

contents

introduction 1

exercise 7

Rule #1: Exercise boosts brain power.

Our brains love motion ~ The incredible test-score booster ~ Will you age like Jim or like Frank? ~ How oxygen builds roads for the brain

survival 29

Rule #2: The human brain evolved, too.

What's uniquely human about us ~ A brilliant survival strategy ~ Meet your brain ~ How we conquered the world

wiring 49

Rule #3: Every brain is wired differently.

Neurons slide, slither, and split ~ Experience makes the difference ~ Furious brain development not once, but twice ~ The Jennifer Aniston neuron

attention 71

Rule #4: We don't pay attention to boring things.

Emotion matters ~ Why there is no such thing as multitasking ~ We pay great attention to threats, sex, and pattern matching ~ The brain needs a break!

short-term memory 95

Rule #5: Repeat to remember.

Memories are volatile ~ How details become splattered across the insides of our brains ~ How the brain pieces them back together again ~ Where memories go

long-term memory 121

Rule #6: Remember to repeat.

If you don't repeat this within 30 seconds, you'll forget it ~ Spaced repetition cycles are key to remembering ~ When floating in water could help your memory

sleep 149

Rule #7: Sleep well, think well.

The brain doesn't sleep to rest ~ Two armies at war in your head ~ How to improve your performance 34 percent in 26 minutes ~ Which bird are you? ~ Sleep on it!

stress 169

Rule #8: Stressed brains don't learn the same way.

Stress is good, stress is bad ~ A villain and a hero in the toxic-stress battle ~ Why the home matters to the workplace ~ Marriage intervention for happy couples

sensory integration 197

Rule #9: Stimulate more of the senses.

Lessons from a nightclub ~ How and why all of our senses work together ~ Multisensory learning means better remembering ~ What's that smell?

vision 221

Rule #10: Vision trumps all other senses.

Playing tricks on wine tasters ~ You see what your brain wants to see, and it likes to make stuff up ~ Throw out your PowerPoint

gender 241

Rule #11: Male and female brains are different.

Sexing humans ~ The difference between little girl best friends and little boy best friends ~ Men favor gist when stressed; women favor details ~ A forgetting drug

exploration 261

Rule #12: We are powerful and natural explorers.

Babies are great scientists ~ Exploration is aggressive ~ Monkey see, monkey do ~ Curiosity is everything

acknowledgements 283

index 285