



Skilful teaching for enhanced student engagement in study skills

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Outline

- The importance of continuing study skills development throughout the student journey
- Steps teachers can take to make study skills more effective
- Harnessing 'peer effects' to boost motivation and engagement



Imperatives: teachers and students

Teachers

- Retaining students
- Achievement metrics
- Student well-being
- Love of learning

Students

- Completing course
- Grades
- More confidence & less stress
- Enjoy student experience

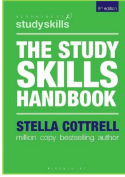


"Most of the students are just cruising! They are not going to fail and they aren't going to come top, so they don't see the point of pushing themselves."

Many students slip under the radar

APT-S Skills framework

A Academic	Critical analysis; decision-making; problem-solving; maths; creativity; synthesis; memory; reflection; research; writing, academic integrity, etc.
P People	Collaborative learning; team-work; communicating, dealing with conflict; group dynamics; negotiating; managing others; cultural competence; leading, etc
T Task	Complete tasks from start to finish; schedule; be organised; prepare; plan; prioritise; use criteria; strategize; deploy resources. For assignments, exams, projects, client briefs, applying for jobs, etc
S Self	Self-motivation; emotional intelligence; managing time; resilience; managing well-being; self-reliance; managing own impact on others; coping with change, uncertainty and set-backs; etc.



Ongoing development: why needed?

1. Increasing complexity and difficulty at each level of study
2. Longer/larger tasks and assignments
3. Increasing responsibility for others
4. Changing external context
5. Decreasing guidance / more autonomy



Objectives...

Engagement & motivation

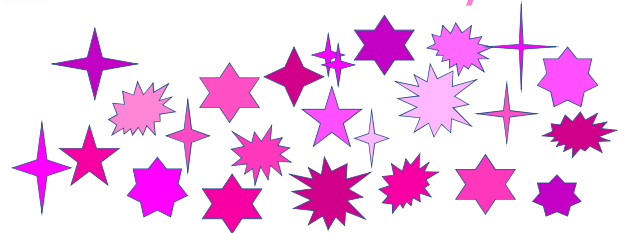
Increasingly sophisticated & habituated in applying a wider range of study skills

Consciously competent

Whole cohort benefit

'Cohort effect'

"All the students shine...they are all stars"



Successful classes: key differences?

- Bonded strongly: "On a journey together"
- Recognised mutual struggle & supported each other lots
- Appreciated what gained from each other
- Motivated each other; being in the group also motivated them.



Positive cohort effect

"What steps can we take to bring about such peer effects – by design rather than chance?"

We hunted through available research...



Peer effects amongst undergraduates

Positive academic effects: marginal

...sharing a room with a strong student.

Negative social impacts: strong

Alcohol, smoking, negative behaviours.

Sacerdote, 2011: summary of research to date



Research on undergraduates

- **Brunello et al. (2009)**: possibly a significant effect for engineering, maths and natural science UGs who share dorms
- **Hasan and Bagde (2013)**: Social background (such as caste) not relevant for positive peer effects from dorm-sharing
- **Filade et al. (2019)**: randomised sample of 116 Nigerian UGs. Beneficial peer impact on academic performance.
- **Cheng, C. (2020)**. Sample: 3000 students. Strong influence of peers from own social class.

Direct and indirect influence of peers

Cheng, C. (2020)

Direct influence of peers

Social capital of peer networks is harnessed as a resource

Indirect influence of peers can be through:

1. Role model
2. The power of group norms
3. Social contagion

The influence of peer networks?

'The driving force behind peer effects lies in the transfer of general academic know-how rather than in the teaching of specific knowledge or social proximity.'

Griffith and Rask 2014



"What steps can we take to generate positive 'peer effects' - or 'whole cohort effects' - by design rather than chance?"

?

How can we harness cohort effects to enhance study skills, motivation and conscious competence?



Starting places...

1. Bonding and a sense of belonging matter.
2. They don't necessarily arise by chance.
3. They won't necessarily last, unless continually nurtured.



'Hopes and Fears'

- Sharing anxieties and hopes (about starting the course) helps alleviate worries and...
- helps students find things in common and feel less isolated.
- Connecting to hope is a factor in success (Adams et al. 2002; Day, et al. 2010)

The recipe: 'Hopes and fears'

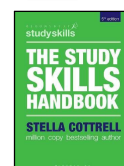
- 1) Mention some typical worries/starter 'nerves'
- 2) Share anxieties (in pair, then 4)
- 3) Group makes list of its anxieties (anonymised)
- 4) Share group lists (to class/larger group)

The recipe: 'Hopes and fears'

- 5) Discuss – and reassure (class)
- 6) Share hopes and ambitions (Pairs)
- 7) Invite contributions of these (to the full group)
- 8) Use the moment: promote mutual encouragement.

