

# Memory Principles

## Making an Effort

**Interest.** In order to remember something thoroughly, you must be interested in it. You must have a reason to learn it.

**Intent to Remember.** Your attitude has much to do with whether you remember something or not. A key factor to remembering is having a positive attitude that you will get it right the first time.

**Basic Background.** Your understanding of new material depends to a great degree on how much you already know about the subject. The more you increase your basic knowledge, the easier it is to build new knowledge on this background.

## Controlling the Amount and Form

**Selectivity.** You must determine what is most important and select those parts to study and learn.

**Meaningful Organization.** You can learn and remember better if you group ideas into meaningful categories or groups.

## Strengthening

**Recitation.** Speaking ideas aloud in your own words is probably the most powerful tool you have to transfer information from short-term to long-term memory.

**Visualization.** Another powerful memory principle is making a mental picture of what needs to be remembered. By visualizing, you use an entirely different part of your brain than you do by reading or listening.

**Association.** Memory is increased when facts to be learned are associated with something familiar to you. Memory is essentially formed by making neural connections.

## Allowing Time to Soak In

**Consolidation.** Your brain must have time for new information to soak in. When you make a list or review your notes right after class, you are using the principle of consolidation.

**Distributed Practice.** A series of shorter study sessions distributed over several days is preferable to fewer and longer study sessions.

From Hopper, C. H. (2004). Practicing college learning strategies (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Houghton Mifflin.