

Buzan Memory and How it Works

Learn to learn, using the most advanced strategies available
- Those developed by Tony Buzan.

The Memory Principles

The principles for perfect memory laid down by the Greeks fit in easily with the information recently discovered about the left and right cortex. Without a scientific basis, the Greeks realised that in order to remember well, you have to use every aspect of your mind and include in your associated and linked mental landscape the following twelve memory principles which can be remembered with the mnemonic of the initial letters, **SMASHIN' SCOPE**.

1. **Synaesthesia/Sensuality** – Synaesthesia refers to the blending of the senses. Most of the great natural memorisers and all of the great mnemonists developed an increased sensitivity in each of their senses and then blended these senses to produce enhanced recall. In developing the memory it was found to be essential to sensitise increasingly and train regularly your senses of: Visions / Hearing / Smell / Taste / Touch / Kinaesthesia – your awareness bodily position and movement in space.
2. **Movement** – In any mnemonic image, movement adds another giant range of possibilities for your brain to “link in” and thus remember. As your images move, make them three-dimensional. As a subdivision of movement, use rhythms in your memory images. The more rhythms and variation of rhythm in your mental picture, the more they will be outstanding and thus the more they will be remembered.
3. **Association** – Whatever you wish to memorise, make sure you associate or link it with something stable in your mental environment.
4. **Sexuality** – We all have a good memory in this area. Use it!
5. **Humour** – The funnier, more ridiculous, absurd and surreal you make images the more outstandingly memorable they will be. Have fun with your memory.
6. **Imagination** – This is the powerhouse of your memory, Einstein said “Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.” The more you apply your vivid imagination to memory, the better your memory will be. (Memory Foundation)
7. **Numbers** – Numbering adds specificity and efficiency to the principle of order and sequence.
8. **Symbolism** – Substituting a more meaningful image for a normal, boring or abstract concept increases the probability of recall, or using traditional symbols e.g. stop sign or light bulb.
9. **Colour** – Whenever possible, use the full range of the rainbow (ideally vibrant/highlighter), to make your ideas more colourful and therefore more memorable.
10. **Order and/or Sequence** – In combinations with other principles, order and/or sequence allows for much more immediate reference, and increases the brain’s possibilities for ‘random access’. Examples are little to big, colour grouping, sorting by category.
11. **Positive Images** – In most instances positive and pleasant images are found to be better for memory purposes, because they made the brain want to return to the images. Certain negative images, even though applying all the principles above, and though in and of themselves ‘memorable’ could be blocked by the brain because it found the prospect of returning to such images unpleasant.
12. **Exaggeration** – In all your images exaggerate size (large and small), shape and sound and therefore memorability.

Excerpts from Use Your Memory by Tony Buzan

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