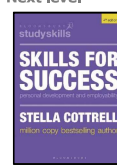
Resources for managing anxieties/stress

Starter



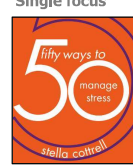
Manage anxiety: p 152-7
Nurture well-being: p158
Resilience: 162-163
Manage stress: 164-7

Next level

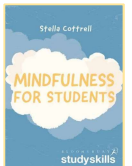


Hope and optimism
Emotional intelligence
Manage own uncertainty, change, distress, etc. etc.

Single focus



Lots of practical actions to select from to manage stress



Stay calm; keep things in perspective

Camping to bond new students?



Skillful (1), p.8

1 CHARACTER

The Birth Order Effect

Discussion point
Discuss with a partner:

1. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Are you a first-born, middle, last-born, or only child?
2. What job would you like to have in the future?
3. Does the infographic match the job you want?
4. Think about your family. Is the information in the infographic correct?

100% ASTRONAUTS WHO'VE GONE INTO SPACE WERE EITHER FIRST-BORN CHILDREN OR FIRST-BORN SONS

TOP CAREERS FOR FIRST-BORNS

- Government
- Information Technology
- Company boss
- Science

TOP CAREERS FOR MIDDLE CHILDREN

- Public Service
- Construction
- Teacher
- Police

TOP CAREERS FOR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

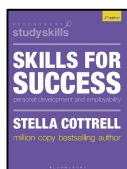
- Design/Art
- Sales
- Editing and Writing
- Sports coach

TOP CAREERS FOR ONLY CHILDREN

- Business person
- Information Technology
- Nursing
- Engineering

Helping students to get to know each other

Investment
in each other:
of time,
interest,
empathy



Lots in *Skills for Success*
e.g. Life chart/poster (p.52-3)



Learning about
each others' stories,
interests, needs,
values, etc.

Investment
each other



Lots in *Skills for Success*

- What kind of 'hero' am I? p.55
- Learning history: p.59
- Personal performance formula: 80-97
- Sharing goals, values, life metaphor, etc.
- Detailed self-evaluations, structured reflections, guidance, activities, tips

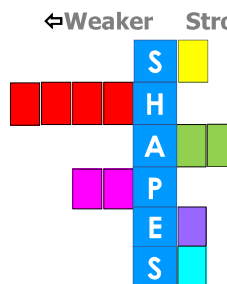
'Face the fear & do it anyway!' peer projects

Mock in-miniature
version of the scariest
part of the course

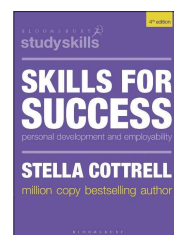
(e.g. the Final year
show, research project
and presentation)

- Fun angle is essential
- Early in the course
- Group/sharing aspects
- Celebrate completion
- Follow-up with in-depth skills analysis

SHAPES



- Skills
- Habits
- Attitudes
- Preferences
- Experience
- Strategy

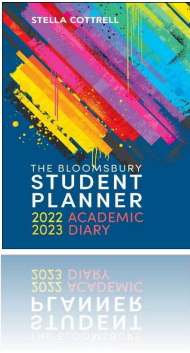
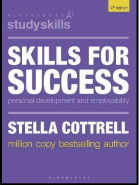


SHAPES self-evaluation (Skills for Success, p. 75)



Rate yourself: habits and attitudes

Habits	
1 I have developed a good routine for daily study	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
2 I have developed a good system for settling down quickly to study	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
3 I understand the conditions I need in order to study most effectively	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
4 I am good at putting those conditions into place	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
5 I study at times of day (or night) when I can think clearly	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
6 I plan my time carefully to make sure I have enough time for study	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
7 I use all of my planned study time effectively	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
8 I am aware of things I do that make my study less effective	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
9 I work at changing poor study habits, such as by using a habit tracker	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
10 I am good at managing potential distractions	⊗ 0 1 2 3 4 5 ⊗
Total score	



HABIT-SHAPER:
DAILY ACTIVITIES TRACKER

Month:

Inspire yourself to keep going by keeping track of key actions you identify for achieving your personal goals, accomplishing essential tasks and forming new daily habits for life or study.

Action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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Skillful (book 2), p.107

Study skills

Enabling good discussion

Include everyone
Speak to everyone in the group, not just individuals. Make sure that everyone has a chance to speak.

