

Academic Success Strategies

JAMES BLEDSOE: Thank you for that great introduction.

I'm super excited to be here.

I do lots of webinars, lots of seminars.

I'm not trying to say how good I am.

[LAUGHTER] I'm just constantly trying to get better and reach as many students as I can.

Thank you. Again, we're going to talk a little bit

tonight about academic success strategies.

I'm going to try to get through some things as

quickly as I can and what I mean by that is I'm a talker,

and [LAUGHTER] so I can go literally two hours or

three hours discussing different topics

that have to do with academic success or career development.

I've been with the university now about 21 years.

I've been a recruiter,

I've been an academic advisor,

I've been a retention coordinator.

I've done all things that pertain to student success.

I feel like I've helped hundreds bordering into the thousands of students,

along with my colleagues,

moved through to graduation.

So whether you're taking classes

face-to-face or in this case online through global campus,

I'm always happy to talk to this population.

I'll go through some things,

tell you little bit about myself and then we'll move into the nitty-gritty reminder.

Questions can go through the chat room and we'll try to get

to all questions as we can and go from there.

A little bit about me.

When I say about me,

that's an acronym for a little bit of what's in my mind and my experiences,

but I want you-all to have an idea of who's talking to you.

It's not just about me throwing titles out there and

my education and then go over the topic,

I want you to know I have really taken aim on helping students succeed.

When I say taking aim on helping students succeed,

I have aspirations, inspirations and motivations.

Again, there's another acronym,

but my aspirations have to do with my folks,

and so what you see right there,

that is, the Wharton County Teachers Institute.

My great grandmother, that's right there and my great grandfather there back there.

They were teachers, college degrees in the early 1900s,

and then my great grandmother's parents are sitting up front here.

Sam and Lottie Martin.

They were also college graduates and got the teaching degrees.

Again, this is in the early 1900s,

right around 1903, 1904.

Everyone in the picture has their college degrees.

Everyone in the picture was born in the slavery in the United States.

The aspiration that I have is that with the opportunity that we get,

when I look back at my folks,

they did the best that they could with opportunities that they have.

They were responsible for educating a lot of people in their county,

so a legacy of education was

started a long time ago in my family and I aim to honor that.

Let me get rid of that stuff if I can here.

It's not just them.

My grandmother, my mother,

they're all college graduates and they were all teachers.

I'm trying to get rid of, sorry.

Little malfunction there. There we go.

I aspire to be just like them,

helping as many people as I can anytime, any place, anywhere.

My inspirations that has to do with my mother and father.

Again, my mother was a school teacher my father was a defense attorney.

Advocating for students and instructing people, that's what I do.

I'm inspired by my parents.

They've both gone on the glory,

but I live on in their legacy and this is just me in the middle finishing another degree.

I'm working on a fourth degree,

and it's a doctorate in educational administration.

If you would talk to anyone that knew me in middle school and high school,
they would not believe I've gone this far with education,
but I have aspirations and I have inspirations and you'll see why I'm going over this.
We'll get back to it later.

My motivations, what I

aspire to be and what inspires me has nothing to do with my motivations.

My motivations have to do with having a chance every day to work with students.

Anytime I'm like a musician that's looking for gigs.

Anywhere I can get a gig, I'm going to go play.

Well for me anytime I can talk about success, I'm going to go do it.

I'm completely focused on having another opportunity.

That's what wakes me up in the morning every single day.

Now you see how I take aim on life.

This is how I take aim on life with my aspirations,

my inspirations, and my motivations.

Again, we're going to talk a little bit about what I

think is ways to how to increase learning,

some study strategies, and we might mix all that together by the time we're done here.

Then five ways to overcome test anxiety, according to me,

James Bledsoe, there's a lot of stuff out there,

but why don't we go ahead and start with that.

I said that I would give five ways to overcome test anxiety,

but by the time I'm done here,

you'll see that I'm not telling the whole truth,

that actually I'm going to give you 10 things.

But what I have here is a diagram here on the left that talks about test anxiety.

I took this not to represent as though,

I did this but I took this from the website of

Louisiana State University School of Nursing because they talk about things

that when you can feel test anxiety coming on and about a

third of people get anxiety before they have to do some assessment.

Whether it's a test, an exam,

get up and speak in front of the class, or in this case,

speak on Zoom, give presentations, display their knowledge.

What are the effects of that?

This diagram talks about inability to concentrate.

Some people feel nausea, anger,

headaches, things going wrong with your heart,

fast and shallow breathing, fear, frustration,

feelings of impending doom,

as it relates to any anxiety.

I'm not going to ask you to identify anything, but,

does anyone feel anxiety or

extreme nervousness when they're about to do something school-related?

If you can use that chat,

let me know that you're there, before test.

If you're willing to talk about,

when you experience, that's cool too. I love that.

I mean, we all. Everybody feels that at some point in their life.

What happened this week?

Everybody has different educational and professional backgrounds
and we're at different places in our life.

We've all experienced those things.

I'm just letting some of these comments,
speaking in front of large class.

