

How to revise?

At this time of year, we are often asked by students (and occasionally by parents) about what is the best way to revise. When I ask students how they have revised in the past, they will often say things like 'I just read through my notes' or 'I watched videos on YouTube' but they acknowledge this hasn't really helped. I like to take a lesson or two from the World of Football; consider the following scenarios...

I don't think that watching 'Match of the Day' or reading footballing magazines helps you get better at football. They may give you useful information or new ideas or be an interesting way of spending time but do not deceive yourself, sitting around on the sofa is not going to help you get better at football. Neither does just reading through your notes or watching endless revision videos help you revise and remember what you need to pass your exams.

Neither does playing FIFA '19 help you get better at football. It is slightly better than binge - watching football matches on Sky sports because you do have to think about team selection and tactics but you are still not really getting better at football. In the same way, doing online quizzes and revision games does not really help you revise and remember what you need to pass your exams. They are better than just passively reading, but still not the best.

I suggest that to get better at football, you need to play football. This includes training, and practising ball control and doing different exercises to improve your skills and also keeping fit. Exams rely on what you can remember so to get better at passing them, you need to practise using your memory. Make your notes, mindmaps and revision cards but that is only the first stage of the process. Now you need to use them to train your memory. Do this by covering up the paragraph under the subheading on your bullet point notes and seeing if you can rewrite it without looking; turn over your mindmap and redraw it from memory; put questions on one side of your revision cards and test yourself; use the prompts in the left hand side of your Cornell notes and see if you can reproduce the content. And when you have seen what you can remember, check back, fill in the gaps and have another go. Finally, answer exam questions, with your books or notes closed, to see how you really do – internal exams are the friendly before the league match so use them to improve your performance before the big day.

And then you won't need the good luck I am about to wish you because you will be fully prepared for the exams this Summer.

References

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