Listen to other students
Your fellow students deserve your respectful attention - just as you deserve theirs.

Build on other people's ideas
That's an important point you made, for several reasons ...

If you agree
Express your agreement: So do I ..., Yes, that's true ...

If you disagree
Express your disagreement: Instead of just rejecting other people's ideas, explore them: What makes you think that?

Offer information
Share your knowledge: There's some useful information on that in ...

© Stella Cottrell (2013)

1 These things were said during a discussion. Match them to the tips.

1 "Let me just quickly write that down."

2 "I agree with your point, and I'd like to add ..."

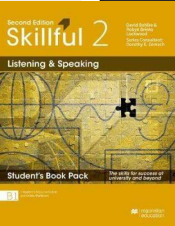
3 "I like what you just said. I've never thought about that before."

4 "That's similar to what I learned last

a Check that everyone can see and hear everyone else.

b Be open to hearing something new.

c Note down useful information.



Creating groups that support peer effects

Communicating as a group

Negotiate as a group
Good communication is essential to effective group working. For some group work, you will need to negotiate the following factors.

Access: How long will it take for members to travel to face-to-face meetings? Which forms of communication can all group members access? Do they all have home internet connections?

Group knowledge and skills: Do some students need more encouragement to speak than others? Does everyone know how to use the preferred app(s)? Do they all use Dropbox or Google Docs? Can you share these skills within the group?

Shared interests and understandings: Do members have the same attitude towards meeting up or using social networking sites? Do they share the same values for privacy, use of texting or Skype, or speed of responding to messages?

Setting ground rules
For all kinds of group interactions, it is worth setting ground rules for a group's communications, and renegotiating these as the group takes shape. Be clear for yourself what you would want addressed in ground rules. Select ✓ any that apply.

☐ 1 The group's staying focused on its core purpose and/or on the subject of the discussion/chat room

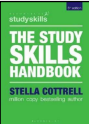
☐ 2 Use of the group's meeting time to arrange outside meetings or to discuss other items

☐ 3 Punctuality for logging in or arriving at meetings

☐ 4 Attendance, including leaving or logging off early

☐ 5 Contributing fairly to activities and

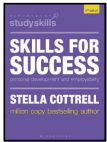
- Setting ground-rules (p. 175)
- Allocating roles (176)
- Enabling discussion (177-9)
- Dealing with difficulties (180)
- Constructive criticism (181)
- Sharing without cheating (184)
- Communicating (185)
- Etc.



ADVANCING
LEARNING

Developing 'people skills' as a study skill

...helps study,
and enables better
peer interactions.



- (Chapters 6-8)
- Active listening
 - Developing rapport and trust
 - Negotiation and persuasiveness
 - Changing recurring situations
 - Creating great teams
 - Understanding team dynamics
 - Managing team conflict
 - Contributing to the group



Skillful (1), p.80

5 CULTURE

Customs around the world

Discussion point
Study the infographic and answer the questions.

1 In which country is it polite to leave a little food on your plate at the end of a meal?

2 In which country should you not give the host yellow or red flowers?

3 Which customs are similar in your country?



Greetings

In Maori, New Zealand, some people greet by pressing their foreheads together.



Meals

In Colombia, don't begin eating until host says "Buen Provecho" ("Enjoy your meal").



Gift-giving

When invited to a Russian home, give the host chocolates and dessert items.



It is common in India for younger people to touch older people's feet to show respect.

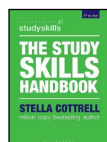


It's polite to leave a little food on your plate at the end of a meal in Italy.



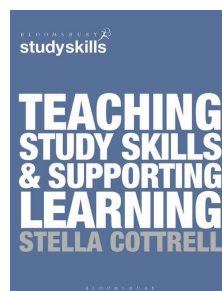
When invited to a Mexican home, give the host flowers, don't give yellow or red flowers.

Cultural competence and sensitivity



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Teaching study skills



Stella Cottrell, 2001

- Understanding the learner
- Supportive learning environments
- Induction and identifying needs
- Integrating study skills into teaching
- Study Skills Programmes
- Supporting individual students
- Study skills sessions
- etc

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Skilful teaching: harnessing peer power to motivate students

- Students need to build study skills at each level of study, including people and self-management skills.
- Strongly bonded cohorts can create positive peer effects, that support skills development and boost motivation.
- Teachers can help groups to bond from the outset... and make study skills engaging, fun and supportive
- Peer effects can help study skills development and, in turn, good study skills can nurture positive cohort effects.



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