Again, if you talk to someone that knew me in
high school and they saw all the talking that I do,

I think I've given 1000 campus tours in my 28 years in higher ed.

I was basically a mute when I was in high school. I didn't talk.

No, I totally understand,

so when we look at these diagrams,

again, this is some of the things that you start to feel.

We'll go to the School of Nursing there,

in just a second,

we'll come back to that, but what I want to show you now is,

and I like to rhyme, Bledsoe's top 10 that helped, him.

One thing that I do to try to lessen the anxiety that builds up,

number 1 is getting enough sleep.

Sometimes that's easier said than done,

but when you have a lack of sleep it just affects your whole approach to life.

So I really value my sleep.

Even if I can only get five hours,

I'm going to get those five hours of sleep.

But I'm really trying to get

seven or eight hours of sleep so that when I sit in my chair,

when I get my mind going so that I can talk to students, I'm 110 percent.

I'm ready to go.

Leading up to this presentation,

there was no nervousness,

there was no anxiety.

I've had my sleep, but I'm ready to go.

Eat the right foods and the beverages.

What I mean by that is,

sometimes it's easier for nervousness and

anxiety to set in if we've been drinking the wrong things,

and I'm not going to go too deep on that.

[LAUGHTER] But you want to watch

what you're drinking and makes sure you're sticking with water.

Make sure you're eating the right foods, you're eating healthy.

I'm not going to go into what's healthy.

We all know what I mean by that.

You can look all over the Internet and find techniques for calming yourself down.

What I'm trying to stress is,

I always try to get my state of mind not just to a point of relaxation,

not just so that I have clarity,

but so that I could refocus myself.

We're always going to get a little nervous and if I told the truth, sure.

Maybe I was nervous for about 15 seconds when I couldn't find the passcode to [LAUGHTER] login to Zoom about 10 minutes ago, but I just breathe through it and refocus my mind.

That's the key, getting your state of mind.

For number 3, focused SOM.

I'm talking about your state of mind.

You can think about what is it that relaxes you, so that when you start to fill those symptoms that we talked about over in the left-hand side you have to now stop it by using your relaxation techniques.

Sometimes it's music for some people, sometimes it's walking.

It could be anything. Sometimes it's scribbling on paper.

Whatever it is, you got to find a way to get yourself relaxed even if it's breathing techniques.

Then you've got to get your mind clear, and then you've got to focus on what's at hand.

That's the state of mind that you want to be in when you feel that anxiety coming on.

That's really eluding to internal dialogue.

Right before anxiety sets in, usually there's internal dialogue.

We had 140 academic advisors today in a meeting on Zoom and the Vice President of Student Affairs called on me and asked me to give my opinion on something.

Right away maybe the first three seconds after she asked me the question,

I wanted to say, "I don't have anything to say.

I'm not ready. I'm not going to say it right."

Immediately, I stopped and replaced those negative thoughts,
that internal dialogue with positive.

I thought of something positive and said,

"I've got all my colleagues in front of me
and they're going to get a chance to hear me speak."

Everyone talks about my webinars
and none of my colleagues ever get a chance to hear me speak.

So all over a sudden I got really excited,
and then I started talking about and gave my perspective.

I cut off those negative thoughts by replacing it with something positive.

I thought of something positive and it just kept me from going into that state of,

"Well, maybe I might have passed up this.

Mary Jo Gonzales, I don't have anything to say."

You think of a reason because your mind is blank.

Number 5 talks about those breathing exercises.

You've probably all heard that before.

But I'm telling you, it works.

Let's not even talk about anxiety,
but even when you're feeling frustration,
or anger, or anything that's happening before you're about to be assessed.

Whether it's a test or whatever you got to do,
get up and speak. The breathing exercises.

Finding your rhythm through getting your breathing in order,
because when you start to get tensed and anxiety is setting in it affects your breathing.

Like I said, probably half the people here tonight have read things,
maybe all of us have,

about how testing anxiety or getting nervous about
something can affect your breathing whether you're hyperventilating,
or you're starting to get lightheaded because you're not taking in enough oxygen.

Getting your breathing together,

I practice it everyday.

It's just part of what I do just to stay in a good flow, in a good rhythm.

Then once I'm there you have to think about,
what keeps you from getting to that state where you're nervous
about maybe what you don't know is your preparation.

That state of mind of thinking every time you're asked to do something by a professor,
or by a team or a group that you're on,
you're getting another chance to display your knowledge.

That's what number 6 is talking about.

You always have to prepare,
we're going to talk about what it means to prepare.

But look at every opportunity as a chance to display your knowledge.

Whether it's a multiple choice test,
getting up and public speaking,
taking exam that may be is more of writing your answers out.

It's a chance to display your knowledge.

I learned that early in life.

Opportunities to display your knowledge or display your skills,

I look forward to it.

A big way to prepare yourself to display your knowledge,

we'll talk about this again in a few minutes is avoiding procrastination.

I read something that said 75 percent of college students procrastinate when it comes to studying and get themselves prepared to display their knowledge [LAUGHTER].

