

Master Your Learning Action Guide

Part I. Building Solid Learning Roots

Six common learning issues

Issue #1 — You try to learn too much

Write at least one specific time when you took on more than you could handle.

Issue #2 — You're overly passive with your learning

Write down two to three concrete things you can start doing to become a more proactive learner.

Issue #3—There is no clear purpose behind your learning

In the space below, list all the things you genuinely want to learn, not because you need to, or because you want to impress others, but because they really interest you.

Issue #4—You're not taking enough action

Write down what taking more action would mean for you when it comes to learning.

Issue #5—You lack confidence in your ability to learn

If you could learn absolutely anything you desire, what would it be?
Write down your answer below.

Issue #6—You have unrealistic expectations

Write down specific situations when you fell for the illusion of knowing. In other words, write down things you don't know as well as you think.

Developing a learning mindset

A. Shift your identity

See yourself as a highly effective learner. To start building your new identity, complete the following sentences below. Create five to ten statements.

I'm an unstoppable learner, therefore I:

B. Adopt a growth mindset

Familiarize yourself with the following statements:

- I embrace challenges.
- I always persist in the face of obstacles.
- I see effort as the necessary path to mastery.
- I accept constructive criticism.
- I learn from the success of others.

Think of a goal you're pursuing right now. Then, on the spaces provided, write down concretely what it would mean for you to adopt a growth mindset to reach that goal.

C. Understand the power of neuroplasticity

You're not too old to reach your goals. Write down one thing you've always wanted to do but gave up on because you considered yourself too old (or for other reasons).

Now, knowing that your brain is malleable and adaptable to change, what could you do to make progress toward that goal?

D. Adopt empowering beliefs about learning

Complete the following statements below and start building your new identity:

- I can always learn and grow because _____

- I can figure things out because _____

- Learning is an inevitable process because _____

- I can learn faster than almost anybody else because _____

E. Master the learning process

Write down a goal you failed to reach in the past. Then, write down what you would do differently if you were to start all over again (now you know about the learning cycle).

F. Make your subconscious work for you

Write down how you will make your subconscious work for you.

What should you learn?

The different levels of skills

Using the table below, write down all the skills you’re currently learning. Separate them into minor, intermediate, and major skills. Then, assess whether you’re spending enough time on major skills.

#	Minor skills	Intermediate skills	Major skills
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Identifying your learning goals

A. Selecting your learning goals

Brainstorm things you want to learn in the future. Just write down what comes to mind. For now, don't worry whether you want to start learning them tomorrow or in a decade, and don't even worry whether you'll actually learn them.

Fill in the table below:

Things you want to learn	Level of interest (on a scale from 1 to 10)	Usefulness (on a scale from 1 to 10)	Relevancy to me right now (on a scale from 1 to 10)

Now, identify the two or three skills that gathered the most points in the table. These are the skills you should focus on right now.

Don't blindly follow this formula though. Ask yourself how you feel about these skills. What is your intuition telling you? Which skill(s) on your list are you the most excited about?

B. Specifying your learning goals

1) Visualizing the result

Select one skill you'd like to learn. Then, answer the following questions:

- What do you want to learn?
- What do you want to be able to do?

- What level of proficiency do you want to reach?

- What future “memories” do you want your new skill to help you create?

2) Strengthening your “whys”

- Returning to the goal you selected in the previous exercise, write down ten reasons why you *must* absolutely reach that goal.
- Write down the three to five most important core values you aspire to live by.

Why I *must* reach that goal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

My three core values:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3) Creating the best action plan possible

Using the previous goal, reflect on your current blueprint. Is it the best strategy possible? If not, what could you do to find or create a more effective blueprint? Write your answer below.

4) Identifying process and result goals

Look at your previous goal. Then, determine the best process and results goals for it. Write them down below.

Process goals:

Results goals:

5) Making your goals SMART

Create your **SMART** learning goal.

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time-bound.

Your SMART goal:

6) Chunking down your goals

What could you do specifically to break your goal down into manageable tasks? Write down your answers below.

Implementing your plan

Write down your answers to the questions below.

- How much time you can spend on your goal every week realistically.

- When you'll be working on the learning goal you've already identified.

- One thing you could do to help you stay on track with your learning goals over the long term (i.e., hiring a coach or having an accountability partner).

- One thing you could do to improve your learning environment.

Part II. Strengthening Your Learning Tree Trunk

Come up with your own definitions of economics and politics. Do not spend more than ten to fifteen minutes doing so. And do not consult a dictionary before you have written down your own definition.

Part III. Watering Your Tree

Come up with specific examples to illustrate a new concept. To go further, create your own examples from your personal life or from the life of people you know. When necessary, make up examples.

Part IV. Pruning The Tree

Overcoming information overload

Elaborate below:

- The type of information you consume during a typical week.
- What you'll do specifically to reduce the amount of information you consume.

Part V. The Different Types of Learning

1. Conceptual Learning

For conceptual learning, you can apply most of the effective learning techniques mentioned in the book, such as recalling, elaborating, or spaced repetition.

To reiterate, below are also a few tips on learning conceptual skills:

1. **Master the fundamentals** and build solid learning foundations.
2. **Go from general to specific.** Don't be overwhelmed by the sea of information as you learn, and seek to deepen your understanding in the field you seek to build expertise in.
3. **Start with accessible content.** Instead of jumping into books and expert articles, start with the simplest and readily available content you can find.
4. **Look for specific examples.** This can help deepen your understanding, and allow you to build a good mental representation of a concept or idea.
5. **Come up with your own examples.** A sign that you truly understood something is your ability to simplify an idea by providing your own explanations and examples.
6. **Expand your personal library of mental models.** Mental models give you a bigger receptacle to hold more knowledge.
7. **Use the Feynman Technique.** Or simply put – write. Writing allows you to sharpen your thinking, and make you a better learner in the process.

2. Practical Skills

How to practice deliberately

Write down what deliberate practice would look like specifically for one of your goals.

Your goal:

What deliberate practice you will implement:

3. Language Learning

A. Direct Learning

- 1) Speak from day one
- 2) Set specific goals
- 3) Challenge yourself/have skin in the game
- 4) Make your goal a priority
- 5) Create a schedule

In the space provided, create your ninety-day learning plan.

My ninety-day learning plan.

B. Input learning

Create your ninety-day plan. To create your ninety-day plan decide:

- How many words you'll learn each day (using Anki or other apps),
- The amount of time you'll spend studying each day,
- When exactly you'll be studying, and
- One specific goal you want to reach at the end of the ninety days.

4. Standardized Tests

Standardized tests usually have clear expectations of you in order to pass, and deadlines to meet – which pushes you to study and prepare well.

Effective ways to prepare for standardized tests:

1. Identify what's expected of you.
2. Ask the advice from people who went through a similar test.
3. Gather relevant learning material.
4. Create a learning schedule.
5. Assess where you stand.
6. Practice.
7. Measure your progress.
8. Adjust your learning.