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Most entrepreneurs and motivated professionals know the importance of investing in themselves, from building valuable skills to improving their strengths over time. Important skills evolve over time and differ from what may have been the most important a decade or two ago. A lot of them are tech-based, but some of them are also based on how employees want to be able to work. Here are some factors you can use to your advantage when you build a successful operation. While business owners themselves don't need to be IT professionals, they need to invest in employees or consultants with that expertise. Retailers need point-of-sale (POS) systems that are compatible with mobile payment systems like Google Pay or Apple Pay. It is also important to have a web presence that emphasizes search engine optimization. Similarly, you should have a web developer on staff or a contract with one who has SEO skills to ensure that your online content is being seen by your target demographic. Websites also need to be mobile-friendly in addition to being desktop-friendly to reach potential customers who visit the site through their smartphones. Being able to do effective market research is a necessary skill. This means finding a void in your community and filling it. Your business must be unique, but you should be confident there is demand. For example, there may be a half dozen pizza shops in town, but if your research shows you that it's still not enough to meet the needs of the community, don't be afraid to shop seventh. However, even if there is a need for another pizzeria, you still want to offer something about the product or service that others may ignore. Separate yourself. Knowing how to take advantage of social media trends is important for any business that is trying to establish itself in a market. Social media is growing rapidly. Entrepreneurs who are skilled at staying on top of these changes and know how to use them as an opportunity to get ahead of the competition have a greater chance to succeed. Making friends and building win-win relationships will give you the potential for great new opportunities in the future. Then it's important to be positive with your community's business organizations and collaborate with other businesses as much as possible. This means signing a contract or consulting with a local design company when creating the logo of your new business, looking for opportunities to cross-promote with businesses that overlap with you in some way, and funding community organizations. When starting a new business, it's ideal to have some people in mind who you know will be reliable and reliable. In the best case scenario, these are people who share your vision and want to see it come true. While such scenarios are not always realistic, it is extremely important to surround yourself with a strong core of employees from which you can build a team of employees. This can be There are only a few people, but these folks should fully understand what you are trying to accomplish and complement your own good skills. For example, if you're a talented chef starting your own restaurant, you might need an experienced business manager to help lead that aspect of your operations. Trust these first core employees to do their job and surround them with talented staff. For your first year or first few years of activity, you should have a goal broken down quarterly or even monthly. Plan out where you expect to be every step of the way in terms of finance, human resources, marketing, and any other relevant part of your business. Detailed SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is always a good way for yourself and your team members to start thinking strategically. As you move through the first months and years of activity, you should regularly review strategies to make sure they stay relevant based on any changes to your business or market. Many employees today are looking for flexibility in their working hours and their workplaces, and recruiting the best talent often means being able to offer this. If employees can work part or all of their hours remotely, this can improve morale and efficiency. A workforce working from high can also help reduce over-air costs. Knowing how to manage and grow your finance is essential. You may be a whiz with this aspect of operating a business, but if you don't, you need to make sure you hire someone. Expect to lose money soon as you build your brand and your reputation. This means you need to have enough start-up capital to cover early losses. Once you become profitable, you need to have a plan for where those profits will go. Depending on the nature of your business, you may want to expand, open branches, or invest in developing new products. Whatever your priorities, there is a plan to go there and how you will fund it. The new business hit speed bumps and struggles at times. No matter how you've planned or how great the people you've hired, an unexpected twist will create problems that need to be fixed. Knowing this potentially, you can budget for unexpected expenses and mentally prepare yourself not to panic. When you react quickly and calmly to a crisis, your management team will follow your leads, and their employees will follow your manager, better allowing your business to navigate any storms you may encounter. University admissions expert, Patrick J. O'Connor, Ph.D., is associate dean of university counseling at Cranbrook Kingswood School in urban Detroit. A former president of the National Association of in University Admissions Counseling (NACAC) and Michigan ACAC, Patrick also teaches Counseling in the University Selection Process as a graduate class and a professional development program. In 2017-18, he was the first School Ambassador to the United States keep the