Then I read some more stuff,

some recent stuff through Washington State University's health services

and they said 98 percent of students will procrastinate.

They reported that they procrastinated getting ready to get their assignments done or to get ready for tests and that's what caused a big part of the anxiety, what they think.

Another way to get around the anxiety is taking the practice quizzes on your own.

When you have a lot of chapters to read and before you take an exam,

in the book usually you can take quizzes.

Take those quizzes, take them over and over again.

You're just getting yourself used to the environment,

what's going to happen in terms of when it's time to take the test.

Even when you have to do public speaking I've got something for that,

that we're going to talk about in a minute too.

Number 8 talks about teach the subject.

We're going to look at YouTube here in just a moment.

But when I talk about teach the subject,

I really believe that [NOISE] you know something and the odds of

you getting nervous about it when you have to display your knowledge are almost zero when you can teach it.

I'll ask people sometimes and they're like,

"What are you talking about?" I'll say so.

Think of the favorite food that you like to cook.

Everybody can cook to some [LAUGHTER] degree.

You can prepare a meal.

If you think of the most favorite thing that you like to prepare for yourself, or maybe it's for other people.

If you take that thought and if I asked you right now, explain to me how you make it, explain to me how you prepare it.

You'd go through step-by-step.

"You add this, you add that, you get the bawls out.

You mix this, you hold this over here,

you get the temperature of the oven to this, that and the other."

You'd go through it,

it's knowing the back of your hand.

What I'm going to show you is an assignment here a little bit later about going on YouTube and practicing teaching it to someone else.

It's an imaginary thing where you go on YouTube and record yourself, just teaching something to somebody else.

But again, you're the only one that's going to see the results.

So as you're learning the stuff, you're reading things.

You're trying to get things in your mind.

Sometimes when you get yourself to the point where you can teach it to someone else, you can actually explain it to someone else, then you know it's sticking up there.

This is all building your confidence as you go into different test type situations.

Then the other thing is visualizing success.

Visualizing success and putting yourself in the picture.

The only reason I started off by having this picture of our former President, Dr. Elson Floyd who I respect and admire, he's gone on to glory.

But I love this picture of him at graduation.

To me, when I was an undergrad and I was an older student when I was an undergrad, I thought no matter what week it was, or what month it was, or what semester it was, or what I was going through,

I always envisioned myself going across the stage.

Even when I felt myself getting discouraged and maybe wanting to give up, or try something new, or try something different,

I always had this vision in my mind of graduating.

I just did. That's what I mean by visualize success.

Visualize success for yourself, put yourself in the picture.

So that whatever you're facing,

you don't want to give up.

You want to push yourself forward and get yourself ready to do what you got to do.

Then the last thing is exercise daily.

It's a very important part of getting your brain in

the right state of mind so that you're relaxed and you're ready to learn more,

but then you're ready to get it out.

Meaning, display your knowledge.

Any questions so far on test anxiety?

I said, we'll have time at the end to go over some questions.

I know I'm going through a lot of stuff.

I can probably put this in the chat room there.

Let me see if I can find the page.

If you can give me a thumbs up.

Andrea, can you see the LSU Health page?

This is the page right here.

I'll put this in the chat room so that you can go to it for yourself.

There's so much information out there.

I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel here.

I'll put this in a chat room,

so everyone has that.

Some good stuff here and what they do,

they go over some strategies to help you reduce test anxiety.

I'm actually going to talk a little bit more about some of these preparation and

time management here as we go on and reflecting on past successes.

But the point I'm trying to get across by giving you this is, sometimes you do have to look at what the university is providing for you in terms of test anxiety.

A lot of this stuff is backed by therapists and psychiatrists, people that are licensed.

The information they put out there really take it to heart and go look at it.

I happen to admire this one that LSU put out.

But we're going to take a look here in just a minute.

Washington State University has a great page too,

but I want you all to see this where I got this from,

because again, it's all over the Internet.

It's not hard to find.

That's where I want to go with test anxiety because again,

I'm not licensed to anything like that.

But I do want to show you what worked for me when I was

an undergrad and even to this day as I'm working on my doctorate degree,

those things that worked for me.

I might as well now jumped to Cougar Health Services.

Again, sometimes addressing things such as

test anxiety or any type of nervousness before you get ready to display your knowledge.

You can look on your health services website for the university.

Let's see if I can find the one that's for Cougar Health there.

Even with Washington State University,

it doesn't matter if you're Global Campus or in Spokane or Vancouver doesn't matter.

Cougar Health Services is for everyone,
so you can look on the main page for WSU.

I just want you to have an idea of the services that are here so you get signed up,
you see here stress management tips on your phone, overcoming stress perfection.

They've got tips for you here.

Tips for overcoming for perfectionism.

That's some things that lead to anxiety.

It's good stuff that's here.

Again, I'm trying to emphasize the resources they're doing

pilot projects that involved 150 codes,

but Cougar is receiving uplifting messages throughout the day, throughout the week.

You can read through this in your spare time.

Getting personalized messages that deal with stress.

Again, all of these things are here on the page with Cougar Health Services.

Again, I want you to be aware that these things are here.

