

## HOW TO ABSORB INFORMATION AT A NEW PLACE

Just think...during orientation, you are not expected to know everything. You can ask all the dumb questions you want. Of course, no questions are dumb...right? I used to think I had to think of every possible scenario and question to ask during orientation. I also tried to categorize, analyze and memorize every answer. Half way through the day, I was yawning and feeling exhausted. As a result, I appeared lackadaisical and uninterested. Over time, I learned simple techniques that help me stay awake and get the most out of orientation. I call this technique "sponging".

Sponging is a way to absorb information without thinking. You will find that if you allow your mind to relax and take in information, you will feel more relaxed. You will also be able to retrieve that information more easily when needed. I used to try to think of every detail and question I might possibly need to know during orientation as though it was my only chance to ask questions. Then, I tried to memorize every detail so I wouldn't look like an idiot when the time came. However, all this thinking, while learning, was counterproductive. Just relax and let it soak in. Don't worry about whether you are going to be able to remember what you are being told. The information will be there when you need it.....really!

I know this sponging technique sounds strange, but try it. Practice this technique with something at home. For example, try reading how to do something new and do not think about what you are reading. Just read the information without trying to categorize or memorize, then have someone ask you how to do particular aspects of the procedure. You will be amazed at what you remember.

Good luck with your sponging technique. The term sounds like a type of art project and well I suppose it is a type of art. It sort of resembles meditation in that you let the information flow through without judgment. The real art is making it look like you are thinking while you aren't. You will look perfectly awake and alert, but inside you will be sort of meditating and letting the information flow. Open your eyes and close your mind and go to orientation.