

CHAPTER 1

ELEMENTS OF STUDY SKILLS

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Introduction

“Every artist is first an amateur”

Ralf Waldo Emerson

Every time I meditate on the above six words of Emerson, two thoughts run through my mind: one, what separates amateurs from professionals are skills; two, anyone can get anything done provided he or she is ready to do what is required to get it done. Whenever you read the story of any great man or woman, you will always discover that he or she has got some skills that make great achievements possible. I therefore believe that no one succeeds in any venture without the skills to match. Every human activity, study inclusive, demands certain skills and strategies.

You have chosen a programme of study in the University, and now you have registered for your first year courses. I am quite sure you will want to achieve academic excellence at the end of the day. The Chancellor of Covenant University once said, “No student has come to university to try, everyone has come to pass”. I wholeheartedly agree with him. As you are reading this book, you want to pass GST111 (GNS111 in other climes) as well as the other courses you just registered for. If you must pass and pass well, then you must be ready to study, and to study effectively, you must be ready to learn some study skills. I have had cause to interview few first class graduates of Covenant University and from my interaction with them, I have found out that they share common study skills which enabled each of them to earn a first class degree. Do you know something? Skills are not talents; they are acquired through learning and constant practice. If you are ready to quickly learn few study skills and operate them adequately, you will be on your way to scoring straight As.

What are study skills? Simply put, they are study techniques and approaches that are effective, efficient and which result in high marks and grades for students. Study skills as a concept is one of the primary concerns of the science of studying (learning to learn). Many students fail, not because they do not attend lectures but because they refuse to learn how to learn. Learning in the University goes beyond attending lectures; it is a serious business and it demands scientific and practical methods and strategies. . In this chapter, you will be scientifically and practically taken through the essential elements of study skills. First, you will be shown how to prepare for academic success. If you must

succeed in your study, preparation is required because nobody gets anything done excellently without first preparing adequately for it and as they say, failure to plan is already a plan to fail. Secondly, you will be taken through the tools and facilities for effective studies. If you do not know yet, I want you to know that there are physical tools and facilities that you will need if your studies must produce desired results. Finally in this chapter, you will be exposed to the likely challenges you may face in your study life on campus. No cause for alarm, you will also be told how you can skillfully defeat those challenges and get results from your studies. Now let's go!

Preparation for Academic Success

*“Success depends upon previous preparation,
and without such preparation
there is sure to be failure.”*

Confucius (551–479 BC)

All things being equal, every student comes to an institution of higher learning to study and achieve academic success. Therefore, your primary assignment as a student is to study in your area of discipline and come out with good grades. All other activities on campus are secondary. You must know one fact at this juncture: nothing ever succeeds without adequate preparation. The statement above credited to the great Chinese teacher and philosopher is the truth and nothing but the truth: the level of success is a result of the amount of preparation devoted to it. So, what constitutes preparation for academic success? This is the question that this section of the chapter will answer for you. You will then need to assess yourself if you are prepared for academic success or not. There are two forms of preparation that will be discussed here: general preparation to succeed academically and preparation for examinations.

General Preparation for Academic Success

When a student gains admission into an institution of higher learning, he or she is given a course to study, i.e Accounting, Achitecture, Business Administration, Computer Science, Computer Engineering, English, French, Mass Communication, Microbiology, Sociology etc. Mostly, the course given may be the choice of the student, either first, second or third choice. In the same vein, some students eventually find themselves in courses they did not choose but which are given to them by the Management of the institution having taken into account some factors bordering on the quota system and entry requirements. Whichever category you fall into, now that you have registered in the course into which you have been admitted, you must generally prepare to succeed in it.

What does general preparation for academic success mean? It means possessing the requisite foundational mindsets upon which academic success can be built. I am going to

introduce to you these mindsets in order that you may ponder over them and make a decision to possess them.