Lots of good stuff for all cougs,

learn how to prevent and recover from burnout.

We'll talk about that a little bit later in some of my slides that are coming up,

but very important burnout can also lead to anxiety.

Again, just knowing where the resources are can be very important as well.

We've gone through that and now let's come over here.

Let's move a little bit to learning and studying.

How many of you I'm dating myself,

but maybe I'm not, I don't know.

Does anybody remember the Cookie Monster?

Yes or no would get anybody hinder [LAUGHTER].

Of course, Jays [? we remember ?] The Cookie Monster.

Well, when I was a kid, this is going to sound like a goofy example,

but one thing that bothered me when I was a kid,

[LAUGHTER] I saw someone says I am the Cookie Monster, I love it.

[LAUGHTER] William, nice one.

One thing that bothered me when I was a kid,

was that when I would watch the Cookie Monster eat,

he'd have a big plate of cookies and then he'd start to devour

them and all the cookies would get every place but in his mouth.

I know the whole thing was supposed to be no, he's eating the cookies.

But as a kid,

I thought I was like man, most of the cookies aren't going into his mouth.

I thought about that as a professional.

Isn't that how we all cram?

At some point in our life,

all of us have had to cram for a tests,

and the one thing we have to remember is that you

try to get all that information in and study at the last minute.

A lot of that information it's going to go right out the sides of your brain,

just like the Cookie Monster's trying to get these cookies in his,

none of that going in his body.

That information is not going in the brain when you try to cram and a big reason

for that is you have to think about how does your brain learn?

How do you digest information?

When you think about eating a sandwich,

all of us maybe have eaten a foot-long sandwich before or watch someone try to eat it.

Now, this person right here,

he's not going to stuff that whole sandwich in his mouth or if he does,

it's all going to come back out.

Because that's just not how the human body digests food.

The human body digests food in

small bites and those bites are chewed and then they're swallow,

and so small bite.

How does the brain digest information? Think about it.

It is the same way in small bites.

Cramming doesn't work as well as digesting thing in

small bites so that you get to a point where you have really mastered the material.

This brings into the conversation time management where again,

I got some stuff here that's going to lead up to this.

But you've got to study things in small bites so that the brain

can digest it so that the brain can move it from short-term memory to long-term memory.

That's key. When you cram,

you're just moving everything to short-term memory,

and then take the test and maybe some of it comes out,

maybe some of it doesn't because short-term memory is what it is.

You're going to lose it. Then even if you take the exam and then it's followed up

by maybe some of that material is on the next test two weeks later.

Some of the material from exam 1 is on exam 2 because you committed the material in exam 1 to short-term memory, it's out of there.

So by the time you get to exam 2,

if it's comprehensive, forget it.

So you want to think about long-term memory,

converting things to long-term memory,

small bites versus big bites.

Here's a study skills tip number 2.

Learning something new is that this is how I feel about it,

it's always like learning a new language.

It's always like learning a new language and anytime I've had to

learn a new language or acquaint myself one,

I try to immerse myself in that language.

I try to do everything I can.

I listen to videos, I read books,

I listen to music,

I listen to other people talk,

I try to converse with them.

If I'm learning a new language,

I'm immersing myself in it.

I'm not worried about making mistakes,

I'm just trying to increase my learning to where it gets to the point

where I'm really seeing the growth in this area.

Another thing is, how many of you take the time,
and I know this is tough with the Zoom situations,
to have professor face time,
meaning our professors have to have office hours.

Do you all feel like you're taking advantage of Professor face time?

Yeah. Meme Jones.

Yeah, helps so much.

There's another suggestion.

Meme, thank you even staying after class.

It helps. I can tell you as an instructor myself.

Those students that stay after class,

I will give them bonus information.

I will give them tips.

As an instructor, you just do.

When you see someone's effort,

you want to reward it.

Now, it's different if you wait until the last final exam.

You never come to talk to me,

and you're just coming now to ask for extra credit, now that's different.

But from day 1, week 1,

month 1, I see your effort,

I'm going to reward that.

I'm going to give you little tips.

I'm going to ask you questions on how it's going.

But you got to look for that face time.

Now, let's just say you've got the situation where working full-time during those hours.

Here's what I would do,

and I'm being completely honest about this because like I say,

I can relate, I'm in a doctoral program and I'm working full time.

You got to talk to the professor and you got to

see if there's something you can do so that you can,

is it special treatment?

No, it's not special treatment,

it's more accommodating and that you're willing to learn.

You're not waiting until the last final exam to say,

hey, I'd like to talk to you.

But actually conversing with the professor and telling

that professor a little bit about your situation and asking if there's

some time that the professor can set aside

maybe 30 minutes so that it's not only office hours,

but it's also by appointment.

It's hard to believe a professor that once that professor here's

your situation and I'm not just talking to you Melissa, I'm talking to everybody.

It's hard to believe that if a professor knows your situation

that they won't try to work with you and give you

maybe 30 minutes or

45 minutes every other week or something like that based on your work schedule.

Then on top of that,

if that's not working,

you feel like you really do need the face time with the professor.

