

A Beginner's

Roadmap to

# Conquering NPLEX

Preparing for and passing NPLEX is no small endeavour. Here are some general tips to help you create and execute an effective study plan.

1

## Get a clear vision and plan.



- Develop a clear sense of your purpose and vision. It should be something especially motivating for YOU. Remind yourself of your "why" as often as needed to focus your actions and help you prioritize.
- Next, generate a high-level study plan. This will help you stay focused and on track because you will see HOW MUCH there is to learn.
- "Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now." ~ Alan Lakein
- In 1 hour or less, develop a high-level plan of what you will be studying each week. Map this to a calendar and include all your other obligations so you have a good idea of the actual time available.
- Based on your weekly plan, map out what you need to do on a daily basis. Your daily plan (objectives) can be made when you're ending one study session and preparing for the next day.

2

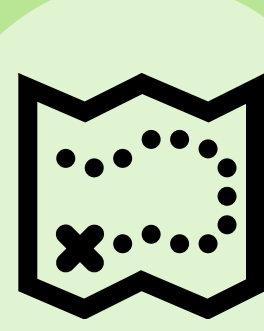
## Set yourself up for success



- Set yourself up for success: get everything ready so you can achieve something early in your study session that day. The sense of accomplishment it will give you will motivate you to stick with it!
- Block off your ideal time of day for your most challenging tasks or to getting the most done. Schedule easy tasks *outside* this block. Make this time sacred.
- Schedule things (e.g., exercise) to avoid having to decide about when to do them later. Preserve your decision-making energy.
- Develop good habits that will reduce strain on your willpower.

3

## Manage your attention



- Realize that memories are grown, not stored. New neural connections require time, repetition, and sleep.
- Focus, don't multitask. Increased concentration = better learning.
- So reduce/eliminate distractions, such as noise, texting, TV, etc. while you are studying.
- Your attention has a time limit. Take breaks every 20 minutes or so. The Pomodoro Technique is based on this principle. But you can lengthen and shorten these chunks depending on your energy level, the challenge of the task, etc.

Keep things interesting and engaging. Monotony and sheer repetition are unlikely to hold your attention over the long term.

4

## Be persistent and tenacious, and just get it done



- Good habits + routines + persistence = success
- Find a study buddy or an accountability partner who will help keep you on track.
- "Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal: My strength lies solely in my tenacity." ~ Louis Pasteur
- "Some tasks are just so big and awful ... The key is to make it as easy as possible to start. Trick yourself into starting by deciding to work on the task for just a handful of minutes and guarantee yourself a break at the end of that time. Then do another 10 minutes. Eventually you'll just want to keep working." ~ Pash & Trapani
- If necessary, break down tasks into 5-minute increments → you can handle almost everything for 5 minutes

It's time to start creating and executing your winning NPLEX study strategy.

# Ready, set, go!

