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A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ACCOUNTING

The following study guide is a series of rules and suggestions which, if followed, will help you achieve the maximum results for your study efforts. Although there is no substitute for HARD WORK and a DESIRE TO LEARN, most of you can use your study time and classroom time more efficiently.

READING THE TEXTBOOK

1. Studying accounting is not like reading a novel or even like

studying history, sociology, or economics.

a. Each assignment in accounting BUILDS on previous assignments. If you do half-hearted work in Chapter 1 and 2, you may be confused by Chapter 3 and lost by Chapter 4.

b. Accounting books are condensed. Almost every sentence is important. Scan reading just does not work!

2. Read to understand "WHY."

a. This is a technical subject, it is logical, and it requires reasoning.

b. Strive to be able to say, "I understand why they do that." If you can understand "WHY" in accounting, there is very little to memorize.

c. Try to explain every new topic in your own words. Putting the new ideas into your own words is better than reciting the words of the text a hundred times.

3. Work problems to understand "HOW."

a. Even though you understand "why they do that" in accounting, you must be able to do it yourself. This is a do-it-yourself course.

b. To be sure that you understand "how" as well as "why," work the problems that are shown with the reading material. Don't copy the book. Try your own skill and then check your answers.

4. Remember "why" and "how."

a. Go back to previous chapters and notes to refresh your memory. Rework problems that were difficult for you. Try to work extra problems that are similar to the assigned homework.

b. Never wait until examination time to review your accounting.

The REVIEW-AS-YOU-GO plan produces better results, doesn't take as long, and saves all that last minute worry and sacrifice of other courses. The forgetting curve is the mirror image of the learning curve. You forget as fast as you learn

It is a scientific fact that information that has been forgotten requires that it be relearned, requiring the same time it took to learn it the first time.

5. If there is something you do not understand, prepare specific questions to ask your instructor. Some students keep a notebook of points with which they have questions. PIN-POINT THE ITEMS THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND. Don't make vague comments to

your instructor such as "I don't understand any of this material." Such statements are a strong indication to the instructor that you have made no attempt to try to understand, and will receive very little sympathy or help.

WORKING HOMEWORK PROBLEMS

1. READ THE PROBLEM! Read the instructions and scan the problem to see what is ahead.

2. Work the problems without "PAGE FLIPPING" back to the chapter.

a. When in doubt, look back at the chapter -- but NOT until you have tried to do the problem on your own. This indicates that you do not remember the chapter material. You are not prepared for an examination.

b. The "PAGE-FLIPPING" method is guaranteed to waste a maximum of your time and to produce a minimum of results.

3. Keep up with the class! IT IS EASIER TO KEEP UP THAN TO CATCH UP!!

A. Check your problem against the solution presented in class.

b. Be sure that you understand the correct solution.

4. Note the part of the problem with which you have difficulty and ask questions during the classroom session.

MAKE BEST USE OF CLASS TIME

1. Classes are never interesting unless you TAKE PART.

2. ALWAYS BE PREPARED before you go to class.

3. DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS. If you have a question, at least ten other students probably have the same question but are afraid to ask because it might sound like a dumb question.

4. Students who make FAILING GRADES also fail to attend classes, fail to pay attention during class, fail to have their homework, and fail to ask the instructor for help until it is too late. And when they do ask, it isn't for help. They go to the instructor to offer poor excuses for poor performance which the instructor has heard from other students over the years. Remember, when you start your career after graduation, excuses won't be a substitute for poor performance; nor will it earn you a grade in this course.

PREPARING FOR EXAMS

1. Be specific in your study; concentrate on the things which seem to be most important.

a. Note items that the instructor emphasizes in class.

b. Note homework problems that are assigned.

2. Do not stop with just "getting the idea." Be sure that you can work problems without the aid of the book. Practice by teaching the material to someone else. Study groups of two or three students work well for this purpose.

3. Every exam has an element of speed. Have your "hows" and "whys" at your finger tips. If you are slow, you probably need to study more.

4. The questions on exams approach the material from a slightly

different angle to test your ability to REASON AND UNDERSTAND rather than your ability to memorize.

5. When taking exams, many points are lost and questions missed because the student does not READ THE PROBLEM. This is especially true with multiple choice questions. Read what the question is really asking, not what you think or want it to ask..AVOID CARELESS ERRORS. On each exam, assume that you have made several careless errors and allow enough time at the end of the exam to look for them.

6. An excellent strategy to use when taking an exam is to quickly look through the entire exam and answer all of the questions that are easy for you. Those are "sure" points and help to relieve the pressure when you go back to work on the more difficult and time-consuming problems.

7. The greatest weakness in a student's ability to take an exam is to keep up a good STEADY PACE without the clock causing the student to panic. Remember, when you panic by constantly thinking about the time factor, the mind closes up on you and that ends any chance you have to do well. It is better to concentrate on answering only 80% of the questions and getting them all correct than to answer all of the question and missing half of them. Of course it is best to answer all of the questions and get them all correct, which is only possible if you concentrate, keep your composure, and maintain a steady pace.

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