That's when you get with your academic adviser and see

if the academic advisor can intervene.

Sometimes advisors have that kind of influence.

It indicates you have good points to bring up about that whole professor face time.

But don't feel like you're alone when you

want to maybe talk with the professor to clarify something sometimes.

If you meet with academic advisor,

they can help get that conversation opened up for you

or arrange in a way that's more agreeable to your work schedule.

We're going to talk a little bit about reading for comprehension here in a minute.

But you want to get to the point with your knowledge

when I talked about earlier, you can teach it.

Then maybe you can actually be tested on it.

Constantly when you're getting new information,

you want to assess if you need improvement,

if you're competent in that information as you're getting ready for the test or if you're

proficient and the way that I know that I'm proficient is I test myself,

I talk about it and so I wanted to give you

all a quick example of what I mean by talking about it.

I am going to have to do a new share here if you just

bear with me and then I see a question came up,

so I want to

take that because it looked like a pretty long question, I want to read that.

I'm going to go in here again so I can share the.

We all should see.

If you can't, please let me know.

You should see my little.

I did a YouTube and I'll let you listen to a little bit of it.

Okay, we'll just go ahead and get going.

This is James Bledsoe,

and I'm going to discuss four specific leadership theory or leadership models in as much detail as I can fit into 7-9 minutes.

Secondly, I'll talk a little bit about how

I think I would go about implementing one of these.

This is a behavior that basically provides specific guidance on how to accomplish task.

Another behavior is supportive,

and this behavior shows concern for the followers and is basically friendly.

It functions without a leader,

but if I were to think about or try to

implement one of these models, I would have to go with.

What I'm doing there,

let me come back here.

I can't really see everybody,

but what I'm doing there,

I'm actually reading my notes.

I'm just looking down and looking at my bullet points and then

trying to talk about it for three or four minutes.

That's why I'm chopping through it.

I'm just getting myself used to.

I see the terminology,

now can I talk about it for a few minutes?

I'm just training myself so that if I feel like,

I really don't know about that theory.

I wasn't even able to talk about it for five seconds,

then whatever I'm doing is not letting it stick there.

Now I got to go back and do some other things.

But again, sometimes like I say,

if you can teach it, then you can be tested on it.

Those are one of the techniques that I use is using YouTube.

Because again, only I'm going to see the results

unless I shared in a webinar like I just did.

I'm going to take a minute to read this question because, yeah.

Navigating. One of our attendees to talk about

navigating this whole thing based on life circumstances.

I'll tell you what I really want to connect with you on that.

Because again, the whole thing is,

when you're navigating through how to be successful.

Again, knowing that you're not alone,

did you have to reach out to someone and talk to someone.

I struggle with my doctorate program and I talk to

my adviser and my professors all the time.

From day one, I'll let them know,

I'm struggling man, I wasn't able to get the reading done.

Can have an extra day or is there more material I can look at that

maybe is in video form because I couldn't afford the book?

I didn't get the book until two weeks into the semester.

Whatever it is, I'm not coming up with excuses,

but my whole thing is I know I'm not alone.

I know I can talk to my advisor.

I know I can talk to the professor and let them know what my situation is.

I think more professors are willing to help and accommodate when they hear

things early than they are hearing things late in the semester.

Because I'll tell you right now,

professors are putting up their defense mechanisms late in the semester because

that's when the people come to the professor that know that they're getting below a C,

they're getting a D or F, and they're trying to look for some type of favor,

or edge, or extra credit.

You put up your defense mechanisms,

and so even when someone who really has

a situation comes to a professor late in the semester,

sometimes, they don't get a chance to get heard.

That's not always fair, but it happens.

That's one thing that I want to stress is going into the professor early

and letting the professor know what your situation is at that time.

Now I'm going to get back to my PowerPoint there.

Again, please someone let me know if

you can't see it because I can't see everyone at this point.

But if I can teach it,

I can be tested on it. That's key.

That's how I feel about that.

I'm going to talk a little bit about reading for comprehension.

This is where I get into the nitty-gritty stuff I feel.

When I talk about reading for comprehension,

and this is going to sound like,

well James, where you're going to go with this?

Well, think about this.

When you have to do a lot of reading,

when you think about it, let me get the chat room back up.

Does anyone ever read a page in a book?

I'm talking about a school book,

not a book that we love to read in our recreation time,

but a school book.

You actually read a couple of pages and then you come

across a word that you don't know what it is, you don't know what it means.

Do you ever come across a word you don't know what it is?

I mean, we all do.

What I've learned to do the hard way [LAUGHTER] when I was finishing up my masters,

yes, I look it up, Melissa.

You've got to look it up not later.

Write that in there, so back in the day,

in the old school, we had our dictionaries, the hard-copy dictionary.

But now there's other ways to get definitions on things.

Even if it's not even in the textbook,

you can Google it, whatever.

But I look it up right then and I put that definition in

my brain so that now I understand the sentence that it was used in.

Because if you try to read a sentence and you see a word that you don't

know and then you try to read the paragraph and several paragraphs,

you miss the meaning of all those paragraphs

because of that one word that you didn't understand.

