

CREATING THE RIGHT CONDITIONS FOR YOU TO LEARN

The **brain** now holds (almost) no more secrets for us! Thanks to research and progress in neuroscience, we can now understand **how the brain works and how to boost our abilities**.

Indeed, scientists have shown that our brains are **plastic** - that is, they can evolve, enabling us to **learn throughout our lives**! Let's follow the tips given by **Stanislas Dehaene**, French neuroscientist and professor of experimental cognitive psychology at the Collège de France, to facilitate learning ...

Controlling your attention

If we're not **attentive**, our brain will have **difficulty fully processing information** and, hence, **recording** it. According to studies carried out by Stanislas Dehaene, when our attention isn't focussed on an object, we are unable to see it! An accumulation of stimuli - such as noises, movements, or multitasking - makes it difficult to **concentrate**.

To control your **attention**, you can start by stomping out multitasking: our brain can only retain a certain amount of information at the same time. For greater **efficiency**, it's therefore best to do things **one after the other**. For example, don't reply to an email during a meeting: not only may you forget important items in the email, but you will also be unable to concentrate on what's being discussed.

Focusing on tasks one after the other will save your brain from experiencing an information overload.

Accepting your mistakes

As we've seen, accepting your mistakes is key to cultivating a growth mindset. And this is a point that Stanislas Dehaene emphasizes: it's by **making mistakes that you learn**. Unfortunately, error is often associated with punishment in our societies - like bad marks at school!

To come to terms with your mistakes, **take a step back** and ask yourself how you can use them to **learn**. Ask yourself questions about the nature of the mistake: why do you think you made it? Was there any information you were lacking? How will you avoid making the same mistake next time round?

Adopting an active posture

Taking MOOCs, going to lectures or, reading articles is great - but it's by **applying your knowledge** that you can assimilate what you learn more fully! It's true that we learn by doing: according to studies by **Edgar Dale**, an American professor and researcher in education, **we remember 70% of what's said and 90% of what we do**.

In real life, this can take concrete form through simple actions. If you're attending a lecture, for example, take notes - you're taking **action**! Have you just completed a MOOC? Discuss it with a colleague and explain to them what you've just learned. This will help you to remember what you've just heard and read better.

Consolidating learning

Do you know what the **forgetting curve** is? It's quite simple: our brain only retains about 40% of what we've learned after 1 day and 20% after 1 month.

That's why you must **consolidate your learning regularly**! Repetition is therefore key to long-term retention of what you've learned: it helps to **anchor our learning in our memory**.

Set aside some time to regularly **review** what you've learned - for example, by rereading your notes in a quiet setting, or by telling a colleague about a learning experience.