

## NOTE TAKING TIPS

Learning to take notes effectively will help you to improve your study skills and work habits and remember important information. Often, students are deceived into thinking that because they understand everything that is said in class they will therefore remember it. This is dead wrong! Write it down.

As you take notes, you will develop skill in selecting important material. The secret to developing this skill is practice. Check your results constantly. Strive to improve. Notes enable you to retain important facts and data and develop an accurate means of arranging necessary information.

### NOTE TAKING

- Don't write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points. Concentrate on the "meat" of the subject and forget the trimmings.
- Notes should consist of key words or very short sentences. If a speaker gets sidetracked, it is often possible to go back and add further information.
- Take accurate notes. You should usually use your own words, but try not to change the meaning. If you quote directly from the author, quote correctly.
- Think a minute about your material before you start making notes. Don't take notes just to be taking notes! Take notes that will be of real value to you when you look over them at a later date.
- Have a uniform system of punctuation and abbreviation that makes sense to you. Use a skeleton outline and show importance by indenting. Leave lots of white space for later additions.
- Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
- Don't keep your notes on oddly shaped pieces of paper. Keep your notes in order and in one place.
- Shortly after making your notes, go back and rework (not redo) your notes by adding extra points and spelling out unclear items. Remember, we forget rapidly. Budget time for this vital step just as you do for the class itself.
- Review your notes regularly. This is the only way to achieve lasting memory.

### REMEMBERING THE 4 R'S OF NOTE-TAKING WILL ALSO HELP. THEY ARE:

- **Record.** During the lecture, record in the main column as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can. Write legibly.
- **Reduce.** As soon as possible, summarize these ideas and facts concisely in the Recall Column. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory. Also, it is a way of preparing for examinations gradually and well ahead of time.
- **Recite.** Now cover the column. Using only your jottings in the Recall column as cues or "flags" to help you recall, go over facts and ideas of the lecture as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words and with as much appreciation of the meaning as you can. Then, uncovering your notes, verify what you have said. This procedure helps to transfer the facts and ideas of your long-term memory.
- **Review.** If you will spend ten minutes every week or so in a quick review of these notes, you will retain most of what you have learned, and you will be able to use your knowledge currently to greater and greater effectiveness.