It totally can change the whole complexity of that sentence,

of that paragraph, of that page when you

know the definition of all the words that are in that passage.

Sometimes, you have to get yourself to the point where, you know what?

I'm learning the vocabulary as I go along.

I know that my wife and daughter,

they are speed readers.

I don't know how they read as fast as they do.

On their own, they read books outside of their schoolwork and stuff.

I'm like, you know what?

I read stuff and then I've got to understand the vocabulary.

I have got to understand every terminology that is being used because I got to

get the essence of what they're trying to convey on that page.

Somebody might say, "Well, James,

that just takes too long."

But I'm going to show you a way to get around that in our next slide.

But the one thing is,

always look up vocabulary words as you're going

along so that you understand exactly what they were trying to get across to you.

Put it back in contexts.

Let me show you something.

I'm going to go over what I feel about chapter outline,

chapter quiz, learning targets.

Do any of you when you are about to read a new chapter,

before you start reading,

do you look at the quiz?

At the end of the chapter, do you look at the learning targets?

Anybody? A yes or no.

I mean, just being honest.

You asked me this 10 years ago, I would say no.

[LAUGHTER] I don't, even though they had been telling me this since high school,

but I'm going to give you a suggestion for this.

It involves, as much as you can,

getting your book in a way that you can use it on the Kindle book tools.

Now there may be other tools,

I'm just going to use Kindle here for today to illustrate this.

But let me see if I could do a new share here and get my little Kindle book stuff open.

You guys don't laugh at my user.

Some of these are free books,
so don't laugh at my book collection.

I'm going to open up leadership.

Again, I can't see you all,
so in the chat room,
if you can give me your hands up that you can see.

Yeah. Thank you very much.

Thank you so much.

Okay, so here's why I like Kindle book.

Kindle books as far as electronic copies.

It's because, let me get my little thing back in order over here.

I love to look at the chapter outline.

For instance, let's go to, whatever.

I'll go to Chapter 1.

I read all this stuff.

The chapter outline here.

I want to know exactly where they want to take me.

I look at all this stuff.

I familiarize my mind with all of these stuff.

Even if it means I go forward in the book,

and I look it up and see where it is,

I need to acquaint myself with whatever it is that I'm about to embark on.

So I'm familiarizing myself with the terminology right away.

Let me get something else here,

I'm going to clear that.

Another thing that I like to do sorry let me get rid of that. Chapter quiz.

So even before I start reading,

I'll look for the Chapter quiz,

anything I can find.

I just went to the end of the chapter

and I'm looking at the chapter summaries ahead of time.

I used to think when I was in middle school or

high school that I remember my teacher said,

"Don't look at the chapter summary.

Don't look at the quiz. Wait till you finish reading."

I think I kept that all the way through

high school with my undergrad where I can't look at the back.

I finally had to say to myself, "Wait a minute, man.

No, look at the back, look at the summary."

See where you're going to go.

Familiarize yourself with how they are

summarizing the different pages within the chapter.

So this is the chapter summary.

They made it available to me.

I see that the chapter summary is

organized to answer the 11 learning outcomes for this chapter.

So now I know exactly what the learning outcomes are.

I know I go to the review questions.

I see where this is going.

I see the key terminology.

So that's going to be important and it even gives me

the page numbers for the terminology.

Before I even start reading the chapter,

I know the terminology and if I haven't heard

of normative leadership before model for instance,

I'm looking over here at normative leadership model.

I'll look it up. I'll Google it just to see what Google says,

what people out there say.

I want to know the definition according to this book,

don't get me wrong, but I want to build context to it.

I love that Kindle books allows us to navigate through this way.

My wife and I are doing advanced degrees together.

She's at Eastern Washington and I'm doing through another University,

working on my doctorate but I love how Kindle lets you take notes so that I can

highlight something and make it a note.

Does anyone use Kindle in this way,

making their own notes?

I'm looking at the chat room here.

I'll make notes this way because you can color code them if you want.

I can come here and if I want to color code them for this whatever.

What I love is that now all the stuff that I have decided is important.

Some of the stuff I'm color-coding is too long,

but maybe I want to color code something that's just a sentence that I think like,

whoa. You know what?

I'm writing a paper, and I'm going to come back to this,

I'm going to do

an in-text citation but I'm writing a paper and I'm going to come back to that.

I'm going to come back and I might color-code that as

orange because that's something I'm going to use in my paper.

That way, when you go to the very right side,

it tells you what page you took it from,

and then what I love is you can click on this button,

export and now you're exporting all the things.

You can save it here at the top,

but you're exporting all the things that you put into your notes.

Yeah, if you can get a textbook on Amazon,

you can put it on Kindle.

With my textbooks for my doctoral class,

I always look on Amazon first and see if it's there,

and if it is I download it to my Kindle app I guess it is.

Whenever I can get a book on Amazon,

I'm going to use it that way.

Let's see if I can go back and act like I know what I'm doing here.

The other feature I want to show you with the whole taking notes is,

see if I can get back in here and find something else.

