

# Chaining Concepts

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In the last video, I showed how you can use the Chain Method to link simple, easy-to-visualize ideas. I did this so that it's easier to practice the technique, but it's not particularly useful for studying. Normally, you're going to have to remember things that are abstract concepts or lists of facts that are harder to visualize. Luckily, the Chain Method can still work here, it just requires a little bit of a modification.

This modification is that you take the fact, the abstract fact, and you first translate it into an easily-visualizable symbol. With that symbol in place, you can link and chain the symbols all together and then when you walk through the list of symbols, you can go through each one and refer to what the original concept that it points to.

So let's walk through one example, and this I'm pulling from business, which is Porter's Five Forces. So if you're taking a business class, you might have to learn Porter's Five Forces, which pertains to how favorable or unfavorable an industry is, and Michael Porter devised this system, this rule of thumb of examining these five different forces as a way of getting a broader assessment of how favorable or unfavorable an industry is.

So the five forces are: *The bargaining power of suppliers, the bargaining power of buyers, the intensity of industry rivalry, the barriers to entry, and then finally the threat of substitutes.* So all of these are very abstract ideas, so the first task is to create a symbol that will allow you to remember each of the ideas.

So these symbols are just for me, and when you're creating your own list you can focus on things that will remind you of the target idea. So when I say them, they may not remind you of that target idea, but for me they do, and that's what matters. So for you, when you're creating a list of facts that you want to memorize through the Chain Method, it's important the symbols you create link very strongly with your mind with the particular concept.

So for me, I was thinking of suppliers, what would bargaining power of suppliers look like?" Well, supplier to me, I'm thinking of you shipping raw materials, so I imagined a very large ore truck. So it's a truck that contains all this raw ore material, it's being delivered to the factory to be manufactured into product. So that for me was the bargaining power of suppliers. Bargaining power of buyers, I imagined a kid in a store throwing a tantrum. He wants his mom to buy him something. A kid throwing a tantrum, to me, symbolizes bargaining power of buyers.

For industry rivalry, I'm imagining a wrestling competition, because a wrestling competition is sort of like two big companies in an industry fighting over a market share. Barriers to entry, that's a little bit more easy to visualize. I just imagine a fence. A fence is like the barriers to entry, and then finally, finally I was trying to think of; What would be good visual association for 'threat of substitutes?' And this one took me a little bit longer.

It's a bit harder to find a symbol because well, a lot of the things aren't really good examples, and it's harder to visualize this concept because it requires two images, the association between two ideas. So what I was thinking is, what is a good example of that? and that example...so you can use examples, if the example is a very prominent one, as a way of linking the idea. So for me, that example is Netflix. Because if you have Netflix, you might not either go to a video store to rental store, or you might not have a cable subscription if you're watching television through Netflix. So Netflix for me, is an example of the threat of a substitute for the existing companies.

So these are the five examples: ore truck, a kid throwing a tantrum, wrestling, a fence, and Netflix. And with those five symbols, now I can create a list, and I can create a list and chain each of those items together, just as I did in the first example, so that you can remember the ideas. So for me, I had to link the first items, which is ore truck and kid throwing a tantrum, and the image that I came up with was a giant kid, so not just a regular-sized kid, a kid that's like eight feet tall, and he's crying and screaming in this store, throwing a tantrum, and a giant, huge, huge ore truck dumps a huge load of ore on him, because this kid is being so annoying. So that's my first association.

Second association, I have to have an association between a kid who's throwing a tantrum in a store, and wrestling. So the idea I came up with is two big kids, so again two giant kids, and they are fighting in the store and they are wrestling, and they are slamming into things and knocking over entire aisles and shelves, and nobody can contain them. So that's my link between those two ideas.

The next is wrestling and a fence, and I imagine two Mexican wrestlers with the masks wrestling, except they're wrestling on the top of a fence, and so they have to be very careful, and they're like tiptoeing on the fence, kind of like a cat, and they're wrestling and doing all the wrestling moves on the top of this wooden picket fence. So that's my visual association for that one.

The next, I had to link fence and Netflix, and I imagine going onto my computer and trying to use Netflix, and this giant wooden fence comes up from my computer screen and I have to actually pull it apart in order to view the movies that I want to watch on Netflix.

So it's a little bit silly, but each of those visual associations allows me to create a link between the symbols, so I can easily traverse from ore truck, to kid throwing a tantrum, to wrestling, to a fence, and then finally to Netflix. And then once I remember each of those, I can remember, Okay, well ore truck, I can remember ore truck. What was ore truck linked to? Ore truck was linked to power of suppliers. Kid throwing a tantrum in a store, well that's the power of buyers. Two people wrestling, that's the industry rivalry. Fourth one, a fence that's barriers to entry, and the fifth one, threat of substitutes, is symbolized for me by Netflix.

So try this with your own facts. Create a list of facts, create a symbol table that you feel really helps you trigger the original concept, and then chain those symbols together. So try this out now with your own studies.