CPR: A Strategy to Pump Some Life Into Your Reading
By Maureen Mischinski

CPR is a technique to revive your tired old reading strategies. It is a way to actively approach reading assignments to ensure that when you sit down to study your textbook, you will come away having learned something that you wanted to or needed to know.

**C = Check It Out**
Before you actually read an assignment, take some time to check it out. Looking over an assignment first will get your mind primed to learn the information. It will also help you to determine the best way for you to approach the reading. This small amount of time up front will have big payoffs in terms of how much you understand and remember in the long run. You can check out an assignment in a number of ways. Here are some options: read the title; read the headings and the subheadings; look at the pictures and diagrams; read the chapter summary; skim the first paragraph or two of each section.

**P = Plan Your Reading Strategy**
Once you have checked out your assignment, you are ready to play how to approach it so that you can make sure you will learn what you want or need to know. The first thing to consider is your goal or purpose for reading. What do you want to get from this reading assignment? Setting a goal helps you focus your attention on what is important. Next, how big of a chunk of a text can you read and digest at one time? Lastly, what techniques will you use to support your comprehension? Some possible choices to try while you are reading are: an extended preview; highlighting; margin notes; asking questions; mind mapping; outlining; taking notes; or none at all.

**R = Review To Remember**
Understanding and remembering what you read are two separate steps. Once you’ve invested sometime and energy into understanding what you’ve read, its a good idea to do some kind of review so that you remember it. It is most important to review right after you finish a reading assignment. Reviewing again 24 hours later and periodically after that will increase your learning. You have many options to choose from for reviewing. Here are some possibilities: reread the title and headings; summary writing; create a mind map or outline; reread what you have highlighted; read the chapter summary; answer chapter questions; create your own questions.

CPR is a very flexible strategy. You select different methods for previewing, reviewing and supporting your understanding based on the specific circumstances of your reading assignment. Your background knowledge of the topic, your interest and motivation levels, time constraints, the difficulty of the text, and the structure of the course are some of the factors to consider when selecting CPR techniques to use.

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