- a. **Mindset of ‘any course is a good course’:** There is this mindset which some people carry about that some courses have better prospects than some others. In fact, some courses are categorized as meant only for the lazy folks. I do not share that opinion at all and I strongly believe that anyone will succeed in life generally with any course of study in the university. All it demands is to study hard and become a person of authority in any of the professions that the course of study eventually leads to. There is no course of study that does not have its place in humanity. Those who share the opinion that some courses are better than the others will readily mention courses such as Accounting, Computer Science, Engineering, Law, Medicine etc. as the reigning kings of studies on campus. Though they are very good courses, just like all the other courses in the university, only students who are doing well in them will get something tangible from them. There are graduates of Accounting who know next to nothing in that field; they cannot even manage their personal resources let alone those of an organization. Have you heard about charge and bail lawyers? They are university and law school graduates who became lawyers but do not possess the intellectual capacity to win any serious case for clients. There are graduate medical doctors who are not doing well because their performance in school leaves a lot to be desired. There are graduates of Computer Science who cannot write any computer programme. There are graduates of Engineering who are roaming about the streets in search of jobs. I am not saying that these courses are not good. They are quite good but just studying them does not guarantee automatic success in life. The point I am trying to make here is that you can succeed in life with whatever course you are reading now provided you will be prepared to own it and determine to make the most of it. Just as you find successful engineers, medical doctors, lawyers, accountants, bankers, so you find successful linguists, sociologists, psychologists, marketers, academics, etc. A first class graduate of Yoruba has a more solid background for success than a third class graduate of Computer Engineering. Success is a function of the state of the brain and not the course read in the university.

What I am telling you, therefore, is that you should be prepared to do well in the course that you are reading now. Do not allow inferiority complex to run you down. Your course is not inferior to any other course. Let your mindset be that you are doing the right course because there is no wrong course in the university. If you can tune your mind to this fact, then you are generally prepared to succeed academically. If anyone tells you that your course is inferior, tell the person that any course is a good course

- b. **Mindset of ‘internal locus of control’:** Internal locus of control refers to attributing the events of one’s life to one’s own efforts. For instance, when a student attributes his grade to his efforts by saying that he got an F, then we say

the student has internal locus of control. However, when a student who failed in an examination says that the lecturer gave him an F, then the student has external locus of control. For you to succeed academically in the university or any institution of higher learning, you must be ready to be responsible for your studies and achievements. If you fail a course, you have yourself to blame, if you pass, you have yourself to congratulate. It is the mindset of external locus of control that leads students to look for someone else to blame when they are not doing well in school. If you fail a course and you blame yourself, you are likely to work harder and do better in a subsequent attempt. Therefore, having a mindset of internal locus of control (I am responsible for my grades) is generally critical to academic success.

- c. Mindset of ‘yes I can make it’:** I once said in one of my lectures that it is possible for every student to come out with a first class degree. However, the students present in that lecture were not very enthusiastic about my statement. They did not believe all of them can make it to that level. This is the problem of many students. What does it take to make a first class? Work hard to score at least 70% in any course registered for and eventually two or three Bs (60%). Honestly, if I had had the opportunity of knowing about study skills when I entered the university, I would have come out with a landslide first class degree. I narrowly missed it because I did not do well in my first year. By the time I got to 200 level with the mindset of ‘yes I can make it’, the damage had already been done and I finished up with a second class upper. My secondary school performance did not show I was a brilliant chap: I managed to get the required five O’level credits (with two C6s) from two rigorous sittings. That was the performance that took me to the university and rubbed off on my first year. However, the story changed in the second year when my mindset changed and I began to get plenty of As and Bs became a tiny minority on my result sheet. So if you have a mindset that you can do it, then you will do it.

With these three mindsets, you have a solid foundation on which you can build academic success. Apart from having the mindsets just discussed, you also need to specifically prepare for examinations, which constitute another angle to preparation for academic success.

