

Are You an Academic Estimator?

Many students earn grades below potential or flunk out of college because they believe they already have all the learning skills they need. They also believe their academic performance is due to factors outside of themselves that they cannot control therefore learning skills courses, workshops, books, or handouts are not relevant. As a result of this attitude, many students **so GREATLY UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING SKILLS** that they never allow themselves to discover the way to earn better grades.

To help see where learning skills fit into the picture for students, look at the model below.

Process	Application of learning skills to specific subject matter.
Subject Matter	The material to be learned.
Outcome	Results of applying learning skills to subject matter. If the outcome is not what is desired, then refining the PROCESS for learning is where effort should be focused. This is where students have control over knowledge and grades.
Feedback	Grades let you know how well your skills for learning are working.

If you want better grades, refine your learning skills.

It is your learning skills that lead to knowledge that yields better grades. Directing energy toward blaming something or someone else for grade performance below your potential is a waste of time.

Since skill at learning exists in varying degrees in all students and not as something “you have or don't have”, there is promise for anyone who wishes to improve academic performance if focus is placed on refinement of the skills for learning.

In this light, it is wise for students to determine how effectively they have refined learning skills to date and where there is room for further refinement. To determine this, look at the outcomes in school. Are you earning the grades you'd like to earn? If desired knowledge, grades or expression of intelligence are not attained, further refinement of learning skills is the key to greater success regardless of past performance.