Academic Study Skills for Students

Time Management and Job Applications

Aims of this session

- Define 'time management' and consider good and bad practices for time management
- Evaluate our own time management
- Consider how to avoid procrastination
- Employability skills
  - CV writing and job interviews

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What is time management?

The act/process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity

Managing time effectively so that the right time is allocated to the right activity

The skill of organising time so that you can accomplish what you need to do by analysing, planning, and avoiding wasting time.

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- *Is it not enough to be busy…. The question is: What are we busy about?*

Henry David Thoreau

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Time management

- Problems:
  - Too much to do in too little time…
  - Not getting much done in plenty of time!
- 'If I spend more time studying, will I do better in my assignments?'
- Hmm – not necessarily – one can sit in front of a book for hours and not take anything in…

Consider Quality over Quantity

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- *Anything that is wasted effort represents wasted time. The best management of our time thus becomes linked inseparably with the best utilisation of our efforts.*

Ted W. Engstrom

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So how do I manage my time more effectively?

- Tips for good time management:
  - Understand **how** to plan and optimise your time
  - Understand how you **waste time**
  - Be a **planner** rather than a **reactor**
  - Identify **priorities** – what is urgent? What is important?

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And this is related to academic progress how…?

- Lack of focus = now knowing how or where to start = wasting time starting assessments = rushing to complete assessments
- Procrastination!
- Distractions from studying
- Difficulties prioritising
- Lack of interest in a topic

Each of these can be overcome with good time management skills!

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Procrastination and Motivation

- **Motivation** is a massive factor in our ability (and enjoyment) in doing what we do
  - If you lack motivation, you're unlikely to want to do certain tasks.
  - If you lack motivation, consider **why** you're not motivated
- **Procrastination** = eating into or wasting time
  - What is the cause of your procrastination?
  - Can fear of not being able to complete work be a factor that causes procrastination?
  - Can lack of interest be a factor?

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Tips for managing time effectively

1. Use small pockets of time in the day to sort out minor tasks
2. Motivation to get going
3. Time tasks!
4. Cost your time
5. Say 'no'

Tips for managing time effectively

6. Delegate to others
7. Ask for help
8. 'Starting' strategies
9. Use a diary/bullet journal
10. Plan activities in a logical order

Understand your strengths and weaknesses

- How often do you prioritise the urgent over the important?
- What do you do that wastes your time?
- Do you have a good balance between getting things done and time for relaxation?
- Things that impact our ability to manage time:
  - Social life
  - Relationships
  - Families
  - Work
  - Exercise
  - Hobbies
  - Pets

Tips to manage your time better

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Manage time better..

Create a suitable studying environment

- This will be different for everyone!
- Think about how you best concentrate – and when!
- What things can you change in your current studying environment?

Identifying and prioritising

- List what needs to be done
- Label as 'work', 'home', 'university'
- Prioritise!
  - Colour code
  - Identify in some way
- Schedule/timetable your tasks

Organising your time

- Be aware (and realistic!) of how much time it takes to complete tasks
- Be aware of your own strengths and weaknesses
  - If you're not interested in a topic, you may need to spend longer on it
- Schedule time for YOU!

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You can also SAVE time when working on university related tasks…

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Procrastination: Avoid it!

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Avoiding procrastination

- Divide tasks into smaller, more manageable sub-goals, and tackle **one** of them ASAP.
- Reward yourself with breaks or treats when you complete a goal
- Do not leave work until the last minute
- Pressure and stress only results in the production of poorer work

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How to win back more time during the day

- Avoid internet procrastination!
- Do not double up on activities
- Get a good nights sleep
- Set time aside for leisure activities
- Get rid of paper that you have no use for
- Reward yourself!

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So – why is time management important?

Employability Skills!!

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What skills do employers value?

- In short, employers want:
  - Skilled workers
    - Some employers offer 'training on the job' roles – but this is NOT guaranteed
  - Confident workers
  - Workers who are able to get on with the job with little direction
  - Workers who do not create difficulties

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What skills do employers value?