Preparation for Examinations

Just as the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the proof of academic success is in the grades you make. You cannot be scoring F and D grades and be looking forward to a good degree at the end of the day. As it stands today, grades are determined by students’ performances in continuous assessments and examinations, nothing more nothing less. In most institutions of higher learning, examination takes 70% of the total obtainable score. Therefore, if you must succeed in your academic pursuit, you must fully prepare for examinations. Psychologists have told us that preparation for examinations can cause stress as a result of too much of mental and physical strains which in turn bring about

anxiety and tension, thus impacting negatively on performance. In this section you will be taken through practical and proven steps towards eliminating examination stress and anxiety. Let us begin with the things you need to do before the examination period.

- a. **Begin to prepare for examinations from the beginning of each semester:** Examination must be regarded as serious business for any student desirous of academic success. Ask any first class candidate and you will be told he or she has always been conscious of examinations early enough before the commencement of those examinations. Students who wait till the examination timetable is out before they start reading are the ones who fail or just manage to pass. For you to earn high grades, you must begin to prepare for examinations right from the day you have your first lecture in each semester. You may ask how you can do that. A simple way to prepare for examinations is to make sure the topics taught in lectures are well understood. Any topic just learnt and you cannot conveniently discuss with others is not yet well understood by you. Any scientific formula or calculation just learnt and which you cannot apply to solve problems is not yet understood by you. So, as you are being taught concepts, formulae and calculations, as the case may be, you must do everything possible to understand them to the extent that you can answer any question set on them. You should not wait till the examination period before you study to understand what your lecturers have taught you. As a matter of fact, reading during examinations should be limited to doing personal revision.
- b. **You must mix reading with study:** personally, I have discovered that there is nothing I read that I do not understand in the long run. Yes, I may not have understood well in the first attempt, but after two or three attempts, I have always properly understood any topic I chose to read about. For some students, they easily assimilate when reading, but for some others, they may need to read repeatedly before assimilation occurs. In any case, understanding occurs at a point. You only need to know which of the two divides you belong to and adapt yourself to it. If the goal is to pass well in examinations, however, reading must go with study. As you read about a topic, take personal notes (note taking is discussed in chapter 3 of this book) and try as much as possible to relate what you are getting from your reading to practical situations: this is mixing reading with study. When you do reading and study simultaneously, you easily assimilate and understanding is stored in your memory for a long time. So, when examinations come, you will easily tackle whatever questions are asked by your lecturers.
- c. **Work on your English writing skill:** The language of instruction in Nigerian schools remains English and there is nothing anybody can do about that. It is one thing to know what to write and it is another thing to be able to clearly write down what you know. Students lose marks to grammatical and expressive errors and mistakes. As an undergraduate, you are supposed to have a good command of English so as to be able to express yourself in an unambiguous manner when you

write examinations. As a lecturer, I am always angry with a university undergraduate who cannot write good English. Although your command of English does not need to be at the level of that of the Queen of England, at least you should be able to write your examinations in the English language that your examiners will understand and appreciate. This is the more reason you need to take the Use of English course very seriously. If your command of English is bad, then you need to go to the library and look for books through which you can take some lessons in the correct use of English.

- d. **Attempt past and likely examination questions:** Attempting past and likely examination questions is one sure way to adequately prepare for examinations. Immediately you are taught a topic and you read and study to understand it, the next thing to do is to look out for past and likely examination questions on that topic. Try to answer those questions and approach your lecturer to help you mark and score you. Even where the lecturer is not available for that, you can openly mark your own script and score yourself. By the time you have attempted two or three likely examination questions on a given topic, I can tell you that you are good to go and facing examinations at the end of the semester will become a walk over for you.

Having discussed the steps you need to take right from the beginning of each semester to the time of examinations proper, you also need to do or avoid doing few things during the examination period.