Ministry informed of current trends and issues of interest to school advisors. There is a close relationship between reading and writing, because the only reason you write something down is for someone to read it. That someone might be you (that's why we're going to talk about taking notes), it could be a teacher (so we'll talk about essays and research papers), or it could be a friend, company, or potential boss (we're talking emails here, and yes, there are things that should and shouldn't be for emails)—but the goal of writing is to put ideas together in a way that makes sense to others when they read it. So if read to the end, the text comes first. If you think this means we'll look at the basic rules of grammar, you're confused. At this point in your life, you've learned the grammar rules from formal learning, or you didn't—and if you didn't learn them from the official guide, the only way you would understand them was for a teacher to talk to you about them when they talked to you about something you wrote. You can definitely get a quick review of the grammar rules here, but the best way to add grammar knowledge in high school and college is to write something and show it to someone who will be kind in pointing out grammar issues. Be brave—no one will be watching, and it can help your writing grow as nothing else can. Back to Top of Page There are a handful of writers who can write without first taking notes, but even most writers record the main ideas they're thinking about before they start putting together final written products. This helps them keep the big picture in mind when they are writing. If they forget what they're really trying to say, it's like they're driving without their hands on the steering wheel. We can actually do it some day with cars, but to write, we avoid wrecks by taking notes. Official notes The type of note you make depends on how detailed you want your notes to be. If you are writing a reminder for yourself to pick up your brother from sports practice, a reminder on a sticky note or on your phone alarm will do the trick, and can take about three words. If you are writing an outline from a book or a lecture on the causes of the American Revolutionary War, it is going to take a little more space and organization—so it is good to think about the depth of your notes ahead of time. Many students look at the american revolutionary example of notes and think it looks pretty complicated, but it really isn't. Each section starts with a big idea, then includes examples or parts of that big idea. For example, if you want to know about the history of rock 'n roll, you can try and understand it based on the different rock music; how rocks differ in other countries; the way rock changes over time, and the types of instruments used in the creation of rock music. It's easy to say, but once you develop writing for a fairly simple question, the outline of rock's history looks a lot like the American Revolution outline and we're talking rock 'n roll here! It's easy to get caught up in Roman digits, and abcs are used in notes, but once you understand their purpose, you can apply traditional note-taking methods in your own style. This method of notes uses the same approach to big ideas, few ideas as the American Revolution example, but instead of Roman digits and letters, it uses the margins of paper to organize big ideas. Mapping provides visual clues as to how ideas are related. Some people like the way large circles and small circles are used to point out ideas big and small, while others look at this and think, wow, what a mess! It is important to understand that you need to find a method of notes that really suits you. Some people may use all three methods that we discussed, while others develop their own methods. Whichever method you use, make sure you review it to make sure you're getting the right level of detail – don't write down every word from the book or from the teller, but don't expect that just writing down George Washington will help you remember the battles of the Revolution. One of the main ways to test the impact of your notes skills is to see what you missed in a test or test. If your scores are not quite what you expect, review the answers and see if they exist in your notes. If they don't or if they do, but you can't easily find them when learning—it's time to tweak your notes taking skills..... and speaking of skill notes, did you notice the American Revolutionary Notes indented in Roman digits starting with the number 5, or V? Yes, a big mistake there. They should all be on the left. Notes taken from a book or a lecture are actually quite easy, since a good author and a good speaker organize their thoughts in ways that are easy to follow (in fact, some books put an outline of the main ideas at the end of each chapter). That's not always true of a meeting or a class discussion; there may be an agenda to try and keep things organized, but if you're talking about how to solve a problem, ideas may not come out in any organized fashion. As an exercise, pull out a piece of paper, and try notes for this two-minute meeting. When you have to find ways to try and make sense out of a presentation without much structure, consider these strategies: If you have an agenda, take notes on each idea right next to each item. This is a good way to remember what ideas go with each item, but you can run out of rooms. If that's the case, try the margin method by your own margin on the back of the agenda. Try the mapping approach. This approach allows you to put big ideas (big circles) anywhere, so if new ideas are coming at a fast pace, you can keep up. Some people will supplement the circles by placing the stars next to big, big ideas. By placing the stars next to the action items. This is a good way to separate ideas from the activities you