- Employers also seek 'soft skills'
  - Tend to be hard to measure with any qualification – but are vital in the work situation
- What 'soft skills' are important?

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Top 10 most important “soft” skills sought by employers (TMP Worldwide research, 1998).

1. Oral Communication	2. Team-Working	3. Listening	4. Written Communication
5. Problem Solving	6. Relationship Development.	7. Adaptive Communication Style.	8. Time Management.
	9. Sharing Knowledge.	10. Influence Others.	

UWTSD Careers Service

- http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/careers/
- UWTSD was ranked #2 out of 46 institutions for ‘Careers & Employability Service’ in the Global International Student Barometer and Student Barometer, Autumn Wave 2015.
- Choosing a career
- Job-seeking strategies
- Application procedures and CVs
- Interview techniques
- Work experience
- Course changes
- Further study options

Job Applications

- Will vary between jobs and companies – make sure to read any application form through thoroughly!
- Typically contain:
  - General information about the company, pensions, leave entitlement etc
  - Do a search of the company online
- **Job specification:**
  - Responsibility of the post
  - What the post holder should be able to do
  - Can work as a tick list – read through and tick off what you can already do
- **Person specification:**
  - Will list the type of person they want for the post
  - Qualifications, skills and qualities
  - Often divided into ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’

Person specification

- Requirement for qualifications:
  - Educated at degree level; a postgraduate qualification; a psychology based degree, etc.
- Skills specific to the job:
  - Experience of working in a team. At least two years work in a care setting. 100 hours of youth work etc.
- General skills:
  - Communication, team work, independent work, using own initiative, etc
- Willingness to accept particular working conditions:
  - Flexible hours, willingness to use own car, work across several sites, etc

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Example Person Specification

Post Title	Office assistant	**Grade**	
Section, Division	Community Service	**Date of Person Specification**	13/08/13
Location:	Town Hall		

Attributes	Minimum Criteria	Method of Assessment	Desirable Criteria	Method of Assessment
Experience	No previous experience required		Experience of working within an office environment	Application Form & Interview
Education, Training And Qualifications	Computer literate, including Microsoft Office packages, internet, email systems.	Application form		
Relationships	Ability to establish good relationships with colleagues and clients Good team-working skills	Application form & interview		
Equalities and Diversity	Commitment to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and Acceptance of their responsibility for its practical application.	Application form & interview		
Skills & Knowledge	To understand and comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. To understand and comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 in the	Application form & interview	Ability to maintain a professional manner under pressure. Ability to quickly learn new skills and apply this knowledge in the workplace.	Application form & interview

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Before STARTING – consider:

- The requirements of the company in submitting the form!
  - How do you submit it when it's complete?
  - Do they ask for an additional CV?
  - Do they ask for a cover letter?
  - Have you provided appropriate references?
  - Is there an equal opportunities form? Have you completed it?
  - Presentation regulations – such as 'black ink only', 'block capitals only', 'typed only'
  - If **not** completely correctly, application forms are often placed in the bin by HR before even being sent to the line manager

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Personal statement

- Some applications forms contain a personal statement section
  - If it does, then this is important!
- You should write a long 'statement' of your skills and qualities that make you a suitable candidate for the job
- Usually word processed and written/submitted separately

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Can I have one personal statement and use it multiple times?

- In short – not advised…
- The PS should also be **personal** to that company/job
  - Should be based on the job and person specification accompanying the job post
- Make sure your PS checks ALL of the essential criteria and as many of the desirable criteria as possible

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Curriculum Vitae (CV's)

- Less demand for CV's now, but can still be an important aspect of obtaining a job
- Some employers respond to CV's even when they don't have a current vacancy
- Many different ways to format a CV
  - Make it visually appealing
  - Make it professional
  - Make it stand out

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Any questions?