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## CONCENTRATION SKILLS – COURT REPORTERS – YOUR FUTURE IS WAITING FOR YOU

A young court reporter sent me a tweet this week saying she is in the 80s, and concentration skills are holding her back. She is taking an online court reporting class.

First, I would like to congratulate and offer my utmost respect to anyone going through court reporting school online. I can only imagine how tough it would be to be super self-disciplined and focused without having a physical place to go to every day for a set amount of time, surrounded by fellow students, and having teachers stand in front of you watching over your progress. When I went to court reporting school, I used the other students and teachers to get energy.

I am a super competitive person. I love, love, love competing. Back in high school when I took typing and Gregg shorthand, I wanted to be the fastest and the best. I enjoyed going to class, getting there early, taking off my typewriter cover, and practicing. To me it is akin to playing Brick Breaker on my BlackBerry or Tetras. How far could I get? How fast could I go? Would I beat the rest of the class? It was so EXCITING.

I took the same competitive attitude with me to court reporting school. Going to class every day was like going into a competition, playing my sport. I was secretly competing against the other students in the class. Having this feeling of being in a game kept me focused and forced me to concentrate. I really wanted to win (even if it was all in my mind).

So I wonder, how can a student who is studying to be a court reporter online have the same sense of competition to help spur them on? I truly want to help my Twitter friend who is in the 80s and having a tough time. Concentration skills require discipline. Discipline equals time and energy. I'd say at least four – five hours a day MUST be spent writing on the machine to build speed and accuracy. There is no way around it. (How about write for 2 hours, a 15-minute break, 2 more hours, a half-hour break, and then two more hours.)

If a person is lethargic or bored with the process, it is never going to work. Sometimes we need a kickstart to move forward. Maybe schools can create an online competition at different speeds. Maybe



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schools can create speed teams and compete against each other like the Big 10 college football or NCAA tournaments. Online students might have to compete with themselves – pushing to be better.

The ultimate prize for the competition is GETTING OUT OF SCHOOL AND BEING A COURT REPORTER! Being a court reporter is FANTASTIC, WONDERFUL, FUN, INTERESTING, and LUCRATIVE. So I suggest students find a way to get rid of their lethargy and start competing. Your future is waiting for you.

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