must complete. As another exercise, go back to the two-minute meeting and try keeping notes using mapping. Is that easier for you? Note-Taking and Writing You need to think very carefully to the approach you will take when you take notes. You can read or hear an idea that you like so much, you decide to write it down exactly as it was first written or spoken by someone else. On the other hand, you can come across an idea you really like, but it's so complicated that the best you can do is summarize your own verbal idea when you write it down. You'll want to develop a way to keep direct quotes separate from summaries that are in your own words, since using other people's words and ideas in an article or presenting and declaring them as your own is justified, which is a big no-no in the academic world. Since schools and colleges place a high value on initial thinking, any student trying to cut corners using other people's words and ideas will find themselves in trouble, quickly. A good number of high school students who are writers will find it extremely difficult to get admitted to college; Famous authors sometimes stumble in their notes, sometimes putting them in difficult situations, and even presenting an idea (or musical melody) that is close to another one that can lead to legal action that you want to avoid. The best approach to staying away from hot water is to make some simple rules, and stick to them. Many students will put quotes directly in quotes- it's quick to write down, and easy to remember. This works even for notes while reading; If you're writing down ideas like it's written in a book, write it the same way you would if the author was in the room, talk to you. Some students may usually reby reby reby usually usually reby explain and summarize when they are taking notes, but it is a talent that can often slow down other notes, resulting in them missing out on some key points of a lecture in class. It is best to develop the evaluation system for now, then learn how to summarize ideas when writing your essay or draft. Review your notes We'll talk more about how to learn from your notes in the Learning Skills section, but there's one step you might want to take before you start using your notes to study the test or write the first rough draft of an article. Many students will build in about twenty minutes after a class or meeting to review their notes. At first, this may not make much sense. If you only hear what the professor has to say, or if the boss just recapped the meeting, you can remember what was said. While that may be true, remember that your goal is to remember what was said long after the meeting was over. Reviewing your notes gives you an opportunity to find that sentence incomplete and add two or three words that will end thoughts, or rewwwwww which has somehow become a Some people will use this time to rewwww their notes altogether, put them in Roman digit form, or use the mapping approach and bring the big idea circles closer together. If, at the end of the session, you can answer the question What was discussed today? by giving an answer out loud and just looking at your notes, you are in good condition. Personal Notes, or Notes for Poetry and Novels You may have heard of creators who get incredible ideas in unusual places. Whether inspiring moments happen in the classroom, while studying, or while walking dogs, it's important to find ways to capture these little ideas, as they have the potential to become big ideas. Recording ideas out of this blue is definitely easier with voice command-based notes taking the apps available on mobile phones or sticky note apps on most computers. In addition, you should enter these ideas in a diary or notebook, so you will have a place where all your ideas reside. A magazine is also a good idea, since all fiction works have several types of structures, and a magazine allows you to develop the flow and interaction of those ideas, trying out a number of different approaches to combining ideas in your journal. More and more students are taking to social media to record their personal feelings and small inspirations, but that idea has its limitations. It's certainly true that many people are making a very nice living with online blogs and videos that seem to be promoting-of-the-record moment that speaks for themselves. These blogs feel at home nice, but only after the less smoother sections have been edited and the content evolves into an idea that has some examples – very much like notes. It is also important to give yourself the opportunity as a writer to update the original ideas and drafts with a limited audience. There are too many examples of students who have lost friends, college scholarships, and more, all because they posted an idea to the Internet before they carefully thought it through and if that's the case with a poem or fiction, it becomes too easy for others to take it, tweak it, and make a successful job that is based on your ideas. These rules will help keep your social media presence safe and strong; so will use an old school laptop or magazine to keep your thoughts private, until they are ready for an audience. Go back to Top After you've read, heard, and talked about ideas presented in a classroom, it's time for you to share the ideas you've developed based on researching this topic. Most of these texts are academic, and come out as essays or research papers. There are many ways to structure both, and The structure has its own set of instructions to follow, but each structure begins by asking two very important questions: What do you mean? The reason teachers ask them to write papers about books, movies, or class discussions is because they want to know what you think. This may sound pretty basic, but you'll be amazed at the number of students submitting essays that simply repeat