The book will have special value for students, especially those in high school or college. It will also help elementary school children, though the tips should be read and explained by the parents.

This book is also for trainees or any working professional engaged in on-the-job training programs. It will help workers master their field and become more competent — and more likely to be successful.

"Dr. Bill, Memory Medic"

If your memory is ill, Dr. Bill is your pill.

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This review is from: Better Grades. Less Effort (Kindle Edition)

There is so much information available these days you doubt which books you should read. This book is one that you should read as early as possible. Learning how to successfully learn and memorize what you have learnt are essential skills. Better grades gives you a simple, easy to understand roadmap that you can use over and over again throughout your life. The return on investment of time, money and effort will pay handsomely in future years.

Many students take little time or thought to how they learn and study. Better grades shows that rote learning is not the most successful method.
Better Grades offers you the roadmap to successful learning with key points which include memory mapping to facilitate memory and taking a window of time for learning consolidation. Easy to understand and implement and well worth your investment in your success.

**At Smashwords:**

Review by: Alex Lopez on Nov. 15, 2012 : star star star star star

Surprised at how well it captures the readers emotions and manages to keep the reader interested in the book. Keeping in thought that you're usually reading this book to improve your focus and concentration this book manages to keep you entertained and several of the teaching methods including the pictures make this a gem to any student or worker.

Review by: Sharon A. Mitchell on March 20, 2012 : star star star star star

Excellent book! Dr. Klemm's style is reading, lively and interesting throughout. While other reviewers have recommended this book for college and high school students, I'd add teachers to the list. If educators knew more about these strategies, they could help their students acquire the skills to raise their grades without as much extra effort as they might think. Also, Dr. Klemm's book puts into plain language the current research into brain-based learning that educators are trying to put into practice.

This book will not only help students, but adults in their workplace as they try to keep pace with advancements in their field.

(reviewed within a month of purchase)

Review by: Mitch on June 07, 2011 : star star star star star

Excellent Book, for the motivated learner of any age. The information provided gives a clear rationale for why people in the US need to move past the mythology of 'talent' and move toward effort/practice/strategic learning to excel.
I used similar methods to good effect, but this e-book consolidates what took me years to discover through studying psychology, neuroscience, biology...too bad I didn't get to read this before my college career, rather than at the end of it. Thanks for the excellent resource and making it interesting and understandable--rather than some of the other info I have read that often comes off as gimmicky and does not present and research data to help validate it.

Mitch
(reviewed the day of purchase)

Review by: Gregg Young on Dec. 30, 2010 : star star star star star

“Better Grades, Less Effort” is a concise and compelling read. It is one that every high school and college student should read and apply. Dr. Klemm writes in a very readable style, covers each point clearly, includes examples, and includes the relevant research that supports his recommendations. It is information I wish I had known when I was in school, and it is still valuable 40 years later.

I highly recommend this book to every student about to start college. It is the perfect graduation gift for any high school senior because the techniques it teaches will help readers learn more effectively in whatever environment they choose next, school or the workplace.

Review by: Rod Harrington on Nov. 28, 2010 : star star star star

I've read a number of books on memory and its improvement. I've been impressed by the authors' feats and accomplishments. Now here's another one, different from the others. Better Grades, Less Effort is not mainly about techniques to memorize a list or a speech (although help for that is here, too)--it's about the science underlying good memory techniques: what works and why.

In compact form, the author points learners to what research has discovered are memory's best practices. After a class, when is the best time to review material? How effective is cramming in an all-nighter? How long should I study at a time? Should I multi-task or should I focus?

Valuable help is given about the piles of reading a student has to assimilate. How can I deal with it most effectively? How can I organize my time and my life to learn what I'm expected to learn?
What are the secrets of learning reams of facts? (A lot of help is offered here.) When I'm writing an exam and I know I know the answer--it's on the tip of my tongue--what can I do to access it?

The book is organized under twenty valuable tips. This is the cutting-edge of the science of memory for the person who is focussed on learning. The final words of the book: STUDY HARD, BUT STUDY SMART.

