

Magical Life



April 2008

More Secrets to Learning Faster and Smarter

Are you one of those people who do badly in exams? Who finds their brain freezes up and they forget everything they have learnt? Perhaps you practice a speech until you are perfect only to find you can't remember any of it when you stand in front of a group. In order to overcome these reactions and learn faster and smarter, we need to manage our bodies' reaction to stress.

For example, when we get tense, such as doing exams or public speaking, our brains shut down – they think we are under attack. Remember the old 'fight or flight' reaction? When we get tense or stressed, our thinking moves to the mid-brain or 'reptilian' part of our brain. Unfortunately for us the stuff we have learnt is stored in other parts of our brain.

The conscious and unconscious sections of our brain are where our knowledge is stored. When our body is reacting to the 'fight or flight' messages, we find it very difficult to access our knowledge.

The answer then is to relax.

If you want to do well in exams, public speaking or learning in general take the time to relax yourself before the event. Have a laugh, watch a silly movie, anything that allows you to relax and access the conscious and subconscious sections of your brain. Remember you can relax by taking deep breaths, rolling your shoulders and relaxing your tense muscles. Give it a go – it works J

Another thing you can do to learn faster and smarter is to work with your body clock. Some people are morning people (like me – I work really well at 3.30am J), some people are highly effective during the day and others are night owls. If you can do your study/ difficult tasks at the time you are most effective, you will find yourself learning things much faster and easier.

Now for the one that all my students love: before you sit down to do homework or study for an exam, spend 20 minutes doing something you love. For example, watch TV, read a book, go for a walk. Again, this will relax you and put you in the right frame of mind to be able to learn faster and smarter.

Try these strategies – you will be amazed at how much difference they can make to your ability to learn faster and smarter.

In our next newsletter I will be writing about how to improve your presentation skills. Until then have a magical month!

Danette 😊

Distance Learning

All of the Magical Learning accredited programs are available via distance learning.

Students can work at their own pace and will have email and phone support and regular tutorials.

Please call Wendy on 02 6273 2221 for further information.

Imagination is more important than knowledge. For while knowledge defines all we currently know and understand, imagination points to all we might yet discover and create.

Einstein

Magical Learning Events

Managing Stress

Wednesday 21 May 2008, University House, Balmain Cres, ANU

Who should attend?

Anyone looking to perform efficiently
Anyone needing to manage their time more effectively

Learning Outcomes

- ☺ Understand what triggers stress in you
- ☺ Deal more effectively with stressful situations
- ☺ Practice stress management
- ☺ Manage you time more effectively
- ☺ Create a plan for work/life balance

Cost

\$ 430 for club members and groups of 3 or more, \$495 for non-members.

Mastering Financial Year End

Half-day Tuesday 3 June 2008, University House, Balmain Cres, ANU

AM session 9.15 am to 12.15 pm

PM session 1.15pm to 4.15 pm

Who should attend?

Anyone involved in financial year end processes

Learning outcomes

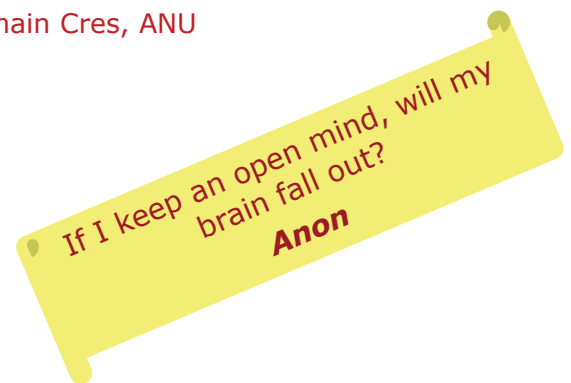
- ☺ The purpose of financial year end
- ☺ Identifying and practicing the main steps in financial year end
- ☺ Lessons learned; how to improve this year's process
- ☺ Building a better year end framework throughout the year
- ☺ Developing a formal year checklist

Cost

\$185 for club members and for groups 3 or more, \$195 for non-members.

