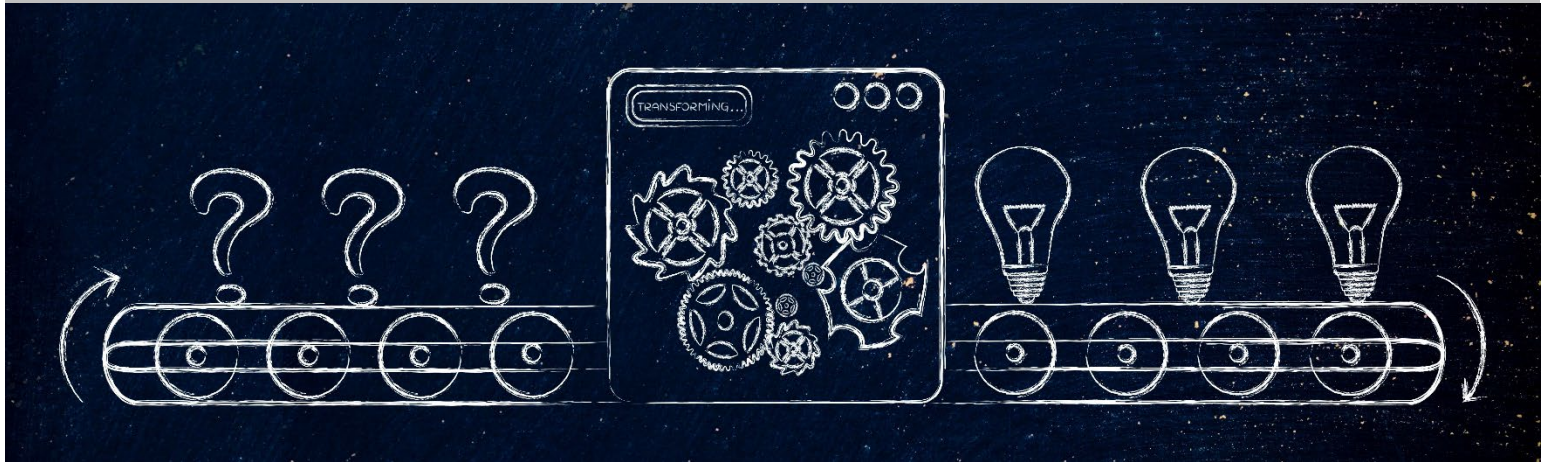# Elaboration

What is it and why do I care?

Elaboration is taking key pieces of what you're going to be learning (or are learning) and expanding on it with specific details. Those details may come from creating a story, identifying an analogy, creating a phrase or mnemonic, asking curious questions, or connecting the information to established memories or experiences in your everyday life.

When you connect information through elaboration, you take stress off your working memory by giving your brain one key thing to remember (LEAN to recall "lidocaine, epinephrine, atropine sulfate, and Narcan" – drugs a nurse can *lean* on in an emergency) or tying new information to something that's already well established in your brain (how your friend with diabetes looked and acted when their blood sugar got low). These elaboration techniques help you be more efficient at processing the information you need to understand for a test, an assignment, and ultimately your career.

How do I use it?

Use the following elaboration strategies to help you to focus on critical knowledge. Pick what works best for the information you're studying and the way your brain works:

Phrases or Example Connection

Use a phrase or an example from the world around you.
EX: "To help you efficiently and effectively care for a patient remember '**A D**elicious **PIE**' - Assessment, Diagnosis, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation."

Analogy or Simile Connection

Use an analogy or simile to connect the information you are learning.
EX: "Blood pressure is like a garden hose or pipe. Both have a level of pump, volume, and squeeze".

Relationship Connection

Relate information you are learning to something similar in real life.
EX: "Photosynthesis is where plants take carbon dioxide and make oxygen. A human, like me, takes in oxygen and produces carbon dioxide. This is a reason we need plants and trees!"

Elaborative Interrogation (also great for Active Recall study questions)

Question the information you are learning so you can better retain data.
EX: "I need to learn about urinary tract infections. What are the risk factors? How do they manifest? What steps are used to diagnose it? How does the pathophysiology present? Why is this important?"

Video Resources

https://youtu.be/IX0rxQ_1K0w   https://youtu.be/gQRzW24KrDc   https://youtu.be/A_0yvNrW-tM