

POWER

Learning

Strategies for Success in College and Life

2005 Edition



Robert S. Feldman

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2005
Edition

Strategies
for
Success
in College
and Life

Robert S. Feldman

University of Massachusetts—Amherst



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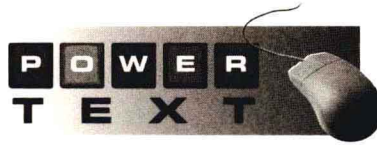
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- **Interviews** with local businesspeople or your school's graduates in which they describe their own challenges and successes.

- **Your course syllabus or homework assignments** are a perfect idea so that your students have everything they need for your course under one cover and you don't have to make copies to hand out.

New Chapters with the P.O.W.E.R. Learning 2005 Update!

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- *Strategies for Success for Student Athletes.* This chapter discusses the unique challenges of student athletes, such as managing school and team pressures, utilizing resources and understanding eligibility, and knowing when and how to ask for help. It also addresses special concerns such as burnout, dealing with injury, and hazing.
- *Taking Charge of Your Career.* This chapter helps students determine the best career choices that fit personal goals. It provides important tips on how to develop a career portfolio, prepare a résumé and cover letters, and have a successful interview, including follow-up strategies.
- *Continuing Education: Making the Leap from Community College to a Four-Year School.* Designed for the potential transfer student, this chapter looks at the pros and cons of moving beyond a two-year degree and what personal decisions to make. It guides students through the transfer process, including applications, credit transfer, financial assistance, and transfer shock.

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The secret to custom publishing is this: *Custom Publishing Is Simple!*

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- You select the chapters you would like to use from *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* with your McGraw-Hill sales representative.
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New Custom Chapters Designed for the Special Needs of Your Students

Three new chapters are available for your customized text and have been designed to address the needs of specific student populations:

- **Strategies for Success for Student Athletes:** This chapter discusses the unique challenges of student athletes, such as managing school and team pressures, utilizing resources and understanding eligibility, and knowing when and how to ask for help. It also addresses special concerns such as burnout, dealing with injury, and hazing.
- **Taking Charge of Your Career:** This chapter helps the student determine the best career choices that fit personal goals. It provides important tips on how to develop a career portfolio, prepare a résumé and cover letters, and have a successful interview, including follow-up strategies.
- **Transfer Strategies: Making the Leap from Community College to a Four-Year School:** Designed for the potential transfer student, this chapter looks at the pros and cons of moving beyond a two-year degree and what personal decisions to make. It guides the student through the transfer process, including the application process, credit transfer, financial assistance, and transfer shock.

All three chapters are supported by the extensive supplements package for easy integration into your course. Ask your McGraw-Hill sales representative about customizing *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* to meet the specific needs of your course!

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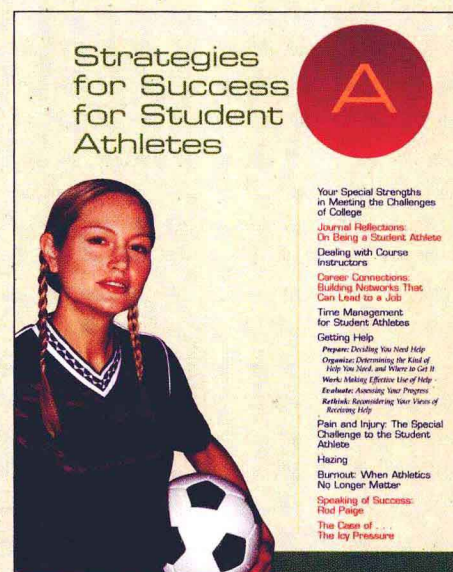
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- Trying to integrate technology in your class?
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Our team of experts, led by *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* author Robert Feldman, can address issues of course management, assessment, organization, and implementation. How do you get students to commit to your program? How do you achieve support from your institution? How can you evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of your first-year experience course? These are questions that every program faces. Let us help you to find an answer that works for you.

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- Using Learning Styles in the Classroom
- Keys to Student Success and Retention
- Creating Student Success Courses Online
- Motivating Your Students

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To my students, who make teaching a joy.

Preface

In the first edition of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*, I wrote about Mark Johnson, a student I encountered early in my teaching career. Smart, articulate, and likable, he certainly wanted to succeed in college, and he seemed every bit as capable as students who were doing quite well. Yet Mark was a marginal student, someone who allowed multiple opportunities to succeed to pass him by. Although he clearly had the ability to do well in college—and ultimately in life—he lacked the skills needed to take full advantage of his talent.