- a. **Engage in physical exercises every morning:** Experts have told us that engaging in physical exercises helps relax our brain and puts it on the alert for maximum productivity. Physical exercises in the morning before examinations will undoubtedly get you mentally battle-ready to face any examination question.
- b. **Eat good food:** during examinations, you are advised to take your three square meals in order not to strain yourself physically. Honestly speaking, the examination period is not the appropriate time to fast. It is a period that food is very essential. However, you need to watch the kind of food you eat during this time. Fast food and too much of heavy meals are not recommended during examinations. Plenty of fruits and vegetable may just be what you need at that period.
- c. **Avoid alcohol and caffeine:** It will be inexplicably stupid of you to get drunk during examinations. If you are used to taking alcohol, you must be ready to abstain totally at the examination period. Also, consumption of coffee and caffeine-related substances such as tea, kola-nut, energy drinks etc. during examinations must be avoided.

- d. **Have enough sleep:** Many students do not know that it is counterproductive to keep late nights during examinations. Students who have done the needful before the commencement of examinations do not need to burn night candles during examinations. Late nights during examinations will surely lead to stress, which is not good for you as you write your papers.
- e. **Avoid cramming:** Lecturers have become very wise these days. They quickly know students who crammed to write examinations. You will find out that you do not need to cram if you take the steps you need to take before the examinations proper. When a crammer answers a question, his/her flow of expression easily reveals lack of in-depth understanding of the issues involved.
- f. **Revise your summarized notes and flashcards:** The examination period is not the right time to study and to engage in long-time reading. All you need to do at this time is to revise your summarized notes and flashcards (the use of flashcards is discussed under the next section on tools for effective study). Whatever reading and studying you do during examinations should be aimed at consolidating what you already know.

You have been taken through the major steps you need to take in order to adequately prepare for examinations. In the next section you will be informed of the tools and facilities that are available on campus that can effectively aid your study.

Tools and Facilities for Effective Study

“Give us the tools and we will finish the job”

Winston Churchill

In every human activity, certain tools and facilities are needed for the purpose of effectiveness. Study is an activity and therefore demands the use of some tools and facilities in order for it to produce the desired result. In this section, you will learn about the tools and facilities required to learn effectively. You will equally be exposed to how you can effectively use those tools. Let’s begin with the tool of academic goals.

- a. **Study goals:** The goal expert, Brian Tracy said that ‘*goals are the fuel in the furnace of achievement*’. Nothing can be truer than this statement because, if you are a goal setter, you are very likely to achieve great things in life. At the beginning of every semester, you should be able to set goals on the kind of grades you want to get in all the courses you have registered for. The mistake most students make is that when they hear about goals, they think it is an abstract thing. Goals are a tool and they are concrete. As far as study goals are concerned all you need to do is to write down your desired grades and display what you have written

in a place where you can quickly see it. Myles Munroe stated six things that goals will do for goal-setters. According to him, goals

*“encourage the development of a plan
create priorities
determine decisions
dictate companions
predict choices and
provide measure for progress”*

If you ask students who are good in setting study goals, they will tell you it is a potent tool in the hands of first class materials on campus. If you start a semester without writing down what you want your academic achievement to look like at the end of that semester, it means you are ready to accept just any grades that come your way. Having set your goals, however, you need another tool which is called the study plan.

- b. **Study plan:** A goal without an action plan is wishful thinking. So if you surely want to study and get enviable results, you must know how to develop and use a study plan. A study plan is an organized schedule that shows precisions of how a student wants to go about his/her studies on a daily basis. I have had cause to advise my students to use this study tool and see if they will not score high marks at the end the day. Academic goals and a study plan go together. To design a study plan, buy a notebook at the beginning of every semester, write down your semester academic goals on the first page and then on a daily basis, put down your study schedules with timeline. In doing this, you must take note of the periods you must attend lectures and other university scheduled functions. No matter how tight those lecture hours and the periods for compulsory university functions may be, you should still have at least five hours that you can devote to personal study. I always hear students say they are free from one time to another. Hello! There are no free periods on campus for serious students. Agreed that students need to have time to rest; that time is still not free because it is meant for that purpose. What I am saying here is that you should plan your study in such a way that you will be guided on what to do per time so that you will not have time for frivolities and unproductive engagements. Though there are no strict templates for the designing of study goals and plan, the template below will be good for you to adopt if you do not already have yours.