(reviewed the day of purchase)

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Review by: Health Colonel Publishing on Nov. 18, 2010 : star star star star star

- Easy - This Really Works - Great for Students and Adults --

These are very simple memory techniques that anyone can use. The author, Dr. Klemm, gave me in his book, Better Grades, Less Effort, all that I needed to start applying his memory techniques. Easy to understand examples, case studies and stories make this book an enjoyable read while improving on an important skill that we all can use at work, at home or in school. The author makes a point to prove that even the elderly can benefit greatly from his memory techniques. By the way, it’s also a great way to impress friends and your boss!

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At Barnes and Noble Web site

Posted November 27, 2010, 2:25 PM EST by Rod Harrington: I've read a
number of books on memory and its improvement. I've been impressed by the authors' feats and accomplishments. Now here's another one, different from the others. Better Grades, Less Effort is not mainly about techniques to memorize a list or a speech (although help for that is here, too)—it's about the science underlying good memory techniques: what works and why. In compact form, the author points learners to what research has discovered are memory's best practices. After a class, when is the best time to review material? How effective is cramming in an all-nighter? How long should I study at a time? Should I multi-task or should I focus? Valuable help is given about the piles of reading a student has to assimilate. How can I deal with it most effectively? How can I organize my time and my life to learn what I'm expected to learn? What are the secrets of learning reams of facts? (A lot of help is offered here.) When I'm writing an exam and I know I know the answer—it's on the tip of my tongue—what can I do to access it? The book is organized under twenty valuable tips. This is the cutting-edge of the science of memory for the person who is focused on learning. The final words of the book: STUDY HARD, BUT STUDY SMART.
Front Matter and Free Sample Chapter

Better Grades, Less Effort

W. R. Klemm, D.V.M., Ph.D.
“Memory Medic”

Published by W. R. Klemm at Smashwords
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About the Author
Web: www.cvm.tamu.edu/wklemm
“Dr. Bill”
Memory Medic
If your memory is ill, Dr. Bill is your pill.
Memory blogs at
http://www.psychologytoday.com/node/41570
http://thankyoubrain.blogspot.com
Newspaper column: Memory Medic

As a Professor of Neuroscience at a major research university and a widely published researcher, Dr. Klemm is listed in 19 biographical publications, including Marquis’ Who’s Who In America and Who’s Who in the World. He has impressive credentials and can speak with authority about how the brain learns and remembers. His analyses are esteemed by journal editors who have called on him to serve on the Editorial Boards of eleven scholarly journals and to peer-review on the order of a thousand papers for over 55 research journals.

Seminars on improving learning and memory are given to:

- Student groups
- Teachers, both in-service and those in training
- Educator meetings, state, regional, and national
- College faculty
- University administrator groups
- Cruise ship audiences
- Social and professional clubs

Dr. Klemm has been interviewed many times on radio and television.

*****
Acknowledgments

The ability to write this book comes from many sources to which I am indebted:

1. My parents, especially my father, who expected me to succeed at whatever I tried.
2. The Dale Carnegie course for introducing me to the notion that memory ability can be improved.

3. My 7th grade teacher, Miss Torti, who motivated me to be a good student (for reasons which were not so noble – see “gory details” in Tip #1).

4. My Bartlett High School Future Farmers of America teacher, David McPherson, who showed me that success was achievable.

5. My college professors at the University of Tennessee, Auburn, and Notre Dame. Even the ones who were not particularly adept at effective teaching still gave me ample opportunities to hone my learning skills during my nine years as a college student.

6. My college students at Iowa State University and Texas A&M University for over four decades, who showed me first-hand why some students do well in school while others do poorly.

7. My neuroscience research colleagues, whose publications helped me learn how the brain learns and remembers.

8. The lab animals and college students who served as experimental subjects in my own research.

9. Dr. Kenneth French, Division Chair of Natural Science at Blinn College, who edited this book.

A technical note: because this book is made available in multiple e-book formats, certain conventional formatting devices are not feasible. This precludes use of columns, tables, page numbering, page breaks, and indexing.

Why and How to Read This Book

If you do what this book says, you will:
1. have memorized all the key ideas of this book.
2. memorize any list up to 100 items.
3. be able to memorize the essence of what is on every page — by page number — of any short book.
4. be able to give a class presentation or speech without notes, and as promised
5. get better grades with less effort.

