

Flowchart Method Strategy: Informing Future Doctors MCAT Program

Link to the test taking strategy video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DqMIYom0JQ>

This is one of my favorite strategies and one that I've seen help countless students truly understand the MCAT and therefore enable them to make phenomenal 520+ scores. You will use this on every science passage you take. If you do not master this strategy, you will not be able to properly use some of the more advanced strategies like Foreshadowing, Namedropping, and more. If it seems like I am being dramatic, it's because I am. In medical school, you will be taught to emphasize what works. The Flowchart Method works.

What is the Flowchart Method?

Because the MCAT is composed of scientific articles, it's very important to separate what you need to understand to get questions correct, and what is "fluff". The Flowchart Method is a way of systematically pulling out the important concepts in the passage and organizing them in a fashion that helps you get questions correct and reduce silly mistakes. To do this, you will focus on pulling out 2 things from each passage: Basic Sciences and Relationships.

Steps to Learning the Flowchart Method:

1. Understand what classifies as basic sciences and relationships
 - a. Basic Sciences – Any science you remember from studying with IFD and/or keystone sciences/units you remember from undergraduate courses.
 - i. <https://youtu.be/AI4aFwt-498>
 - b. Relationships – The link between 2 concepts. Correlations and descriptions. This can be an inverse relationship, direct relationship, or the description of some random enzyme and a proton pump inhibitor.
2. Place them in Flowchart
 - a. Your flowchart should be quick to write and easy *for you* to interpret. This generally works best with arrows and abbreviations. Shorthand will be your best friend here and any shorthand is fine, but make sure to keep it consistent so that you can begin to practice a system.
3. Become efficient
 - a. Flowcharting will take you a while at first. You will not likely be able to complete each passage in the allotted 3.5 minutes. This is why we must practice the drills listed below.

Drills to Improve the Flowchart Method:



1. Work through practice passages, creating your Flowchart with a stopwatch running beside you. See how long it takes you to complete the flowchart and write down the discipline of that subject (i.e., 5:55 – Physics). Systematically try to increase that speed while making SURE you do not sacrifice any accuracy. Note: Most students will take way longer than needed and write down way more than they should. That's normal. But, if you shave off just 5 seconds per passage, you will soon be at your goal!

