# Being Informed About What You Can Do To Gain Success in Testing

Identify type what you need for success!

1. Get an action plan
2. Sample Action Plan:  Mission: Become a professional nurse
   - Long term goal: Graduate CSUB and pass state boards
   - Short term goal: Pass fall quarter nursing classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Date for accomplishments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organize knowledge around basic concepts:  a. Describe fluids and electrolytes and their relation to body intake and output.</td>
<td>1. Review material a. from previous physiology as needed.  b. Read assigned chapters  c. Review material 24 hours after lecture on own or with study group  2. Study 45 minutes each day on current material  3. Relate material to clinical experiences as needed.  4. Identify your strengths from previous test taking.  5. Reward self for process completed after test.</td>
<td>1. Before assigned class  a. within 24 hours of class  b. At time as arranged with 1-2 study partners (Often right after class is most meaningful).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Obtain 90% on review tests of material</td>
<td></td>
<td>After test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Create a self-fulfilling positive concept of your ability and success. Check on your self-expectancy and how you can maintain it.
4. Recognize that failure is not foreign to most courageous people. It is a consequence. How you treat failure identifies the type of person you are. Do you make excuses?? Be honest with yourself. Pick yourself up and see failure as an opportunity for another chance. Correct what you identify was missing for success. Fear? Mismanaged time? Lack of concentration? Etc.
5. Are your reading skills up to par? How is your comprehension score? Get your results from your testing. Know where you stand on reading times, comprehension and math skills. Be pro active!!! Go to the learning center and get help, tutoring, or planning.
6. Memorization will not allow you to integrate the materials needed for test passing, patient care. Critical thinking skills are at a higher level of learning than memory and comprehension. (the 1st two levels of thinking). Blooms taxonomy include: Application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
7. Use learning techniques as acronyms, acrostics (On old Olympus towering tops etc.) ABC’s.
8. Write out questions YOU would ask. Share with other students. Use the end of chapter questions. Give rationales for EVERYTHING, not just answers. That way if the question is not exactly the same you can recall and work through to “get the answer”. Why is it this way? What would make it better? What
would make it worse?? Can I influence it?? How?? What would make it change? (Meds?? Position??) What would you see then??

10. Errors that occur in students analyzing questions:
   a. Incomplete analysis-read the stem of the question. Know what you are answering
   b. Know what level of the nursing process you are looking to answer. Is it in the assessment phase, planning goals, the activity phase or the evaluation phase? How do you begin to prioritize? Remember the ABC’s. Airway, breathing and circulation. These must be met before any other application for a patient care.
   c. Over-analyze, using data that is not relevant, or not provided.
   d. Quality errors- “Best response” means the one answer that offers the highest quality (or most complete) answer. There may be 2-3 “correct” answers, but one identifies a better response to the question.

11. Identify key words in the stem
12. Watch for the words “except”, “Not included”. You then are looking for a negative answer.
13. Eliminate choices you KNOW are incorrect.
14. Accept responses that project the professionalism and empathy of nursing. (We are not flippant, sarcastic, condescending, or defensive)/
15. Manage your time. Usually we allow about 1 minute per question. State boards do not allow you to go back to questions and you do not know how many questions you will be given. So be prepared to meet this 1 minute frame so you can complete our testing and state boards.
16. Make sure your answer is using nursing judgment. What do Nurses do in this situation?? What information do I need BEFORE I notify the physician? Calling the physician is not usually the best answer unless you have all the information you need.
17. Other ideas are to make a list of what type of errors you had.
   Did not remember material, did not understand, and did not recognize the idea, principle, or rationale. Missed a distracter, misunderstood a question, used incorrect rational for selecting answer, changed the answer.
18. Know what kind of test taker you are: One who hurries through the test and misses essential information, one who is so slow for fear of making a mistake you don’t get to questions you know, one who “personalizes” all their life experiences and/or uses work experiences as a criteria (usually a really really bad idea), or one who “over searches” all the stored information and reads information into the question or thinks “it is a trick question”.

And last but not least!! AVOID at all costs getting in a hole with your grades. It is very difficult getting out of holes.!!
Have some Balance in your day and week. Learning should be not just about informative and knowledge but some fun.

Bpulskamp 9/06
Adapted from: Sides, Marion, and Korcheck, Nancy. Successful Test Taking, Learning Strategies for Nurses, Philadelphia, Lippincott.