With the notes I also can make my own flashcards.

I showed you how to export the notes,

but you can also make your own flashcards here.

I want this to be a flashcard.

I hit the green check arrow.

Yeah, I want that to be a flashcard.

I'm going to skip this now, I decide that's not important. I don't read that either.

Yeah, I need this, that was important.

I'm making my own set of flash cards just by what I highlighted in the book.

Again, just some quick ways that you can use

Kindle when you can buy your textbooks through Amazon.

I'm always going to look to get things there as soon as I can.

[LAUGHTER] Melisa I told my wife about this feature.

We were sitting on the sofa reading our books.

[LAUGHTER] She said the same thing.

You know what? This is blowing my mind.

I didn't know there was there because my wife was sitting there writing notes,

every little note like writing it,

rewriting it in her notebook, and I'm like, "Why you doing all that?"

Why don't you just highlight it and make your own notes?"

Anyway, fun stuff, fun stuff.

Just sharing ideas on that.

I hope that helps.

I'm going to come back and do a new share here back to my screen here. All right

here's my next slide,

reading stamina and speed.

Now this may help all of you.

This may help one person.

I don't know but I'm going to try this out.

Again I can't see you all,

but I want to make sure you see my reading for comprehension chart that I put together.

In the chat room, if you can let me know.

Okay, I see. Let me go.

All right very good, very good.

Reading for comprehension. All right,

now there is a chart that I put together.

Let's just say it's a Monday and the professor

has said to everyone, "Read Chapters 1-12."

I'm immediately going to look at how many pages that is.

That's 360 pages because chapters 1-12,

each chapter has 30 pages, hypothetically.

So that's 360 pages, I'll say to myself.

Now, I already know what my reading speed is. How do I know?

I went on and read two or three pages and I saw that it's taken

me on average about three minutes to read a page.

Sometimes I go back and look up a word,

but ordinarily it might take me a minute-and-a-half or something like that.

But because some of the words I'm having to look up,
it's taken me about three minutes, maybe four minutes.

If I know my average speed of the book that I'm reading,
not just in general, the book that I'm reading,
it's taking me three minutes per page.

I know I got 360 pages to read. Here's the other part.

You have to know,

what's your reading stamina?

In any given day,

how long are you willing to read to where you like, you know what?

I can read for comprehension for about two hours.

If I'm going to sit down for the day and read,

I can only really do maybe two hours and then after that,

I start to lose my focus, my head hurts.

I got things to do, I've got chores, whatever.

Well, if you know your reading stamina, I'm calling it stamina,

is about a 120 minutes,

let's say if this is me, I'm two hours.

I know I'm two hours, so I got to read every day to stay on pace.

But if you divide now three minutes into a 120 minutes,

and three minutes represents one page,

then you're going to come back and I know that when I do sit down to read,

I can do about 40 pages in a day, and then I'm done.

I'm not going to do anymore. My brain is shut.

If I know I've got to read by
down here where it says the midterm exam that's going to be on chapters 1-12,
then I know it's going to take me nine days to get through
these 360 pages to the point where I'm not just competent, I'm proficient.

I know this stuff. I can teach it.

So I now have to look at okay,

"When am I going to read?"

According to my stamina and speed,

do you want to just stack up all the days here?

I'm going to try to get in these nine days.

Let's see. That's 1, 2, 3, 4,

5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

No, because that gets back to how does the brain work? Do you want to do that?

No. I'm going to say,

"Okay, I found on a Monday, so guess what?

I'm going to do this.

I'm going to get three done there and I'm going to get three done here,

and then maybe I go to the third week and I got it here."

Now, all of this is hypothetical because maybe you have a quiz before the mid-term.

I get that.

But the whole thing is sometimes when you have a lot of reading to do,

you've got to know what your speed and stamina is,

based on the book that you're reading.

Some books are easier to read than others.

We can all agree on that.

But you got to now start to plot out when you're going to do this,
and we're just talking about one subject.

If you're taking 2, 3,

4 different classes, you've got to figure out,

how many pages do I have to read?

Really be realistic on,

how long is it going to take me to get through all these pages?

How long am I willing to read every day?

Again, if I've got three subjects,

and let's say I got to get those three subjects into

those a 120 minutes that I said I can read a day,

then I got to figure out,

okay, I'm only going to be devoting here but,

I'm only going to get maybe 20 pages done per subject per day.

The maths gets fun, I think,

[LAUGHTER] but it is really helped me pace

myself in terms of getting reading done so that I'm not spending the whole day Saturday,

or the whole day Sunday doing reading,

knowing that if I read for six hours,

I'm going to have burnout.

That's just me. I know some of us have really hectic schedules,

but there's some times where I'll get up at 5:00 and I'll read for 30 minutes.

Then during my lunch break,

I'll read for 45 minutes.

Then before, maybe after I come home from work,
or after I move from my desk to the dining room because this is my office,
then maybe I'm going to read for another hour.