based on the fact of what they've just learned. That kind of writing is important, but most teachers want you to do something with those facts: compare another book; analyzing the differences between the two historical events; assess the quality of a play. For example, not everyone in your class who read Twelve Years a Slave will be able to recall every character, but even fewer students will be able to compare solomon Northrup's challenges with those facing today's society. A good essay will do both and in doing so, it will show you can think at both the basic level of event memorizing, and the more advanced levels of analysis and comparison. These levels of thinking are part of Bloom's Classification, a tool that teachers use to develop the way they teach and a tool commonly used to measure what students have learned. All levels are important, and the highest level requires you to have an opinion on what you are learning. So keep the facts in mind, but think about how events make you feel, and what they remind you of – it's the beginning of real thinking. What teachers are looking for all written is designed for some kind of audience, so it's important to remember who will be reading your work, and what they hope to get out of it. Since most of your academic writing will be read by your teacher, it is important to understand the questions they want you to address in your writing; How long they want it to be; how they want you to cite any source you use to write your article, and any other information you need to provide as part of the reading and grading process. This may not be as difficult as you think. Many teachers are currently using assessments in their grading. These check lists make it easier for them to score, but it also makes it easier for students to understand what to include in the paper. Some categories provide general guidance, while others are more specific (like this). Either way, they give students a clearer understanding of the structure and content they should develop for paper. Yes, you're thinking, but what if my paper has a conclusion teachers disagree with? The goal of academic articles is to teach students how to put their thoughts together in a structured way that allows them to reach a conclusion based on carefully laid out facts. Logic tell us that if the facts, or the basis, are all correct, the conclusion has been correct and yet, we have heard all the stories about the English teacher who thinks that Ernest Hemingway is the greatest author ever published, and gives low scores to papers that would Other. This is where a category can really come in handy. If everything used to calculate your score is on the rubric, it will be difficult for a teacher to class you down just because they don't like your conclusions. Not proving your conclusion is one thing; article; to conclude they will not perform is another. Draft rough This is one of the reasons the rough draft can also be a huge help. The basic rules for rough drafts are easy. If a paper is due on, say, the 15th, work on it as if it were due on the 8th. Ask your instructor if you can meet to discuss the rough draft of your paper; that's when they'll go through the paper with you, point out its strengths, provide suggestions for improvement, and give you some ideas about what kind of grades it will earn. The information a rough draft gives you is great. Not only do you get some free advice on how to get a better grade, you can also get some comments like I didn't really consider the role of Hester Prynne from that perspective, a comment that suggests your conclusion is unusual , but OK. On the other hand, what if your teacher said Hester Prynne was a victim of society? Really?, it's a sign that your conclusion is either underdeveloped, or that one of your teachers will have a hard time with it. If that was before, you have some rewriting to do to make sure you've actually made your case. If that's the second thing, you have some thoughts to do; Will you stand by your arguments, or risk having to spend time and energy defending your views with your teacher? A few tips are in order with rough drafts. First, make sure your teacher will accept them. Incredibly few students bother to write rough drafts, even if faculty encourage students to submit them. This means most teachers have time to read the draft rough, and want to do so— but that's not everyone, especially high school teachers, who may have never read a rough draft in their careers. Being a successful student sometimes means flaming some trails, but you don't want to necessarily burn your bridge. So before you take the hassle of writing a rough draft, make sure it will do you some good. Second, if you commit to writing a rough draft, make it a good one. I had situations where something unexpected came, and a student could only submit half of a final article as a rough draft. That's OK, since writing gave me some ideas on their approach to the topic. The more difficult thing is if the student submits a rough draft that is less than an outline. Sketches are great at establishing a structure, but they usually don't leave much room for specific feedback as a rough draft. In a perfect world, you want a rough draft without updating. You won't always be able to do it, of course, which is why you write them, but write as if that's your goal, and your teacher won't be disappointed. Go back to Top of Page Floating Format most for school essays is the Five Paragraph Essay. This approach to writing-introducing your big ideas, writing three paragraphs supports big ideas, then writing a conclusion—used by teachers from elementary school to college to serve as a skeleton of academic writing, where support passages get more detailed in high school and This can be a great way to start your writing, as it gives you to build a conclusion based