Over the years, I encountered other students like Mark. I began to wonder: Was there a way to teach *every* student how to succeed, both academically and beyond the classroom? *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* is my answer.

Based on the conviction that *good students are made, not born*, the central message of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* is that students can be successful in college if they follow the basic principles and strategies presented in this book. Once mastered, these principles and strategies can help students to maximize their potential, both in and out of the classroom.

This text is designed to be used by students in first-year experience courses. For many students, the first-year experience course is a literal lifeline. It provides the means to learn what it takes to achieve academic success and to make a positive social adjustment to the campus community. If students learn how to do well in their first term of college, they have built a foundation that will last a lifetime.

I wrote *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* because no existing text provides a systematic framework that helps students develop learning and problem-solving strategies that work effectively both in and out of the classroom. The book is an outgrowth of my experience as a college instructor, most of it involving first-year students, combined with my research as a psychologist on the factors that influence learning.

Judging from the response to the first edition—now in use at hundreds of colleges and universities in North America and beyond—the approach embodied in the book resonates with the philosophy and experience of many educators. *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* provides a framework that students can begin to use immediately to become more effective students. That framework is designed to be

- easy-to-grasp, logical, and compelling, so that students can readily see its merits;
- effective for a variety of student learning styles—as well as a variety of teaching styles;
- workable within a variety of course formats and for supplemental instruction;
- valuable for use in learning communities;
- transferable to settings ranging from the classroom to the dorm room to the boardroom;

- effective in addressing both the mind *and* the spirit. P.O.W.E.R. explains useful cognitive strategies and skills to students, while at the same time engaging the natural enthusiasm, motivation, and inclination to succeed that students carry within them.

Based in part on comprehensive, detailed feedback obtained from both instructors and students, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* meets these aims. The book will help students confront and master the numerous challenges of the college experience through use of the P.O.W.E.R. learning approach, embodied in the five steps of the acronym P.O.W.E.R. (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink). Using simple—yet effective—principles, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* teaches the skills needed to succeed in college and on the job.

Changes that Make a Difference: P.O.W.E.R. Learning, 2/E

Consistent with the extensive class-testing and reviewing that shaped the first edition, each chapter in this second edition has been reviewed by a large group of seasoned first-year experience instructors. Their responses, in addition to classroom testing and feedback from the many students and instructors who used the first edition, have resulted in some significant enhancements to the text:

Personal Styles Assessments: Every chapter now includes a new *Personal Styles Try It*. These self-diagnostic questionnaires help students measure their learning style or other personal style. Examples include “Find Your Time Style” (Chapter 2); “Measure Your Test-Taking Style” (Chapter 5); and “Find Your Problem-Solving Style” (Chapter 11).

Civic Engagement, Civility, and Classroom Etiquette: Increasingly important in and out of the classroom, the topic of appropriate respect and concern for others is now directly addressed in several chapters, including Chapters 1, 5, 10, and 12.

Chapter 10: Making the Most of Technology. From distance learning to using e-mail effectively, this new chapter includes coverage of word-processing, working and studying online, presentation and spreadsheet programs, and locating and evaluating information, both in libraries and on the Web.

Speaking of Success Interviews: These informative and inspiring profiles have been refreshed with several new faces, including Kenisha Creary (University of Hartford) in Chapter 3; Catalina Angeles (California State University at San Marcos) in Chapter 9; Naison Nayamatutu (Carthage College) in chapter 10; Ben Carson (Yale University) in Chapter 11; Sandra Marotta (Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, MN) in Chapter 12; Jerry Yang (Stanford University, co-founder and director of Yahoo) in Chapter 13; and Justin McCarthy (Washington College) in Chapter 14. (Additional *Speaking of Success* interviews, along with all of those from the first edition of the book, are available on the P.O.W.E.R. Learning website.)

Reorganized Table of Contents: Many instructors, especially those using customized versions of the text, requested that the most important (and most often assigned) chapters be moved to the beginning of the book. That has been done. Additionally, material on listening has been incorporated into the note-taking chapter, better suiting the approach of most instructors.

An overall streamlining and tightening of textual material. Every sentence has been reassessed with the goal of making the text even more readable and the vocabulary precisely appropriate for first-year students.

Addition of new design features. The overall graphic design, which was the source of considerable enthusiasm from instructors in the first edition, has been slightly modified to reflect new material and improve readability.