Registration

Forms at www.magicallearning.com/training.html



The Google Culture

At a time when some employers are struggling to hire and retain staff, Google USA receives about 3,000 job applications a day. In January, Fortune magazine voted Google the best company to work for in the US – for the second year running.

Anne Fawcett from the *Sydney Morning Herald* recently took a look inside Google to see if it really is the best palace to work. Her article was in the *MyCareer* section of the weekend paper April 4-6, 2008.

Google's most valuable resource, according to their website, is their people – and they are encouraged to spend 20% of their working hours on a project of their choosing- whether or not it benefits Google directly.

Some of the employee benefits include free lunches; dinner by gourmet chefs create a variety of healthy and delicious meals every day. They have onsite medical services and at their headquarters in Mountain View in America, there's on-site oil change, car wash, dry cleaning, massage therapy, gym, hair stylist, fitness classes and bike repair. Google matches contributes of up to \$3,000 per year from eligible employees to non-profit organisations and even offers employee up to \$5,000 to assist with cost associated with the adoption of a child.

They even have what they call the Take-Out Benefit – this is to help make things easier for new mums and dads, and they are able to expense up to \$500 for take-out meals during the first four weeks what they are home with their new baby.

Winning an interview with the company isn't easy. Google screens its employees thoroughly, putting them through an interview process that can take anywhere from two to six months. One employee was interviewed 13 times over 6 months.

One of the best perks could be that Google gives share options to 99% of its employees.

According to a survey of Australian and New Zealand companies by Hewitt Associates for the 2006-07 financial year, the best employers had high number of employees who consistently spoke positively about their organizations, couldn't imagine working anywhere else and would willingly put in extra effort for the company.

Find out more at www.google.com/corparate/culture.html

Domaine de l'Arlot's bread

*The bread recipe is from Domaine de l'Arlot in Burgundy, France where it is made every day by the lady of the house, Madame de Smet**

- ☺ 1kg strong unbleached bread flour
- ☺ 1 tbsp instant yeast
- ☺ 1 tbsp salt
- ☺ 950ml lukewarm water
- ☺ Extra four for dusting and shaping

Place the flour, yeast and salt in a very large bowl.

Mix in the water to make wet sticky dough. Use your hands to mix around well. Cover with plastic wrap and leave in the fridge overnight.

Next day take the bowl from the fridge and leave it to come to room temperature. Prepare two flat trays, by lining with baking paper and sprinkling generously with flour.

Using a dough scraper, remove the dough from the bowl to a floured bench. Cut the dough in half. With floured hands lightly shape each piece into a round. Place the dough on floured trays and press/pull lightly into flattish ciabatta shapes. Flip them over so that the wrinkled, floured sides are now on top. Place the trays in a cold, fan-forced oven set to 220C. Bake for 45-50 minutes, or until the bread sounds hollow, when tapped. Cool on wire racks.

* *Sunday Canberra Times – February 10, 2008.*

Competition



OK, here's where we have to get mean!

We didn't get any responses to our book voucher competition last month 😞

None. Zip. Zero. Zilch. Nada. Geen. Aucun. Keine. Nessuno. Nenhum.

Get the picture?

We'd love for you — as Club members — to have more input into this newsletter, to get more involved in what we're doing and what we're **all** learning.

So, if we don't get at least three — that's three — book reviews by the closing date this month, we'll have to send our kids out to live with each and every one of you, for a month at a time!

Now, back to our regular program.....

Want to win a \$30 book voucher?

Simply send us a short book or movie review (100 – 200 words). Make the review about a book or movie that has inspired you (the book or movie does not need to be new). Include with your review how many smiley faces you would give it.

PS: We weren't really serious about the kids thing, you know. But wouldn't it be wonderful to read some book reviews from Club members in next month's newsletter?

Injustice anywhere is a
threat to justice
everywhere
Martin Luther King Jr

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