

## How can we become self-regulated learners? | PATHS Self-Regulation Series

By the end of this video, you will be able to: describe the cycle of self-regulated learning and identify steps you can take to practice self-regulated learning.

Self-regulation is a skill we can develop and refers to the ability to assess and understand our internal state, including our emotions, motivations, skills and mindset, and develop an action plan or strategy to effectively respond to external challenges.

It's a skill we can develop that involves different aspects, including thinking metacognitively, or, thinking about our own thinking and learning, and developing mindfulness.

When we use self-regulation and approach learning in this way, we take a proactive approach to our learning and can more effectively and efficiently accomplish a task or respond. And, as a result, research shows us that our learning performance can also greatly improve.

An easy example that illustrates self-regulated learning would include constantly checking your comprehension. So, if you are reading or listening to a passage from a course reading, and realize that you do not understand it, you'd go back and reread this passage or listen to it again, and then question or summarize what it is that you need to understand or clarify.

We can approach our learning in a more organized, insightful, and systemic way, using the cycle of self-regulated learning.

The cycle of self-regulated learning consists of three key phases: reflect, plan, and act. Ideally, you should repeat this cycle multiple times as you create goals and tackle challenges.

Within the three phases of this cycle, there are different steps you should take.

First, this includes analyzing the task at hand before diving in and self-reflecting so that you have a good understanding of your internal state and existing knowledge that can be helpful to you for completing your task. Some helpful questions to ask yourself include: Do I understand the assignment? Have I completed an assignment like this before? If so, how did I do last time? What was helpful? What skills or knowledge do I have now that will help me complete this assignment?

Then you can start focusing on preparing, strategizing and goal setting as you move into the planning phase. This will help you organize your timelines, think about resources that can help you meet your goals, and spend some time thinking about potential obstacles or challenges when completing your task, and how you can respond. This also involves setting expectations with yourself, so – thinking about the outcome you hope to achieve. While you may be eager to jump in and start working on an assignment, going through the planning phase and approaching your assignment with forethought will help you stay on track and complete your tasks more confidently.



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The next steps involve implementing your plan of action and monitoring your performance as you work to complete your tasks. Monitoring includes tracking if you're meeting your timelines and seeing if certain strategies have been working better than others.

For example, let's say you developed a study plan to help prepare you for an upcoming exam. After a few study sessions you may realize that when you studied in the library you felt more focused than when at home.

After you have completed your task, for example, submitted an assignment or received a grade, spend some time evaluating your overall performance and the outcome you've received. Did you feel more prepared for your exam than last time? How was the quality of your work? What grade did you receive?

And lastly, reflecting on your experience is important too because it will help you identify your strengths as a learner and areas you can develop in, what strategies to revise or mistakes to correct, and how you can use these insights to inform your future actions. You can follow the, what, so what, and now what reflection framework to help you reflect on your overall experience.

As a student, going through the cycle of self-regulated learning can help you take strategic control of how you approach your coursework and goals, help you be better prepared and face challenges, and help you seize opportunities that might arise in university.

So, the next time you're studying, working on an assignment or going through an active-learning task or experience, how can you practice becoming a self-regulated learner using this cycle?