Study Goals and Plan Template

John Morinho' Study Goals for Alpha 2014/2015

| <u>Subject</u> | | <u>Goal</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| ENG 111 | - | A |
| ENG 112 | - | A |
| ENG 113 | - | A |
| ENG 114 | - | A |
| ENG 115 | - | A |
| ENG 116 | - | A |
| FRE 116 | - | A |
| GST 111 | - | A |
| CST 111 | - | A |
| EDS111 | - | A |
| TMC111 | - | A |
| <i>Goals</i> by Brian Tracy | - | Read the whole book |

John Morinho's Study Plan for Monday August 18, 2014

| <u>Subject</u> | <u>Time and Venue</u> |
|---|--------------------------|
| Revise lecture notes on <i>varieties of language use</i> | 3pm-4pm in the Library |
| Read a text and take notes on <i>varieties of language use</i> | 4pm – 5pm in the Library |
| Do my assignment on <i>varieties of language use</i> | 5pm – 6pm in the Library |
| Read chapters 1 & 2 of <i>Goals</i> by Brian Tracy | 9pm – 10pm in my room |

You can see clearly from John Marinho's study goals that he is a 100 level student reading English. He has registered for eleven courses and has set a straight As goal for himself at the beginning of the Alpha Semester. Part of his study goals is to read a motivational book written by Brian Tracy. It must be pointed out to you that the degree that you will be awarded at the end of your programme covers both your academic learning and your character. So, you will also need to read books that will shape your character along the line. That is the reason behind John's decision to read that book in the Alpha semester of his first year. Having set his study goals for the semester, John sets out to draw a study plan on a daily basis in order to achieve the set goals. Although you only need to set study goals once and for all at the beginning of the semester, you may need to review it as the semester advances if there are new realities that may warrant your doing that. Once the goals are set, you must draw your study plan for each day until examinations begin.

- c. **Time Management Strategy:** in order for you to realize your study goals using the tool of a study plan, you must learn and practise the tool of time management strategy. It was Charles Darwin that said: '*A man who dares to waste one hour of life has not discovered the value of life.*' Just like money, time is spent, invested, saved or wasted. You spend time when you do things and you cannot see improvement in your level of productivity after some time, you invest it when you engage in what will bring you benefits in future. You save time when you are able to perform tasks in less time or with less effort than previously and you waste time when you engage it in doing what is not profitable. As a student who wants to make the most of his study on campus, you must learn how to invest and save time by avoiding just spending time or wasting time. To manage your time effectively, do the following: prioritize your tasks on a daily basis, have a daily-to-do list (this is where your study plan emanates from), break your tasks into small units, meet deadlines (especially in the submission of assignments, term papers and projects), avoid procrastination, ask for the help of others where necessary and pay for services that you are capable of paying for.
- d. **Textbooks and the Library:** The library is a facility for effective study on campus. There you will find textbooks that contain vital information on your course of study. Since you may not be able to buy all the textbooks that you may need, the library has become unavoidable. The library being a very serene and relax atmosphere, it is certain that you will benefit maximally if you do most of

your personal study there. Looking at John's study plan above, you will see that most of his studies are carried out in the library. That is how it should be for a student who has set a goal of high marks.

- e. **The Internet:** The volume of information available on the Internet today is amazing. There is virtually no information on the content of your course that you will not get using the World Wide Web (www). While the Internet is a good facility for effective study though, students must be very careful in using it. Many students no longer visit the library because they believe they can get all the information they need on the net. This behaviour is not good at all because it has turned many to lazy students, thereby making them resort to copying and pasting when they do their assignments. Copying the work of others and pasting it as your own without due acknowledgment is called plagiarism and is academic fraud that imposes severe consequences on perpetrators. You should also note that not all the information posted on the net is correct. This is possible because just anybody can post just anything without any review mechanism. So, as you use the Internet as a facility for effective study, you must apply caution by using it to complement the use of your personal textbooks and those in the Library.