The Goals of P.O.W.E.R. Learning

Although *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* has been thoroughly revised, the goals of the book remain the same in this new edition:

- **To provide a systematic framework for organizing the strategies that lead to success.** First and foremost, the book provides a systematic, balanced presentation of the skills required to achieve student success. Using the *P.O.W.E.R.* framework and relying on proven strategies, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* provides specific, hands-on techniques for achieving success as a student.
- **To offer a wide range of skill-building opportunities.** *Students learn by doing.* *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* provides a wealth of interactive exercises, diagnostic questionnaires, case studies, and journal writing activities designed to help students try out and eventually *master* the skills and techniques they need to become effective learners and problem-solvers.
- **To demonstrate the connection between academic success and success beyond the classroom.** Stressing the importance of *self-reliance* and *self-accountability*, the book demonstrates that the skills required to be a successful student are tied to career and personal success.
- **To develop critical thinking skills.** Whether to evaluate the quality of information found on the Internet or to judge the merits of a position taken by a friend, the ability to think critically is more important than ever in this age of information. Through carefully crafted questionnaires, exercises, journal activities, and guided group work, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* helps students to develop their capacity to think critically.
- **To provide an engaging, accessible, and meaningful presentation.** The fifth goal of this book underlies the first four: to write a student-friendly book that is relevant to the needs and interests of its readers and that will promote enthusiasm and interest in the process of becoming a successful student. Learning the strategies needed to become a more effective student should be a stimulating and fulfilling experience, and *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* makes that experience possible. In short, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life* is designed to give students a sense of mastery and success as they work through the book. It is meant to engage and nurture students' minds and spirits, stimulating their intellectual curiosity about the world and planting a seed that will grow throughout their lifetime.

A Guide to **PowerText**, the Complete Online Version of **P.O.W.E.R. Learning**

The only first-year experience text with a unifying system for critical thinking and problem solving, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning's PowerText* now offers an integrated learning experience that combines the traditional content of the textbook with the media-rich environment of the Internet. The content is designed to appeal to all learning styles, as material is presented through integrated components including text, illustrations, photos, video and audio resources, quizzes, interactive critical thinking activities, self assessments, journal activities, research tools, and Web exploration exercises. You can access the online text by simply visiting the site www.mhhe.com/power and entering your password and username found on the PowerText card in the front of this book.

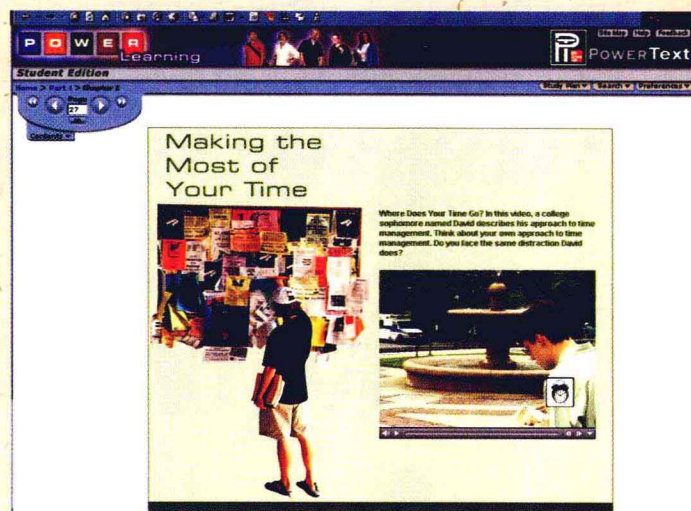
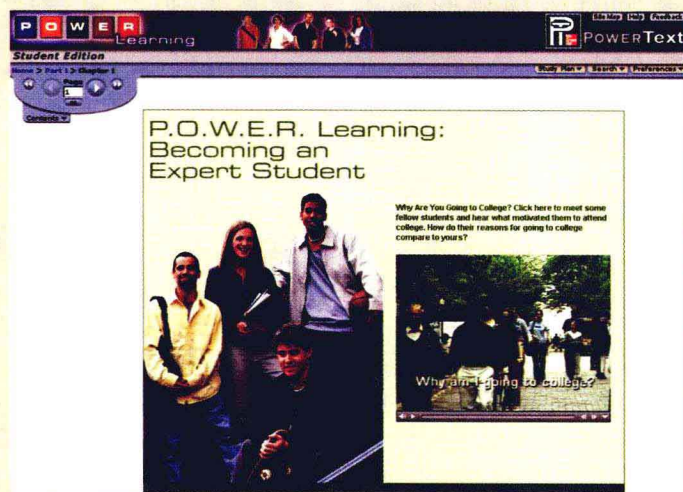


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Where to Begin?