This book is for any student, especially those in high school, college, or in on-the-job training programs. It is also for elementary school children, though the tips should be read and explained by the parents.

You would not have bought this book if making good grades weren’t important to you. Obviously anybody who wants to make good grades would like to do so with the least amount of time and effort required. That is what this book is about.

Trust me, I know what I am talking about. I have been thinking and learning about this subject as an Honors student in three universities, at a time in my life where I wanted to have fun and still make good grades. Also, I have been a Professor for 47 years in two other universities. I have had ample opportunity to learn, from observing
my successes and failures and those of many hundreds of students, what works and what does not.

I am also a researcher and teacher of neuroscience, an interdisciplinary field focused on how the brain works, including how it learns and remembers. I have actually conducted memory research on lab rats and college sophomores. The principles are the same. Sometimes, the rats do better than the people. Unlike lab rats, which are really pretty good at learning and remembering, humans have a huge repertoire of behaviors and opportunities that interfere with remembering. Many of the tips will explain what I mean.

The other thing I have learned, especially as a Professor, is that most students think they know more about how to learn than they really do. In elementary and secondary schools, the emphasis of teaching is on WHAT to learn, not HOW to learn. By the time you get to college, professors assume you already know how to learn.

Most of the tips in this book are not taught in school at all or incompletely at best. This is particularly noticeable with college freshmen. Typically, they breeze through high schools because U.S. schools are not very rigorous and because students who qualify for entrance into premier colleges are generally smart enough to get by without learning much about how to learn. Worse yet, because they have been successful up to this point, they think they know all they need to know to succeed in college. WRONG.

Success in school or in on-the-job learning programs depends on recognizing the importance of long-term memory. Let’s face it: What good is learning if you don’t remember it? Studying for the next exam is an all-too-common mistake. This mind-set is often accompanied by cramming a day or so before each exam. Not only does this produce less-than-optimal results on the exam, it also prevents accumulation of competence that you can use in future courses or on-the-job requirements. Several tips will address this issue. So, in your quest for grades, remember what employers really want is competence.

It is so sad to see college kids get off to a bad start in their first couple of semesters because they did not realize how unprepared they were for college work. Most students eventually figure out how to get decent grades, but by then they have so blemished their records that the door has been forever slammed shut for getting into medical, law, graduate, or other professional schools. Hearts and dreams are broken forever. I know, it happened to my own son, and, as I said, I have seen it happen to hundreds of the college students I have taught.

My job in this book is to tell you how to keep your dreams from being shattered. The rest is up to you. The book not only provides the key tips and ideas but does so in a way that models what I am talking about. For example, I could just list the 20 ideas and explain them in any order. But one of the tips explained is the importance of organization. Embedded in that idea is to form learning content into small chunks of related material. Thus, for this book, the ideas are grouped among four themes, each with four to six tips.

- Attitude and approach
- Classroom and study behavior
- Memory principles and processes
- General lifestyle
Another tip explained in the book is the importance of associating what you want to learn with mental pictures. Thus for each idea I suggest a relevant mental image you can use as a mnemonic device. If you don't like my choice of image, make up one of your own. Then within each group, I “Tie It All Together” with composite story chains of the images. This is a very easy and effective way to memorize all 20 tips.

Where I Am Coming From

Before we begin, you might want to know if what this old professor has to say has any relevance to you. We are, after all, of different generations. But remember, I was a K-12 student too (back when teaching was not watered down so the poorest learners could pass) and went to college for nine years. And I have taught college students for over four decades. I should know something about how students learn (and fail to learn).

I first got interested in this learning-how-to-learn business from my seventh grade female teacher, Ms. Torti. She was a real babe. My hormones were starting to surge at that stage, and I developed a crush on her. To aggravate matters, there were jealousy factors: she had a sailor boyfriend who showed up in class occasionally. Also, there was a “teacher’s pet,” a girl who always knew the right answers and made the top grades. I decided I must find a way to get Ms. Torti’s attention by making good grades. So I tried. The more my hormones churned, the harder I tried and the more I thought about how to create and optimize an approach to learning. And it worked. Not surprisingly, I never got anywhere with Ms. Torti, but I discovered that I could make good grades if I thought hard enough about how to do it. From the seventh grade till I graduated from high school, I never made a grade in any subject less than an A. With only a couple of exceptions, that also applied to my university course work.

