

Applying Activator Talents in Academics

These insights and action ideas can help you apply Activator talents to achieve in various aspects of your academic life.

General Academic Life

- Initiate classroom discussions. Suggest topics. Take sides in debates. Help your fellow students learn faster and learn more.
- Find the answers to questions that you anticipate the instructor will ask on upcoming tests and quizzes.
- Instigate conversations with your peers outside the classroom. Center these on topics related to a recent lecture given by your instructor or a visiting professor.
- Take charge of small-group conversations, projects, presentations, and experiments. Distinguish yourself by transforming plans into tangible results.
- Waste no time finishing the first draft of a writing assignment. Immediately seek feedback from a teaching assistant or your professor. Incorporate some of their constructive suggestions in your second draft.

Study Techniques

- Lead study groups. Participate in the life of the mind. Urge members to share their best ideas. Give timid individuals permission to explore topics, raise questions, and work on projects.
- Jot down one or two key thoughts as you read an article, story, or the directions from a project. Use these insights to shape the group's discussions.
- Draw quiet individuals into conversations, debates, planning, and discussions. Call on them by name. Probe when they respond to questions with one- or two-word answers.
- Read ahead to prepare for class lectures. Compose two or three questions not offered in the textbook to ask your instructor. Intentionally change the classroom atmosphere from one of passive listening to active participation.
- Stay physically active to remain mentally engaged in your studies. Eat. Pace. Take breaks to stretch. Test your ideas with your study group. Press for their honest opinions.

Relationships

- Surround yourself with individuals who are restless to start working on projects and assignments. Associate with people who welcome and respond to your directives.
- Identify classmates who automatically know when the time for planning has expired and the time for action has arrived.
- Initiate conversations with professors outside the classroom. Make appointments with them to confirm expectations, clarify course requirements, and establish deadlines.
- Volunteer to chair group discussions, facilitate brainstorming sessions, or spearhead projects. Observe your classmates' relief at not having to be in charge.

Class Selection

- Choose a major field of study about which you are passionate. Realize your success hinges on your being fully engaged. Opt for courses that involve hands-on activities, lively verbal exchanges, and interesting experiments.
- Check the course syllabus for information about projects, field trips, extra reading, and independent study options. Avoid classes that restrict your pace and methods. Honor your need for speedy results and changes of pace.
- Attack your assignments immediately. Refuse to procrastinate. Turn in your work ahead of schedule. Enjoy the satisfaction of being done. Analyze how you avoid the pitfalls of "analysis paralysis" and excessive preparation.
- Persuade your professor to give you permission to invent your own assignments with the understanding that they must satisfy the course requirements and learning objectives.

Extracurricular Activities

- Join clubs and try out for athletic teams with jam-packed rosters of events. Avoid groups with a reputation for meeting a lot but accomplishing very little.
- Volunteer for activities such as constructing a Habitat for Humanity® house, serving as a Big Brother or Big Sister, acting in community theatre productions, conducting nature walks, running to raise funds for worthwhile causes, or coaching a youth team.
- Be the change agent for a stalled project. Study the original action plan. Determine why momentum was lost. Convince group members they can put the undertaking back on course. Recruit several energetic individuals to help implement the new initiative.
- Campaign for an office in campus government. Influence potential voters to cast their ballots for you.