• Chapter-Opening Videos

Each chapter begins with a short video clip featuring an inspiring individual, either a student or professional, describing life challenges and how the elements of the P.O.W.E.R. system help them achieve success.



• Chapter-Opening Scenarios

Each chapter begins with a short vignette, describing an ordinary individual grappling with a situation that is relevant to the subject matter of the chapter. Different chapters feature students running behind schedule (Chapter 2), figuring out a way to keep up with reading assignments (Chapter 6), or facing a long list of French vocabulary words to memorize (Chapter 8).

POWER Learning

Student Edition

Home > Part 2 > Chapter 2

Choose one...

Contents:

- Opening Video
- Getting Ready
- Assessing Your Learning
- Preparing Yourself for the Test
- Taking the Test
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy

So it all comes down to a test. That was the thought that ran through Imani Brown's mind as he got ready to start the most important test he had ever faced. Yes, he had taken tests all through his high school career, and yes, he had suffered through the S.A.T. to get into college.

But now, on the verge of starting his career as a high school teacher, he had one more hurdle to jump over. The state legislature had recently decided that all new graduates of teacher training programs had to pass a competency test before starting to teach. Imani had wanted to be a teacher as long as he could remember; he simply had to pass.

Although he was fairly confident—he had studied hard—he couldn't relax altogether. He told himself that he had always done well on tests in the past; he wasn't going to fail now. But still...

Looking Ahead

Although many tests are not as critical as Imani Brown's teacher competency exam, tests do play a significant role in everyone's academic life. Students typically experience more anxiety over tests than over anything else in their college careers.

But tests don't have to be so anxiety producing. There are strategies and techniques you can learn to reduce your fear of test-taking. In fact, learning how to take tests is in some ways as important as learning the content that they cover. Taking tests effectively does not just involve mastering information; it also requires mastering specific test-taking skills.

One of the most important goals of this chapter is to take the mystery out of the whole process of taking tests. To do that, you'll learn about the different types of tests and strategies you can start using even before you take a test. You'll gain insight into how different kinds of tests work and how best to approach them, and you'll also learn about the various types of test questions and strategies for responding most effectively to each type.

This chapter will explore how specific strategies that focus on effective test-taking skills can help you succeed in your college career.

POWER Learning

Student Edition

Home > Part 2 > Chapter 4

Choose one...

Contents:

- Opening Video
- Getting Ready
- Assessing Your Learning
- Preparing Yourself for the Test
- Taking the Test
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy
- Working with the Test
- Evaluating Your Test-Taking Skills
- Preparing Your Test-Taking Strategy

When he sat himself down in the front row of his biology class at the start of his second semester in college, Hill Taylor realized that something fundamental had changed.

In the past, Hill would have sat as far back in the classroom as he could. That's what he had done all through high school and the beginning of his first semester.

But then he received Cs on three midterms.

In a notetaking workshop Hill enrolled in afterward, he learned the importance of active listening and taking good notes in class. He also learned that one way to become more engaged in class is to sit close to the instructor.

Trying out the strategies he was taught in the workshop, Hill found—a bit to his surprise—that they helped. By the end of the semester, he'd pulled his grades way up.

Looking Ahead

Hill Taylor's move from the back to the front of the classroom was both a source and a symbol of his academic success. Hill's ability to take good notes was also likely to pay future dividends, because notetaking skills not only help produce academic success in college but also contribute to career success.

In this chapter we discuss effective strategies for taking notes during class lectures, during other kinds of oral presentations, and from written sources such as textbooks. There's a lot more to good notetaking than you probably think—and a lot less if you view notetaking as essentially "getting everything down on paper." As we explore the art and out of notetaking, we'll pause along the way to discuss the tools of the notetaking trade, how to be an active learner, how to think your way to good notes, and how to deal with disorganized instructors.

• Looking Ahead Sections

These sections provide a bridge between the opening vignettes and the remainder of the chapter, and include questions that allow students to articulate the chapter's objectives.

Let's Get Interactive!

• Try It! Activities

These highly engaging self-assessment sections include written exercises of all types and provide instant feedback. There are at least five *Try It!* activities in every chapter, and at least one of these is designated as an in-class, group exercise. Examples of *Try It!* exercises include "Assess Your Analytical and Relational Learning Style" (Chapter 3), "Take a Test-Taking Test" (Chapter 5), and "Work the Web" (Chapter 10).

POWER Learning

Student Edition

Home > Part 2 > Chapter 2

Choose one...

