

How to Learn PDR Like a Genius

Leonardo DaVinci* was a genius. A visionary. Much of the technology of today he saw in advance five hundred years ago.

The Mona Lisa is but one example of his many works of art we still treasure today. But his real genius was found in his journal, or book of notes.

He was an avid note taker. A scribbler to some who saw them, a doodler to others. Yes, his notes contained both.

This combination of writing and pictures is powerful for you in learning paintless dent repair.

How, you say? On first glance, this would seem crazy. For where do you write and where do you draw when fixing a dent?

You are right, you don't. Let's come back to the words and pictures in a moment.

First, let me ask you this. You ever find yourself hesitant to start pushing? How about getting diverted by another task as you walk towards the car?
Happens to me on a daily basis.

Picture this. A car with a dent, an easy one, fifteen minutes work, 75 bucks to me when done. As I set up, I notice a screw loose on my light. Hmmmm.

Now I'm off hunting for a screwdriver to fix it. Screw is tightened, good. But now my attention is drawn to the lens cover. Wasn't I going to spray a new one? I wonder if a new stripe combination might work for this?

Two hours later, I still haven't started the 15 minute dent. What happened?

I got derailed.
How?

This question is dangerous because it makes us want to rationalize our actions. We want to be right. These excuses are often so good, I'd soon have you thinking the same and right there with me fixing a new light cover.

But if you caught it, you are wise indeed. If you didn't, still OK, but once you see it, you won't let me get away with it again. The trick here is spotting nonsense. Not just others, but your own.

Putting off the important work of making money is never really justifiable. In fact it is nonsense, and you can call me out for trying to trick me and you.

Procrastination really is the enemy of the entrepreneur. So why do it?
Why do we get derailed so easily?

Because our brain is simply not engaged in the task yet.
Why stop and fix the light? It is caused by the way we think. Your brain loves pictures. In fact you think in them all the time.

*DaVinci would have been amazing at PDR! Find out why in the March 2007 edition of this newsletter.
<https://pdrsecrets.com/members>

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When you approach a task, a dent, anything you might consider a challenge, your mind sees the whole picture. It sees the pain you'll feel if it doesn't come out right. Another picture is painted about the frustration you'll feel as you try to access it. So, there is risk involved. Risk brings fear.

Fear pictures tend to be dark, and your mind wants happy pictures. So, in its quest for self preservation, it begins to show you different pictures. Happy ones with way less risk.

Think about it. How much risk is there in spraying a new light? Tightening a screw? Little to none. Your mind knows this.

What you really want

You want and *need* rewards. Its why you're reading this right now. You are scouring this letter for a nugget which will build your skill in business and PDR.

But its also why you watch TV or go see the latest movie. These activities, though passive, still give us a reward.

You can argue these things are not rewarding if you want. I would agree to a point, since they can be time wasters. But you would never do either if you didn't get something out of it.

Its how we're made.

Your mind is constantly guiding you to some kind of reward.

Hungry? You will start to think about food. The smells, tastes, yes, the complete picture. Forget your hunger and your mind will tell your body to remind you. To show the picture once again.

We are like a reward seeking missile, wandering around looking for the next target.

We get derailed from must do tasks by this reward seeking brain of ours. We choose low priority tasks over high paying ones all the time. Why?

Because the pictures our mind puts in front of us are simply too compelling to ignore. Which picture sounds better?

One is filled with angst, frustration, possible failure, public humiliation, physical exertion and all of these possibilities will be spent on an intangible benefit. In this case, money.

Another picture is of you engaged in something you like, painting another shadow on your lens cover. The picture of this activity is low risk, happy, after all we're just experimenting. If it fails, big deal, no one will see, just you. Add to this a very tangible result is possible. The good feeling of getting something done. Plus, if it comes out like you'd hoped, an endorphin release for succeeding.

Now you see why we often choose the wrong thing.

Show me the pretty picture. This one's OK. Not great. Flip the page, maybe the next one will be better.

This is what goes on in our distraction seeking minds. But its not just distraction we seek.

We want fascination.

We choose one mental image over another, because it is more fascinating.

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Even as you read this document, you are seeing the words, but your mind is seeing the pictures. It is how the best authors write so well. They can express pictures through their text.

Learning with pictures

The greatest teacher ever to walk the earth was a master of using illustrations.

Ever read the story of the Good Samaritan? This paints a vivid picture of a violent act followed by a series of selfless acts which portray man at his best. This illustration is so powerful it moves you want to be good to your neighbor.

But you don't feel forced into this feeling. No, you feel uplifted. You want to be in the picture, but on the right side of the frame.

You learned about PDR light angles with the illustration of a landscape. Why is this so easy to grasp? Because you know already what a landscape looks like. Even if you've never been to the mountains, you've seen photos. You've seen the shadows, you know they move.