My next inspiration for improving learning skills came from the Dale Carnegie leadership course that my dad made me take when I was in high school (You may know how insistent dads can be about such things). My dad was a recruiter for the course. He got me into the course, and I learned the memory tricks that were a part of the course. I was pretty good at it, and they decided to make me a showpiece for their memory training at the meetings where they were recruiting enrollees. At the start of the meeting, they would tell the audience: "Here is the latest issue of Life magazine. Billy Klemm is a 16-year-old who has taken the course. He will demonstrate to you the powerful memory techniques that are a part of this course. Thirty minutes from now, Billy will memorize this magazine. He has never seen it. Yet he will be able to tell you what every page is about, in any order. Or, you can tell him what is on a given page, and he will tell you the page number." Sure enough, after 30 minutes, I had memorized the magazine (and I had NOT seen it before). The audience was astonished that I could tell them what was on each page or could tell them the page number of any page that they described to me. That's heady stuff for a 16-year-old. It certainly motivated me to care about memory.

And it paid off in high school. I graduated with a 96 four-year average, the highest in any school in Memphis and surrounding Shelby county. Yet I was not a nerd. I spent a whole lot of time with my girl friend, trying to play (poorly, by the way) varsity football and baseball, and serving as president of the school chapter of Kiwanis, the Future
Farmers of America club (2 years) and the high school student government (2 years). I was the voted “Outstanding Student” for two years in a row.

The high-school Biology teacher said my modest IQ score could not explain my good grades (my Ph.D. is in Biology!). I was called an “over-achiever,” as if that were a dirty word. It was predicted I would have trouble in college. Oh, really? This teacher didn’t know how well I knew how to learn. I went on to become valedictorian, an Honors student in three universities (including graduating with a D.V.M. degree and securing a PhD in two-and-a-half years). It’s not that I was so smart — I studied smart. This book will show you how to study smart.

About this same time, I developed an interest in becoming a veterinarian. Getting into veterinary school was (and still is) very competitive. Back then there were only 19 schools in the whole country and they all had smaller classes than they do now. The only veterinary college I could go to without paying out-of-state tuition was Auburn, in Alabama, which had a contract to take only 10 students from each of the states surrounding Alabama. So to get into veterinary medical school, I had to be in the top 10 from my home state of Tennessee. I relied on my memory skills to be the top applicant. As an example of how memory skills helped me, in my first year I was stumbling in calculus, going into the final exam with an F. My problem was that I was trying to understand calculus at a deeper level than my meager IQ could handle. Finally, I gave up on understanding and just decided to memorize all the formulas and the situations to which they applied. Come final exam time, I made 100. The professor said, "Mr. Klemm, I know you did not cheat. I watched you like a hawk, because I knew you were desperate to salvage that F grade. How in the world did you do it?"

Learning to become a veterinarian at Auburn University taught me a great deal about how to learn. In a veterinary school curriculum, students easily get frustrated and overwhelmed by all the stuff they have to memorize. That is why admission officers at veterinary medical colleges put so much emphasis on grades in courses taken in regular college. Typically, they want to see four years of grades (Auburn admitted me after two years of college). Many people do not realize just how rigorous a veterinary medical curriculum is. We have to learn all the anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, pathology, microbiology, and public health that human medical students do. We also learn and perform surgery on both large and small animals. Medical students don’t learn surgery. For them, it is a specialty they only get as post-graduate residents.

I had a good time as a veterinary student. I fell in love at first sight with my wife-to-be, Doris Mewha, and married her in my third year of vet. school. Our love sustained us both through the rest of school and for 49 years until she died.