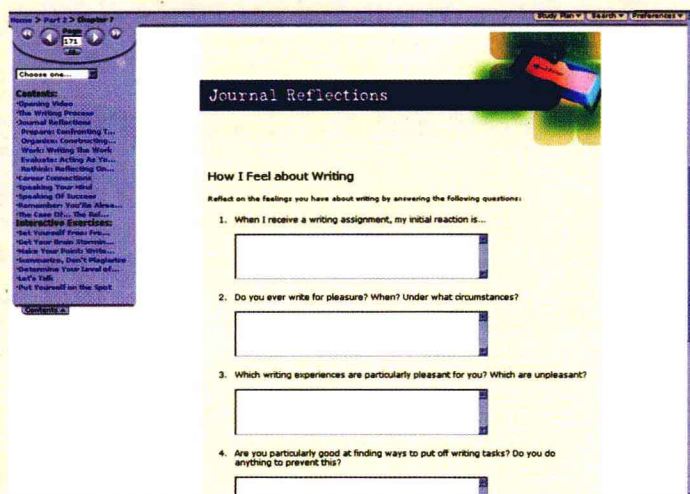
Try It!

Assessing Your Analytical and Relational Learning Styles

Consider the following pairs of statements. Place a check next to the statement in each pair that more closely describes your style.

- 1a. Before tackling a complex task I'm unfamiliar with, I prefer to have detailed instructions on how to do it.
- 1b. I prefer to dive into a new task, trying things out to see what happens and finding my way as I go.
- 2a. I like watching movies a second time because I know where they're going.
- 2b. I generally don't like watching movies a second time because I know their plots already.
- 3a. I prefer to solve math or science problems using formulas and directions.
- 3b. I prefer to figure out why formulas work.
- 4a. When I read mystery stories, I usually let the author tell the story and reveal the mystery.
- 4b. When I read mystery stories, I like to try figuring out the mystery before the author reveals it.
- 5a. I usually read the instruction booklet before trying out a new piece of software.
- 5b. I never read the instruction booklet before trying out a new piece of software.

Next

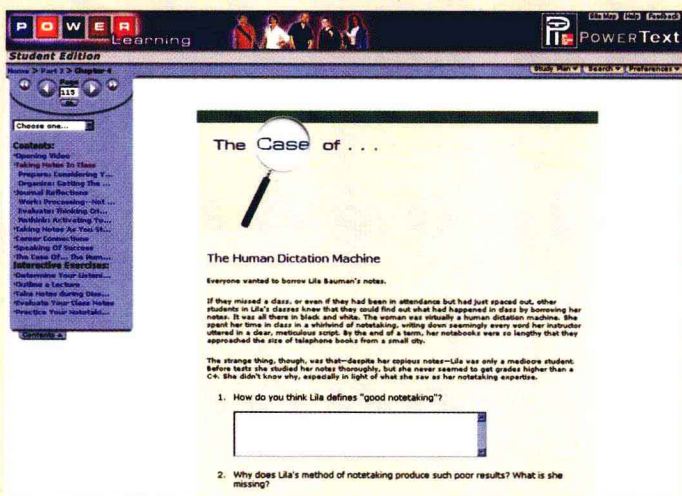


• Journal Reflections

This feature provides students with journal prompts that ask students to reflect on and think critically about the chapter content and about related prior experiences. For example, the “Journal Reflections” in Chapter 7, “Writing and Speaking,” asks students to reflect on their feelings about the writing process and the one in Chapter 13, “Money Matters” asks students to evaluate their financial savvy after performing a few simple but eye-opening exercises. Once students have completed their journal, they can either print or e-mail their responses to instructor.

• Case Study

Each chapter ends with “The Case of . . .,” a case study that invites students to apply that chapter’s principles in solving a unique problem. Case studies are based on situations that students might themselves encounter. For instance, the case study in Chapter 4, “Taking Notes,” describes the difficulties experienced by a student who writes down the instructor’s every word (“The Case of . . . The Human Dictation Machine”); the case study in Chapter 11, “Making Decisions That are Right for You,” describes an all-too-typical problem involving an apartment lease and roommates. Each case provides a series of questions that encourage students to use what they’ve learned in responding to these dilemmas. Once students have completed the case, they can either print or e-mail their responses to their instructor.



Making Connections



• Speaking of Success

Every chapter includes interviews with people who exemplify academic success. Some of these individuals are well-known figures, such as Bill Cosby, Rebecca Lobo, and John Irving; others are current students or recent graduates. Many of these individuals have struggled to overcome difficulties in their personal lives or in school before achieving academic or career success.