For an illustration to be effective, it must come from the familiar. That is, what's already known to the reader or listener.

Now that you know about dents and how to fix them, you and I can have a conversation like this:

Me: Hey, buddy, how's your neck today?

Feeling better?

You: Yeah. Getting better.

Me: What's going on with it? What does it feel like?

You: Well, you know how you feel at the end

of the day, when you just had a car with dents in the rail and you had to glue pull for 6 hours? And you put your light low and far back so you can blend? That's how it feels. Me: Oh boy! Yes I do. Ouch!

You just illustrated to me how your neck feels because I already knew the picture. I've felt it and can remember what that looks like. This sounds weird to talk about feelings like pain and hunger in pictures, I know. But it is how we think.

Turn to the Right

Ever wonder why clockwise is turning to the right? Who set up this convention? Better yet, why did they?

It started with sundials. In the Northern Hemisphere, the shadow appeared to go around the dial toward the right. When mechanical clocks were made, it was only natural to make them move in a way already familiar to sundial users.

Just as a sundial was a picture of how the sun moved, so the term clockwise is really just an illustration, too. When you hear it or even when you read it, you see a picture in your mind of a clock and how it moves.

Could this be why bolts and screws are right hand thread? Probably. Turn to the right *seems* positive, like it will hold fast, so its tightening. Moving forward, like time. Counter clockwise, in contrast, just sounds like an undoing. Turning back time.

Righty tighty - lefty loosie. Its how we describe it sometimes. But even then, when you hear this, you will see a picture in your mind of moving to the right. Again, an illustration based on what you already know.

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English is written left to right. Not every language is, true enough. But bolts are turned in the same direction when tightening. Is there a correlation?

I believe these things wound up as they did for a reason. And the reason is familiarity. Or at least, our tendency to want to put things a certain way. Usually we do so because it follows the pattern of something we already know.

Consider how you see this pattern repeated in many things.

The structure of communication

Ever notice how we like what we hear to follow a certain pattern?

What makes a song popular? What makes a book a best seller? Why is one movie a blockbuster while another bombs? What causes people to vote for one politician over another?

When you think about it, these examples are really popularity contests. So it is a vote of the human collective. What is popular reflects what is liked, enjoyed, and often, has an effect on people.

All of these forms of communication follow a pattern. A book has an introduction, a body and a conclusion. There are other elements of course, but for now, let's just stick to what makes them similar.

What about a speech?

A speech also has an introduction, body and a conclusion.

A song? Its the same, just falls under different names. Intro, verse, bridge, chorus and outro. We are so used to hearing music this way, if someone plays a song from the middle we know its only a snippet.

See the pattern?

Everything well spoken or sung is also written.

And everything written needs these elements or the writing is simply not effective. You'll find it in every well written article, email or book. Its in every screenplay and Broadway musical.

You can boil it down further too. A sentence has a subject and predicate. A noun and a verb. Take one out and you get only words. Combine them and you have the beginnings of communication.

The point is, we are made to see things a certain way and at the same time, we want them to be laid out, or to sound a certain way as well.

Everything has a beginning and end with something in between. When we take on a task, we start, we do, then we finish. Everything in our life is framed in this kind of a box. Know why?
Its how everything happens.

Its even in your genes. That's right. There are chemicals in your DNA which are known as stop signals. Without these conclusions, the cell could not form, and we could never have translated the genetic code. A beginning and an end. Life in between. Hmmm.

Begin. Do. End.

All you do follows this pattern. Its how you are made. Its how everything occurs.

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It is therefore, familiar.

The key to learning, yes, to understanding is all wrapped up in the familiar. The things you *now know* will carry you forward to the next thing you are about to learn.

If you are male and married, ask your wife if this is true:

You come home with a sudden revelation. You just had a true Eureka! moment and you are excited. This new thought suddenly brings together all you have ever thought before. You feel as if you've just unlocked everything.

Anxious to share, you tell her this golden nugget of knowledge. But you do not understand the look of disbelief on her face and the hands on her hips.

She lets you finish, then says, "Honey, I've been trying to tell you that for three months now!"

"Really? Uh-uh..." you say shaking your head in denial and disbelief.

Then it hits you. You start to remember the times she really did try to tell you this. (Sorry ladies, the last sentence may well be fantasy.)

Although you heard it, you did not accept it until it became familiar. It is why repetition is needed. This is how things *become* familiar.

Ever find yourself humming a song? Or have one get stuck in your head? Why?

American lyricist and Broadway composer Stephen Sondheim said this in a radio interview:

"The whole business of hummability, of course, has to do with familiarity. If you hear a tune enough times, you'll hum it. You know, the first time I heard the Berg violin concerto, I thought what is this noise? And the third time I heard it, I thought oh, that's interesting. And the fifth time I heard it, I was humming along with it.

