

7 Ways You Can Learn 10 Times Faster... And Beat The Competition FLAT!

By Stuart Tan

You know, many people have approached me and asked “how do you read so many books in such a short period of time?”

I know it appears unreal, but I built up my reading capabilities over time. But today, because you are interested to learn, I’ll show you how to eliminate the chores of learning, and enhance your ability to master what you learn in a shorter span of time.

Now, you know that I’ve spent most of my life learning how to learn. It’s called accelerated learning. Have you been to Adam’s website? It’s at www.adam-khoo.com because the guy who ‘stole’ www.adamkhoo.com wanted to sell it at \$100,000. Which I think it ridiculous. Anyhow, you’ll find that I happened to learn web programming, and did up Adam’s site all in less than 3 hours. It was a simple page, and I admit I DO NOT have any programming experience. How did I learn how to do something that some people consider complex and confusing?

Here’s my formula for knowledge building. I used it to create foundations for my reading capabilities, and when I mastered this, I became far more productive at my kind of work.

This is what helped me to learn about persuasion, sales, psychology, NLP, internet marketing... everything that you have seen me master, and you were the live audience for some of it!

1. Set a Target: Spend a concerted amount of time during a 3-4 month period.

Goal setting is extremely important in this respect. For me, I knew that I had important things to learn when I first read up about selling and persuasion especially

when I didn't know anything about it. So, when I learnt about persuasion, it was for the purpose of improving my knowledge and helping others to extend theirs.

I literally compress time and gather as much knowledge as possible and set aside a time frame to master the information put forward to me. Usually, this takes about 3-4 months, but I think most people should be able to get a handle on things with laser-sharp focus and discipline to master everything you need to know within 30 days or less.

2. Build your vocabulary for the topic area.

If your English is bad, will it affect your ability to learn?

I'm not 100% sure, but evidence points to the fact that knowledge is encased in language, so if you have a poor command of language, you may need to address that first before you can really create a spike in your learning abilities. Take some time, and create the learning potential by enhancing your language skills. I know a friend who lives in the Czech Republic who has learnt and is conversationally fluent in over 11 different languages and she is only 40 this year. The reason being she uses them actively in the various countries she visits and conscientiously spends time building on it by talking to friends in that language. Wanna guess who taught her some Chinese?

Anyway, when you start learning something that is very new to you, you may get confused about terminology. If you check, every single profession has its own 'language'. To be an expert, you have to learn that language. It becomes the foundation of your learning. So, where is my starting point? I take out a number of books on a topic area and start reading through the glossary to build my vocabulary. I even search online for glossaries of my intended target area.

Once I have this done, I memorize the information (that, by the way, is how I became familiar with internetworking terms like T1, T3, ADSL, blah, blah, blah... within 2 weeks).

Using that information, I go out and deliberately test myself and see if I can still differentiate similar terms. Often, I get confused because some terms look alike. I will test myself until I find that I can distinguish similar terms, items and concepts. This is known as *contrastive learning*.

3. Use confusion as a means to drive your urgency to learn.

Like we always know, some people are put off by confusion. I'm not. The more confused I get, the more charged up I become to learn about what the whole thing is about. It has driven me to stop, take a deep breath, then dive back into it again. I'm never satisfied with knowing that I don't know about it, especially if my goal is a meaningful one.

Since you already know about anchoring, you can use it here. Anchor confusion to dissatisfaction, and you will find yourself feeling more driven to gather more knowledge.

4. Gather information from various sources.

Nowadays, information is everywhere. Newspapers, internet search engines, news portals, podcasts... wherever you need them, you have them. But, you will always have to have a main source of information.

For me, I read the newspapers almost every day (at least headlines) so that I know what is going on. Failing this, I always go to news portals like Channel News Asia

and other specialty sites (www.clickz.com, www.emarketer.com) that are relevant to my needs and get information from there.

One thing I found out is that information is all interlinked. So, even if I am reading about politics, I'll always ask 'how does this influence my ability to lead or persuade?' You see, I can learn anything I choose by asking myself the right kinds of questions.

5. Read for facts, not just for pleasure.

I'll go straight for statistics, numbers, facts and anything that bears relevant information for me. This is also to help me become more credible when I am speaking to people in the industry. Knowledge, when shared, can actually give people value, and if you are the person to give that value, you will be very well liked indeed!

Remember also, when you share information, you make more friends. The more powerful the information (those that help people to make money, increase productivity, save hassle, increase pleasure...) the more friends you'll make! So, be discerning and find out how you can still contribute to the lives of other people simply by improving yourself and your own knowledge!

6. Multiple sources of knowledge.

I gather information from multiple sources. Books, tapes, DVDs, news columns, newspapers, books (did I mention books already), magazines, books... you get the idea.

With multiple sources of knowledge, I guarantee you will have to tussle with which one is more accurate, which one is the right view, and the like. So this is where you

add even more value – being an expert means you should be able to give an opinion about the knowledge you read or find out about.

7. Immediate application of what you have learnt

Give yourself a chance to apply what you have learnt. I do this by talking to people about what I just read 5 minutes ago. It makes use of my memory, and therefore, gives me a whole lot more recall-ability. I'll be able to pull out that information over and over again.

Sometimes, you just have to write things down. Occasionally, whatever that has been written can be used to generate new ideas and when you generate new ideas, you are also applying your knowledge.

I do this by asking myself where this knowledge will be useful. I play scenarios in my head and think of things in business, relationships, writing, money-making, consulting... anything and everything that will help me to bring my knowledge alive.

In case you didn't notice, I used NLP while I was studying psychology and linguistics in the university. They were related subject areas, and helped me to do cross-application from theory to practice. When I found a concept in psychology or linguistics, I asked myself "how might I use this in practical reality from an NLP approach?" and then formulate a new idea to test and see if it works!

The Next Step Forward

Does it give you a better idea as to how to improve the quality of your knowledge? Sure, it doesn't tell you how to read 10 times faster, but learning isn't just about reading. Learning is about improving your quality of knowledge building. All this forms the

foundation, and if you get the foundation right, you will be able to create more value added knowledge and be far ahead of your competitors who will use confusion and tedium as an excuse for not learning.

Set up a plan and an area you want to master. Most important part of the plan is to gather enough information from various sources and apply them as soon as possible.

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