But the whole thing is,

I know ahead of time based on what
I got to do as far as I'll get ready for our midterm exams,
quizzes, whatever, I've already plotted out,
how I'm going to get this reading done,
or how I'm going to write the papers,
when I'm going to write the papers,
but I'm really going to be realistic about my time,
and plot it all out based on my ability to read and digest the information.

That's going to be different for everybody.

It's going to be different for everybody.

I'm getting long-winded and I'm coming to the end here.

I'm not in a rush; I know we promised we'd stop at 7:30.

I'm going to stay here until all the questions are answered,
but are there any questions or things that you'd like me to touch on?

I don't mind if people ask their questions.

I don't mind if they unmute themselves.

ANDREA: If you have a question please feel free to unmute
yourself or just write them in the chat, either way.

JAMES BLEDSOE: Breaking this down,

that's what I wanted to do.

I just don't want to give you a bunch of tips,

the stuff that everybody gives everybody.

Here's why I do it this way, everybody,

because half my time I'm

a Career Development Coordinator and too often we will say to students,

"If you don't know what you want to do in life, just explore.

Just explore. If you don't know what your major is, go explore."

I got tired of telling students that 15 years ago,

because we don't give them the framework to explore.

I've put together curriculum that helps people to

explore majors and to explore career options.

Not just occupations, career fields.

That's what I think is important,

breaking it down and showing people how,

giving them a framework. Do we have a question there?

AUDIENCE: Yeah, I have a question.

I was just curious as far as reading,

I decided to use hard books this semester.

I bounced back and forth and it's

weird not knowing where you're at in the book with the digital books,

it felt like a old school.

JAMES BLEDSOE: I hear you. [LAUGHTER]

AUDIENCE My biggest question is,

I started strong taking notes and reading,
and within two weeks, I'm completely behind and
burnt-out because I end up transcribing the entire book.

Do you have any tips for taking realistic notes?

JAMES BLEDSOE: Yes, I do. [LAUGHTER] I wish I would have had one of my books here.

What I try to do to train myself not to take this copious notes is,
if I'm reading I've got the book or I've got the hard copy,
I'll put my notes, old school stuff.

I'll put little buzzwords on the side of
each page that remind me what each paragraph is about,
so it's almost like I'm describing the paragraph in my own words,
I'm just summarizing it.

What are they really trying to say? They're trying to say basically,
theories are theories, but it's not anything until you put it into practice.

I'll try to summarize it in a way that I'm not saying in slang,
but in the way that I would summarize it.

Because that's going to stay in my head easier if I'm putting it in my words,
so in the book,

I'm not underlining every word like that, but I do,

I use the side of the pages to just quickly
summarize in a few words what that paragraph is talking about.

You'll find that it's easy to go back and find
things in the book when you're reading your writing,
and the way you would describe it,

not just writing these long copious notes on another Notepad, that's tough.

When I can flip through the book,
and I know what each paragraph is talking about,
it just helps me to connect the dots.

Is there something that maybe requires
a little more feedback than that, what I just said?

AUDIENCE: That's great. Thank you.

JAMES BLEDSOE: That's my next thing when it comes to
notes because that way
you're going to keep yourself from writing stuff that's way too long,
and it's going to be hard to remember that.

That way you can get to the book quicker,
just reading through it and just jotting down some things on the side of the page,
and getting familiarized with, what's the big picture?

Where's this chapter trying to take me?

That's the thing that I've realized is,
where's this chapter trying to take me?

Where's it trying to take me?

That's important, that's why I'd go back and read the outlines, the summaries.

It's not saying that I'm cheating like I used to think when I was in elementary school,
not to read the back of the book or not to read the.

No, it's just, you know what?

I need to see the big picture, where this is going.

It's just like, if you're in an art class and the teacher

starts the class with a new art project and they don't show you the finished product,
it's going to be hard for you to stay within where the teacher wants to go.

If I have an art project and I want everybody to do,
I show them the finished product.

This was going to look like, so let's get going.

Step by step is going to be easier because everyone knows where we're going.

Again, it's very important to read I think the back of
the chapters and get all that information so you see where things are going.

Any other questions? I'm sorry,

I can't see the questions as quickly as I should, but.

ANDREA: No, I don't see any more questions.

JAMES BLEDSOE: I know you have a lot of phenomenal people
in the Global Campus as far as advisors and counselors,
but I'm here as well.

I'm part of the Cougar Team,

I'll help anybody anywhere, anytime, anyplace.

You saw in the beginning,

if you go back to my original slide here,

and then I'm going to try to share it just so that in case you want to take a,
not picture of me, but my contact information.

[LAUGHTER] If you want my contact information,

I use Google Office when I'm at my desk.

It rings right to my desktop computer,

but then you can leave messages at my office phone,

you can email me, I'm really good with emails.

But honestly, my boss doesn't like my hours,

but this is just how I roll everybody.

We're in a new normal,

so I'm seven days a week,

08:00 AM to 08:00 PM, Monday through Friday,

and 12:00 to 5:00 on Saturdays and Sundays.

I'm always available whether it's Zoom,

email or a phone call just for feedback.

I don't care what campus you're in,

I'm here for everybody.