived from the Census Bureau Web site.

The Census Bureau site provides information about the level of education achieved by people over 25 years of age. Click on "Preliminary data" and examine the chart. How many men have received a bachelor's degree? How many women?

2

Consider the reasons for going to college. The U.S. Department of Education's "Think College" site (www.ed.gov/students/prep/college/thinkcollege/edlite-index.html) offers various rationales for continuing your education beyond high school. Were you aware of them prior to your enrollment in college?

THE CASE OF . . .

Clueless in Seattle



It was during the second week of classes that the questioning started. Until then, Roger hadn't thought much about his decision to attend a large state college in a Seattle suburb. It had seemed like a good idea, and he was excited when he was accepted, but he couldn't really pinpoint why he was there.

And that was becoming a problem. As he was walking to class, he began to think about all that had happened to him in the last few weeks. First-year orientation . . . meeting his roommate, and trying to deal with his odd neatness . . . enrolling for classes . . . finding his way around campus . . . meeting an overwhelming number of new people, and trying to figure out where he fit in. Everyone else seemed to know what they were doing. Why didn't he?

It was overwhelming. He wanted to call his parents and tell them to come pick him up. He needed to sit on the porch where it was familiar and comfortable and not overwhelming and try to figure out what he should do. Nothing seemed to make sense. He began to question his decision to attend college. What was he going to do with his life? The question made him feel even more overwhelmed. Did he really need a college degree? With his computer skills, he could probably get a job right away. Hadn't his father's friend told him that he had a job waiting for him whenever he wanted it? At least then he'd be making money.

"Why bother," he thought to himself. "What an expense, and what a hassle. For what?" He realized, to his surprise, he had no real clue as to why he was in college.

1. What arguments could you provide Roger as to the value of a college education?
2. Do you think that Roger's doubts are common? Do people often attend college without thinking about it very much?
3. What might you suggest that Roger do to help deal with his doubts about the value of college?
4. Why might a student's doubts about the value of college be especially strong during the beginning weeks of college?
5. Do you share any of Roger's concerns about the value of a college education? Do you have additional ones? Did you think carefully about the reasons for attending college before you enrolled?