Use practice problems and assignments in your STEM courses to learn the concepts and do not rush to get to the answer. This is part of your studying and learning processes. Try manipulating the problem to make sure you are at a deeper level of comprehension with the material. With this exercise, you will reinforce the application of the concept.

Quick flow chart for working with problems

1. Read the problem
   - Does the problem make sense?
     - Yes
     - No
     - Examine the problem closely.
     - Check your understanding of the terms.
     - Try to rephrase the question.

2. Step 1
   - Answer the problem. Check your answer to be sure it’s correct.
   - What concepts are covered by the problem?
     1.
     2.
     3.
     Etc.

3. Step 2
   - Manipulate the problem to test your understanding of each of the concepts you listed. Generally, this requires making the problem more complicated. Answer the new problem(s).

4. Step 3
   - Ask yourself the following questions:
     - “How can I change the problem so that I get a different answer from before?”
     - “What information matters? What doesn’t?”

   - Repeat as needed. Move on to a new problem...