

How Learning Skills Affect Grades

Many learners earn grades below potential 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. Because of this attitude, many learners **GREATLY UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING SKILLS** in learning so badly that they never *allow themselves* to discover the way to earn better grades. This group composes a large portion of students who never graduate. To see how learning skills fit into the learning picture, examine the model below.

Learning Skills	Notetaking Time Mgmt. Test Prep Self-testing Memory Skills Test Taking, etc.
Subject Matter	Economics History Sociology Math Chemistry Biology, etc.
Outcome	Knowledge
Feedback	Grades

The term **LEARNING SKILLS** refers to the skills that are indispensable to learning.

The term **SUBJECT MATTER** refers to the material to be learned.

The term **OUTCOME** refers to the knowledge gained as a result of applying learning skills to a subject.

The term **FEEDBACK** refers to the grades that reflect how well learning skills work.

To change how much knowledge is learned and earn higher grades, learners must focus on refining the learning skills *indispensable* to getting knowledge and grades. If grades are not as desired, then learners must modify skills for learning. It is *ONLY* via learning skills that learners have control over knowledge and grades. Directing energy toward blaming something or someone else for poor grade performance is a waste of time.

Skill at learning exists in varying degrees in all learners. It is not something “you have or don't have.” **There is hope for anyone** who wishes to improve academic performance if focus is placed on refinement of the skills for learning.