I also indulged my personal interests, and still ended up ranked fifth in my graduating class. The few ranked ahead of me didn’t have much of a life outside of being curled up with their books and class notes. Many of my classmates were World War II veterans bent on making up for the loss of time the war cost them. The average age at graduation was 35; I was 24. One of the few students ranked ahead of me was Clay Currant, a Nazi prisoner of war. My room-mate was Jim Pardue, a veteran of the combat at the Battle of the Bulge. These guys were really serious students, not interested in using up study time in frivolous “Joe-College” activities. Meanwhile, I was Joe College, active in campus politics and writing a weekly column for the award winning college newspaper, The Plainsman. I used a lot of potential study time writing
columns about typical college-student issues, but also serious things like the Cold War with the Russians and the need for Auburn and other southern universities to admit Black students (This was 1954-1958). The latter articles got me called on the carpet by the Alabama State Legislature. To the credit of Auburn University President, Ralph Draughon, he told me the politicians wanted me to stop, but he would not censor me. Five years later, James Meredith became the first Black admitted to a Southern university. Soon thereafter, Blacks were admitted to Auburn, located 60 miles from the heart of the Civil Rights movement that began in Montgomery.

Another thing I did while a student at Auburn was write a pamphlet on how to study. It was so popular, the Inter-fraternity Council published and distributed it to all campus fraternities. You can be sure I learned a lot about learning since then, and hopefully it shows up in this present book of tips.

![Four Memory Themes Diagram]

**Attitudes and Approach**

**Tip # 5. Believe in Your Ability — But Make Those Beliefs Correct**

Belief about memory ability becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you think you don’t have a good memory, you probably don’t. But it is not just a matter of self-awareness. Beliefs about memory ability can be a cause of poor memory. If you have convinced yourself that such a weakness is inevitable, you may not do what is necessary to improve your memory capability.
Beliefs about memory in young people may be a special case. College students have some erroneous beliefs about how well they have remembered something just studied, as well as faulty predictions about the benefits of study. A very sophisticated and comprehensive set of 12 experiments confirms what experienced teachers have long known: students over-estimate how much they know and under-estimate the value of repeated study of the same material. This bias may apply to everyone, but this particular study was performed on college students.

UCLA researchers studied the reliability of people's ability to judge how well they had remembered something just studied and to predict how well they could remember if they went over the same material in several sessions. They asked the students to look at a list of word pairs and make two estimates: one a judgment of how well they remembered what they just studied and the other a prediction of how well they would be able to remember the words after subsequent study of those same word lists.

When asked after a given study trial to judge how well they thought they remembered, students' judgment of their knowledge was not confirmed by actual performance on the test. That is, they over-estimated how much they had learned.

Amazingly, students predicted little or no learning improvement would occur with repeated study sessions, yet they actually showed large increases in actual learning with repeated study. The change in predicted performance was about the same, irrespective of whether the word pairs were deemed easy or hard to remember. However, the actual performance benefit of extra study was especially marked for the hard-to-remember words.

Other studies have shown people fail to predict accurately how much their memory of specific learning will deteriorate over time after the initial learning.

Why does this matter? Well, it affects how well one manages learning tasks such as choosing the best activities to create lasting memories, as for example, students choosing how and when to study. The implication is students don't study as much as they should because they don't appreciate the value of extra study, especially for hard-to-learn material. They also don't study as much as they need to because they think they have learned more than they really have.

Is the problem that students are generally not as smart as they think they are? Or do they fail to study more because they don't correctly realize how much it would help? The ultimate consequence is students tend to study too little and stop studying too quickly.

The authors of the above study suggest these inaccurate beliefs and the negative consequences just reflect normal psychology. They do not consider that mental laziness could be a factor. Nor do they consider that this effect might be age-specific.

This may also relate to an observation that has puzzled me ever since I began giving seminars to students on how to improve their memory. Students have not been as interested in what I had to say as I expected. At one university where I recently gave a well-advertised talk on how to improve memory, only one student showed up and he was an Army veteran. Everybody else was faculty. Older adults, in general, seem to realize they need to work on their memory. I don't know if typical college students tend to think they are either just fine or whether they believe memory ability can't be improved. Either view is wrong.
A related matter is students don't appreciate the value of testing in enhancing memory. Frequent testing is not appreciated. Pop quizzing may trigger a stampede to complain to the Dean. Testing is a good thing. It forces retrieval of stored information and retrieval is a strong rehearsal process that reinforces the memory. The sad paradox is that professors who try to help students learn by means of frequent exams and pop quizzes are considered sadistic.

Students tend to study too little and stop studying too quickly.