- f. **Flashcards:** These are cards designed for students to jot down the main points of a topic. They are tools for effective study because they present an overview of the content of a given topic. How are flashcards used for study? Simply buy these cards or buy cardboards and cut them into smaller sizes and as you read your lecture notes and other reading materials, write the main points on these cards and keep them. These cards are handy especially during examinations. As a matter of fact, the examination period is not a time to begin to study; it is a time when you only need to refresh your memory with the major points you have noted during lectures, reading and study.

- g. **Study groups:** This is another tool for effective study on campus. No man is an island to himself. Students who think they can do without others always fail their papers. You should look out for study groups within your class and join one of them. In study groups, students come together and discuss a topic of mutual benefit whereby everybody contributes to discussions. By so doing they learn from one another. Experts have noted that issues that are discussed in study groups are easily assimilated by participants. Also, study groups encourage students to read well because every member of the group wants to contribute to discussions so as not to be seen by others as an unserious student.

- h. **Student and Lecturer Relationship:** You may wonder why this is a tool for effective study. Ask students who relate interpersonally with their lecturers and they will tell you that such a relationship is a big deal. Learn to be close to your lecturers to the extent of being able to freely meet them in their offices. There are issues concerning your study on which you will need clarification by your lecturers and you should not be constrained from seeking their assistance when needed. I do not know why the sight of a lecturer should scare a student. See your lecturers as your parents on campus, know their names and ask them questions. This attitude is a tool for effective study.
- i. **Tutorials:** Closely related to study groups are tutorial classes. The idea behind tutorials is to give individualized attention to students after the normal lectures. During lectures, lecturers present contents to students and allow for general discussion toward solving problems. Because of the largeness of some classes, lecturers may not be able to give attention to all the students in the class. In an institution of higher learning where tutorials are used, Covenant University for instance, students are organized into smaller units of between 10 and 20. Tutors are appointed to manage the classes and students are given ample opportunity to share their knowledge among group members in a collaborative manner. The presence of a tutor also allows students to ask questions. A student who wants to maximize his/her study should value the study tool of tutorials and participate actively in them.

There may be other tools and facilities for effective study that may not have been discussed here, one thing is sure: if you use the ones enumerated above, I do not see anything that can stop you from achieving academic excellence at the end of the day. You have been given the tools; it is now up to you to do the job. We are going to close this chapter by examining the challenges you may face as you study on campus.

Challenges to Effective Study

“A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner.”

English Proverb

In order for you to understand what this section is all about, there is need to distinguish between a challenge and a problem. While a challenge is defined as *‘something needing great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore tests a person’s ability’*, a problem in the other hand is *a situation or a person that need to be*

dealt with or solved (see *Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary*, Third edition). While a problem may look negative - although it also has a positive connotation in research and learning -, a challenge must be viewed from a positive perspective. In fact, only lazy students run away from challenges. A student who avoids challenges and prays against having them will not come out with flying colours. The following are the challenges that you may face in the course of your study and what you should do to surmount them in order to come out with excellent result.

