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LISTENING AND NOTE-TAKING

Lectures and Note-taking



Workshop Outline

- The rationale for lectures at university
- Being effective in lectures
- Active listening
- Taking notes and Using them
- Following up lectures

Lectures are one of the main methods of teaching

At university, lectures are used:

- to provide a summary of essential knowledge in a subject area.
- to guide your reading and research.
- to demonstrate how to do something, e.g. solve a problem
- to present a point of view or different points of view
- to challenge your thinking by presenting an area of controversy
- To stimulate your interest

Attending Lectures – a new skill (perhaps)

- Taking excellent lecture notes is an essential skill.
- high schools often do not prepare students properly for this
- effective note-taking is just as important as learning how to complete assignments or take an exam.
- taking good notes is especially important for large subjects and lecture sizes

Active listening

- is when you listen carefully to make sure you understand and learn the information that is being conveyed
- Is different to the type of listening we normally do, which tends to be passive
- In a lecture, listening actively involves:

Listening for the main point and major sub-points

- Don't just write everything down
- Listen carefully and make sure you understand what the *purpose* of this lecture is
- As you take down notes, keep the main point in mind
- make sure you understand how these notes are related

Listen for an organisational structure

- Unless lecturer is really bad, their notes are probably organised into some kind of outline
- Listen carefully to figure out how the ideas are organized and they will make more sense
- if an outline is provided, take advantage of this

Pay attention to organisational cues

- Listen carefully for words and phrases that reflect the organisational structure of the lecture
- Pay close attention to the introduction, as it will probably indicate how you should organize your notes. If the lecture begins with, "Today I'm going to talk about three ..." then you have a good idea of what's going to follow
- Listen for "signpost" words to indicate a transition for one point to the next, such as "next" and "finally" and numerical signposts like "first" or "third"

Listen with your eyes

- Speakers communicate information through nonverbal communication
- Watch the lecturer, and be aware of how they use hand gestures, eye contact, and other body language to convey points

Remove distractions

Don't tempt yourself! Put away the:

- campus newspaper
- your Sudoku puzzle
- your mobile
- anything else ...

that might be more interesting than the lecturer

Practice

- Learning to concentrate and listen actively is an endurance skill
- Make yourself do it, and
- it will get easier over time

The purpose of lecture notes

- After a lecture, it is very easy to forget what was said
- unless you have taken notes
- notes can provide a summary of relevant and important points on the topic
- They can be used for several purposes:

analysing the topic

- by thinking about the main points to include
- you are analysing the topic and
- producing an outline for your revision.

highlight significant references

- Your notes can highlight significant references to follow up on

Provide an individual forum

- Your notes can be a forum for your own thoughts and comments
- can reflect your own preferred style

Before a lecture

- Print and read any web lecture notes.
- If reading has been recommended ahead of the lecture, read it.
- Go over your notes from the last lecture so you can make connections between lectures.
- Identify what you already know about a subject, because this develops your ability to understand new material.

At the lecture

- Arrive 5 minutes early to avoid missing critical details. Usually the main point is presented in the first few minutes, and often the lecture plan is also
- Avoid sitting at the back – it's noisy!
- Begin notes for each lecture on a new page, headed with: Lecture topic, subject, speaker, date and, if appropriate, reading covered.
- Keep any handouts with your lecture notes.

During the lecture

- no need to write whole sentences
- notes need to reconstruct main points **and some supporting detail** with some examples
- note any repeated key words
- copy definitions and diagrams exactly
- adopt your own abbreviated writing style, e.g. you may use 'texting' language and symbols, acronyms (Australian School of Business = ASB)

After the lecture

- Go over your notes soon after the lecture when you can still remember it
- If your notes seem insufficient, try:
 - to fill in the gaps later from that week's reading.
 - make a list of questions /new terms and seek answers from reading, other students, tutor, and lecturer.
 - to leave a lot of space so you can fill in the gaps later.

To help you understand and remember your notes

- you could turn them into diagrams or mind maps
- Use colour-highlighting to show what's important
- Use different colours for different ideas
- In the margin, write keywords to help you skim later

For example, notes and commentary



Or a mind map



Or ... linear notes

Technol. can play import. role in corp. success e.g., Intel, 3M, Polaroid etc.
BUT most execs. limited management exper. w. technol. (lack intuitive feel for strategically directing & positioning R&D compared w. marketing, sales etc.)

Causes:

usually not trained in technol. fields

knowledge is new

lack of adequate frameworks

technol. change proceeds slowly but 90% US R&D activities designed to be implemented in 3 yrs.

most R&D towards existing needs

most US corps organised round production process. Technol. innovation seen as risky

Only 3 areas where technol. change routinely considered in strategic corp.

Only 3 area
planning

acquisitions

licensing area ...

Review notes regularly

- Discuss the subject with other students
- form a study group

References and Further reading

Rocker-Gladen, N. 2007, How to Take Effective Class Notes, Campus Life. Available at: <http://www.suite101.com/profile.cfm/naomirg>

Deakin university, 2007, Listening and note-taking in lectures. Available at: http://www.deakin.edu.au/current-students/study-support/study-skills/handouts/notetaking.php#take_notes

La Trobe University, Listening to Lectures and Note-taking. Available at: www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/assets/downloads/Listening-to-lectures-note-taking.doc

Monash University, 2007, Learning Support, Lectures. Available at: <http://www.monash.edu.au/lis/lionline/listening/lectures/index.xml>

EDU workshops in Academic skills – Session 1 schedule

Topic – Skill area	Date/ time [ASB bldg, West lobby G07]
Lectures and Note taking	Week 1, Thursday 12 Mar. 12.00–1.00pm
Making the Most of Tutorials	Week 2, Monday 16 Mar. 4.00–5.00pm
Presentations at University	Week 9, Thursday 14 May 4.00–5.00pm
Introduction to WebVista:	Week 3, Tuesday 24 Mar. 12.00–1.00pm
Time Management	Week 4, Thursday 3 Apr. 12.00–1.00pm
Managing your reading	Week 5, Monday 6 Apr. 12.00–1.00pm
Writing at University	Week 8, Wednesday 6 May 4.00–5.00pm
Introduction to referencing and academic argument	Week 6, Monday 20 Apr. 12.00–1.00pm