One educational fad today is the self-esteem movement. While self-esteem is important for learning, it is a limited facet of the range of emotions that affect learning. Belief in one’s ability to become competent is a key for learning success. Teachers at all levels know motivation is the most important requirement for learning (see Tip #1). Unfortunately, too many children never get enough positive reinforcement as they go through learning processes. “I can't do this” and "I'm not good at this" are common statements that turned-off students make. They don’t learn, because they don’t even try. They don’t try, because they have come to expect failure. Such thoughts arise out of disturbed emotions involving confusion, frustration, and lack of confidence.

We will never successfully reform public school education until we have helped students to overcome the obstacles created by negative attitudes and emotions. What passes for educational reform these days is doomed to failure until we find ways to improve the attitudes and emotions of students. A large part of the bad attitudes and emotions come from dysfunctional family life (remember, many children are born to teenage mothers ill equipped to raise children. Depending on the local school, some one-half to two-thirds of the children are born out of wedlock. Divorce is devastating to children, and in the U.S. 50% percent of first marriages end in divorce, while the rate is 67% of second and 74% of third marriages. You can’t expect schools to compensate for the damage this does to child attitudes and emotions.

Educational reform efforts have emphasized teaching more information and facts and putting more emphasis on glitzy presentations via television and computers. But little has been accomplished in improving the learning process. When teachers present material to the class, it is usually in a polished, “spoon feeding” form that omits the natural steps of making mistakes (feeling confused), recovering from them (overcoming frustration), objectively assessing what went wrong (not becoming dispirited), and starting over again. Thus, students are not given the chance to experience and learn healthy emotional responses to learning that come from victory over confusion, frustration, and loss of spirit and enthusiasm. How can we expect them to earn confidence in their ability to learn?

Learning naturally involves failure, which can lead to a host of associated emotional responses. Effective learners have core emotional competencies that assist learning. One underused use of computers is to use them as learning “companions” that stimulate the child’s motivation for learning with questions or feedback and by detecting and responding to the child’s emotional reactions, such as signs of frustration and boredom or pleasure. A companion is not a tutor that knows all the answers, but a friend who helps learning to occur. Children are motivated by learning success to seek the positive reinforcement of more learning success.
So the point is that teachers need to put more emphasis on teaching students how to cultivate their emotions in ways that nurture learning. These positive emotions include a sense of awe, wonder, excitement, hopefulness, personal satisfaction and confidence.

*Children are motivated by learning success to seek the positive reinforcement of more learning success.*

This phenomenon has been well documented for older people. A recent study of memory in the elderly provides strong evidence that stereotypical beliefs about losing memory with age may actually cause poor memory and conversely, changing beliefs changes memory ability.

Earlier investigators had noticed that older people do NOT have poor memories if they live in cultures (such as China) where the elderly are considered wise. Picking up on this theme, a Harvard University researcher studied 90 people, age 60 or older, and found he could change their memory task performance by manipulating their beliefs about their own memory skills.

The manipulation involved creating a bias about memory ability. Subjects viewed a list of about 50 words that either represented senile behaviors (absent-minded, etc.) or represented “wise” behaviors (“sees all sides of issues,” etc.). The lists were presented on a computer screen, and the subjects were asked to notice whether a flash occurred above or below a bull’s eye that they were to focus on. Subjects were to signal the location of the flash as soon as they could with a computer key press. The rate of stimulus presentation was slow enough to allow the subliminal messages to be encoded but fast enough to keep them from being registered consciously. This was a way for the experimenter to make the biasing subliminal and implicit.

Before and after the intervention, subjects were given three different kinds of memory tests that are known to assess the kinds of memory decline that occur in old age.

Test results revealed a correspondence between memory performance and the conditioned bias. Compared with their pre-test memory scores, post-test scores increased in the group that was primed with words signifying wisdom and were lower in the group that was primed with words suggesting senility.

In any case, it was clear that implicit priming with positive verbal images of old age was effective, despite the fact that all the priming was done in one training session. The implications for real-world memory performance seem clear. If we truly believe that we can remember well, maybe we can! Believing makes it so. More correctly, believing motivates us to do the things that will make it so.

*Image Mnemonic:*
Imagine a kitty cat looking in the mirror. But what it sees is a lion! Do the same yourself. Think big, think success. Expect success. Then do what it takes.
Be positive. Believe in your ability to achieve.