- a. **Rules and Regulations:** Any university that has no rules and regulations is not worth attending. Some of these rules and regulations may be very stringent, making it difficult for some students to obey. The challenge involved here is that students are denied carefree life on campus and those who were used to carefree life before they enter university may find it difficult to adapt. Many students have had their studies truncated as a result of violation of set rules. Imposition of rules and regulations must therefore be seen as a challenge that must be faced squarely. If you don't want your studies to be impaired, then you must be ready to obey the rules and regulations of your institution. All said and done, those rules are not made to ruin you but to make you.
- b. **Peer pressure:** Peer pressure is not something you should avoid as an undergraduate. The students in your class are your mates and there is the pressure to do what you see them doing. Many students who were good boys and girls from home have been negatively influenced by their peers in the university, resulting in loss of concentration on their studies. You cannot avoid peer pressure, but you can purpose in your heart not to be influenced negatively by anybody. You should make a decision to always get positive influences among your peers.
- c. **Distractions:** Closely related to peer pressure is the challenge of distractions on campus. There are so many activities on campus that may distract you from your studies if you are not careful. If it is correct to say that all work and no play make Jack a dull boy, it must equally be accepted that all play and no work will makes Jack a failed boy. No matter how tempted campus activities are, you must not be distracted from what you have gone there to achieve. Study must be your priority at all times because that is the purpose for which you have paid school fees.
- d. **Finance:** As a student, you must be ready to face a financial challenge on campus. There are times you may wish to have money to purchase one thing or the other and the financial resources are not just available. As a result of this challenge, many students resort to stealing or engaging in other untoward conducts in order to make money on campus. You can surmount the challenge of finance on campus by just living a life that your means can afford. You do not need to eat what the children of rich men eat – food is food as long as it is hygienic and balanced. In the process of trying to live above your means, you may violate rules and the consequences may truncate your study along the line.

- e. **Insufficient infrastructures and amenities on campus:** No matter how the management of a higher institution tries to put in place infrastructures and amenities such as electricity, water, lecture halls, halls of residence, etc. on campus, there will always be room for improvement. In other words, you will not always get 100% satisfaction in all you need for effective study on campus. This, for instance, has always been a challenge in Nigerian higher institutions. However, wise students always make optimal use of what is available to get what they want academically. In order to still get excellent results from your study in the face of insufficient infrastructures and amenities, you should learn how to adapt to prevalent situations on campus and pattern your study in line with them.

Looking critically at all the challenges discussed in this section, you will find out that none of them is insurmountable. If you allow them to overtake and overrun you, then you will have problems with your study. However, if you can just face them squarely and not run away from them, then you are on your way to academic success.

Conclusion

To refresh your memory, the title of the chapter you have just read is *Element of Study Skills*. In the chapter, three major issues have been discussed. They are preparing for academic success, tools and facilities for effective study and challenges to effective study. On the first issue, you have been taught that there are two sets of preparation that you need to make on your way to achieving academic excellence. First is that you should make general preparation to succeed by imbibing some mindsets. Second is that you must adequately prepare for examinations in order to get high grades which are the hallmarks of academic success. On the second issue, you were exposed to various tools and facilities on campus that will impact positively on your academic endeavour. Tools and facilities such as study goals, study plans, time management strategy, flashcards, etc. were taught. Finally, with regard to the third issue, you were taught how to face and surmount the common challenges students of higher institutions have to contend with. These include those of rules and regulations, peer pressure, money, distractions and what have you. It is my belief that if you have studiously gone through this chapter and are ready to practise all the steps recommended, you will have a very brilliant story to tell at the end of the day. Thank you.

Exercises

1. Mention the three main headings taught in this chapter.

2. 'Success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation, there is sure to be failure.' Who made this statement and how will you relate it with study skills?
3. What are the two forms of preparation students need to make in the pursuit of high performance in the university?
4. Mention the three mindsets involved in the general preparation for academic success.
5. Briefly explain what 'internal locus of control' means and relate it with academic excellence.
6. State four proven steps you can take to avoid stress and anxiety during examinations.
7. Enumerate four things you need to do and two things you must avoid during examinations.
8. 'Give us the tools and we will finish the job.' How will you relate this statement by Winston Churchill to the subject of tools for effective study on campus?
9. Develop personal study goals and plan for the current semester and briefly demonstrate how that will help you get high grades at the end of the semester.
10. Mention and briefly explain five challenges to effective study on campus and state how best they can be surmounted.

Suggestions for Further Reading

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