And I remember being at the intermission of "A Little Night Music" when it first came out and hearing somebody say oh, that "Weekend in the Country" is such a catchy tune. Well, you know, very few people accuse me of writing catchy tunes, and of course it was a catchy tune. She just heard 11 choruses of it, and so of course she could hum it."

Yep. You hear something enough times, it becomes familiar, and *then it becomes your own.*

Remember DaVinci? Its where we started.

Leonardo used this powerful learning process to put things together well before his time. He took the unknown and drew it on paper. He scribbled notes on it and carried it with him. He looked at it many times, adjusting, or adding to it. On this paper his thoughts lived. He studied those drawings until they became familiar. To him they became automatic, like a song you can't shake.

Now that you understand *why* you think in pictures, and how you love the familiar and you like, yes, even need things to be in a certain structure, lets move to the next step.

With this knowledge, we can conquer our progress killer, procrastination.

We will do it using tools that are familiar, follow a well known structure and as candy for your brain, they are revealed in pictures. This process will be familiar to you because it moves like a clock. It has structure, for it starts

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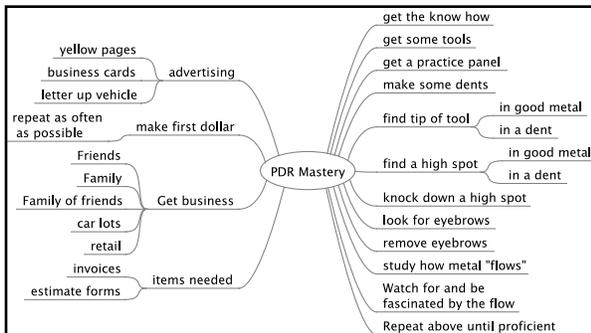
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in the one o'clock position. As it goes around in a natural progression, although it can be written, it really is a picture.

What we're talking about is a mental map*. If you've seen the PDR questions video, you've seen this kind of map. It works because it embraces all the keys to knowledge listed above.

But more than this, it works because we tend to think spatially. In other words, we see things not as they are written, but where they are in space.

What makes a person's face familiar? Its the *position* of his or her features. Its why you can almost always tell a well known star just got a face lift. You've seen their face multiple times but now, something's different. Oh yeah, their eyebrows are higher!



To the left is an example of a mental map.

Can you see how this process goes around like a clock?

Start at 1 o'clock and go around.

The written information now becomes a picture you can see, with a place in space which will help you remember.

Take a look at the map on the previous page again. See how it starts at 1 and goes round in a natural order of what to do next? No need

She just heard I I choruses of it, and so of course she could hum it.

to number each element, because its laid out like our familiar clock face. Its even split into natural halves. Practice pushing the first half of your chosen time period, second part begin gathering needed elements for your business. See how this process can take something overwhelming and reduce it to lower risk baby steps?

Now, look at the map again. Something is missing. Can you spot it? Hint: its on the right and its very important.

If you spotted it quick, you have very good visual skills. It took me several times to spot it. Seriously, it was not left out on purpose. This is what I like about using the software. I spit this out using the "tab" and "enter" keys and did it as fast as possible. Then, I dragged everything into a natural, progressive order.

Even then, the missing element did not jump out until I saw it two more times. Only when it became familiar did it become clear.

Answer: After you find the tip of your tool, what's next? Right! Fix a dent!

My silly brain left out the most important thing. But its OK, you can change it.

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Therein lies the secret to the genius of DaVinci and now, you.

He understood that his knowledge, his grasp of the order of things, and his level of familiarity with them was dynamic. His thinking and wisdom were evolving.

His journal, and the notes inside reflected this ever changing thought process. He was constantly drawing, writing, doodling some more and making changes as new ideas came to him. Each time he studied them, it became ever more familiar to him. Ideas which were at one time complex, soon entered the automatic thought side of his brain. Naturally, this freed up thought energy for other new ideas to flow through.

If you like using a computer, I hope you will explore the software I've mentioned. There are other programs with more features, but I like simple.

I also encourage you to draw these maps on paper. Connect them with curved lines. When you combine words with pictures, you will discover the genius that has always been you.

Whatever you do, if you push yourself, you will be uncomfortable. This discomfort can derail you, so please, learn to embrace the familiar and the order of things all around. Use your mental maps and drawings to help you learn like the genius you already are.

Till next time,
Tim Olson

* The above map was made with FreeMind, a free program that works on both PC and Mac.
http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page
Here is an example of how it can be used: <http://www.artemissoftware.biz/videos/freemind-demo1.mov>

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