on the truth. At the same time, not all teachers are a fan of five-paragraph essays because many people feel that it leads to boring writing that doesn't really interest the reader, or makes writers think about what they really want to say. This is why other approaches are encouraged, allowing students to use a format such as big ideas and mapping methods used in notes that we discussed at the beginning of this chapter. These approaches allow some writers to be more creative, or go into more detail, than five-paragraph essays. You'll also want to be sure to check out the systology of your class, since the instructor may have a specific essay format that they want you to use and since they are readers, what they think matters. Back on Top of Page One of the most successful high school football coaches in Michigan spent a lot of his practice time having players working in small groups. He once explained that he does this because it's the best way for the players to work on individual skills and, he added, it also works because good football is actually a series of small games from six to eight players at once. This approach to football makes sense. If you've ever watched a game, you know that there are no more than a few players around the ball at once, so it makes sense that players learn to win individual battles. The same can be said for thinking of a research article as a series of essays. If each essay is trying to promote a medium idea, a research article can be considered advancing a really big idea, which has been supported by many medium ideas. Writing about the Battle of Gettysburg would be quite difficult to do in a one-page essay; it would require a discussion of the civil war; how the war went before Gettysburg which made that battle so important; a detailed analysis of the smaller battles that have occurred; what happened immediately after Gettysburg, and how the battle was viewed today. This Gettysburg overview is a good example of a well-structured research post. This approach to a research paper makes organizing your notes and rough drafts easy to follow, since you are thinking of research papers as a well produced series of essays. Some students find research papers more difficult because they are longer than essays, and require more organization, but if you think of a research paper as a series of essays, you know exactly how to keep them organized, and you know how to keep writing creative and fresh. Like writing essays, writing research requires you to have an understanding of Be clear about how you will be grading, and what the instructor is looking for, so try and get a copy of the rubric teacher will use to score your work. In addition, most teachers who specify a research paper will create a series of deadlines students will have to meet by completing parts of the paper, such as a summary, or even a rough draft. Since most of these deadlines will include classes for the finished work, it's important to meet them – but it's more important to do quality work, since feedback on these materials will help you write a stronger article. Returning to top of page Essays or research paper formats gives you an idea of how to structure your paper, while a style guide gives you guidance on how to do things like indentation paragraphs, reference citations, and more. Some teachers will build style requirements with their essay formats, others will tell you what style guide to use, and some will leave it to you. The most popular style guides are MLA, APA and Chicago style guides. You don't need to know each of them by memory, but it's important to know they exist, and know what your teacher is looking for. Make sure you understand the specific requirements for each individual paper, as rewriting something like a citation list can be extremely time consuming. Going back to the Top of Page It will take a lifetime to discover many formats used in personal and creative writing, and many teachers offer introductions to some of the more common formats used in literature, including intercalary chapters, sonnets, and, believe it or not , free verse verses, which have its own set of rules. Most students learn about many forms of creative writing by reading a variety of authors and poets of their own, and discuss with other interested readers through local bookstores, libraries, or online chat rooms. Some students are lucky enough to have creative writing classes taught in their high schools or colleges. Most students will complete their formal education without ever being asked to explore the world of creative writing beyond a basic study of fourth grade poetry and Shakespeare High School, and that is unfortunate. Some of the best reading authors have developed their own approach to nonfiction bringing their ideas to life in ways that make people really think about their ideas, authors like Thomas Cahill and David McCullough. Their use of language is still based on solid research and reasonable reasoning, but it goes too far through the basis of five paragraph essays, it helps to think they're creating this story from their imagination- and yet, they don't. The requirements of high school and college degree make it difficult for students to find time to understand why e cummings never use capital letters, or why William Faulkner rarely used time. At the same time, nonfiction is developed from observations of the real world that help us understand more about the truth of life, while the world is created from pure imagination help us understand more about what the world can become. Both have their place when we find our own voice as authors of essays and research papers, formats that can inspire new thoughts and new possibilities, if done with the right balance of discipline and creativity. Last January 30, 2019

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