

Name: Kay-Ann Lambert

ID: 2406927

Module code: LCBB4012

Module title: Academic Skills

Assignment title: Component 1 Individual Written Report

Lecturer: Dr Roopa Aruvanahalli Nagaraju

**TIME MANAGEMENT FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS:
USING THE MAYO JAR ANALOGY**

A Written Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Definition of Time Management	4
3. Importance of Time Management for Academic Success.....	5
4. Time Management Strategies	5
4.1. The Pomodoro Technique	5
4.2. The Eisenhower Matrix	6
5. Conclusion	7
6. Reference List	8

1. Introduction

Time is a finite resource, and for university students, how it is managed can be the single most decisive factor in academic achievement. This report argues that effective time management, encompassing planning, prioritising, and monitoring enables higher academic performance, sustained motivation, and reduce stress (Cottrell, 2024, p.94; Zimmerman, 2002, p. 65). The Mayo Jar Analogy serves as a central illustrative tool, and two practical strategies, the Pomodoro Technique and the Eisenhower Matrix, are examined for their contribution to academic success.

2. Definition of Time Management

Time management is the conscious and process of planning, organising, and controlling how time is allocated across tasks to achieve one's goals. Levin (2007, p. 1) defines it as actively deciding what to do, process of deciding what to do, when, and how most efficiently, whilst Cottrell (2024, p. 94) describes it as making deliberate choices rather than reacting passively to demands. Macan et al. (2000, p. 761) identify three core dimensions: goal setting and prioritisation, scheduling, and perceived control of time. Britton and Tesser (1991, p. 405) distinguish short-range from long-range planning, both of which concerns influence outcomes. Crede and Kuncel (2008, p. 426) confirm that time-related study skills are among the strongest non-cognitive predictors of academic success.

3. Importance of Time Management for Academic Success

Effective time management is linked to improved academic performance, motivation, and reduce stress. Britton and Tesser (1991, p. 406) found that structured short-range planning produced significantly higher grades. Nonis and Hudson (2010, p. 232) demonstrated that the quality of study time was the strongest predictor of academic performance. Pintrich (2004, p. 378) established that self-regulated learners who plan and monitor their time are more intrinsically motivated and achieve more consistently. Hafer, Stock, and Oberst (2014, p. 2) confirmed that time management training measurably reduced student stress.

The Mayo Jar Analogy illustrates these principles. A professor fills a jar representing a student's finite time, with large rocks first (priority tasks: assignments and revision), then pebbles (seminars, coursework notes), and finally sand (low-value tasks such as scrolling social media) (Covey, cited in Cottrell, 2024, p. 98). If sand fills the jar first, no room remains for the rocks. (Levin, 2007, p. 17) argues that students who fail to protect time for essential work inevitably fall behind, and prioritising academic 'rocks' is therefore essential to sustained motivation and achievement (Macan et al., 2000, p. 762).

4. Time Management Strategies

4.1 The Pomodoro Technique

The Pomodoro Technique, (Cirillo, 2018), involves focused twenty-five-minutes work intervals separated by five-minute breaks, with a longer break after every four cycles. A student selects one task drafting an essay or revising notes, sets a timer, works without interruption, then rests briefly before repeating. Nonis and Hudson (2010, p. 234) confirm that focused, intentional study time is far more productive than extended but distracted sessions, whilst Cottrell (2024, p. 105) advocates structured intervals to prevent cognitive fatigue. Steel (2007, p. 66) identifies poor self-regulation as a core driver of procrastination; the Pomodoro Technique counters this by reducing each

session to a manageable unit, improving work quality, reducing anxiety, and supporting consistent progress towards deadlines.

4.2 The Eisenhower Matrix

The Eisenhower Matrix, categorise tasks urgent and Importance. Tasks that are both urgent and important are addressed immediately; those important but not urgent are scheduled; urgent but unimportant tasks are delegated; and tasks neither urgent nor important are eliminated (Levin, 2007, p. 22). A student applies this matrix weekly, assigning time slots to high-value academic work before the deadline pressure builds. Macan et al. (2000, p. 763) found that students who proactively prioritised tasks reported better academic outcomes and lower stress. Steel (2007, p. 68) demonstrates that clear prioritisation reduces procrastination by eliminating ambiguity about what to do first, directly enacting the Mayo Jar principle of placing academic 'rocks' into the schedule before pebbles and sand.

5. Conclusion

This report has argued that effective time management is indispensable to academic success. Defined by Levin (2007) and Cottrell (2024) as a deliberate, goal-oriented discipline, it encompasses planning, prioritising, and monitoring. The Mayo Jar Analogy demonstrates why protecting time for academic priorities is non-negotiable. Evidence from Britton and Tesser (1991), Nonis and Hudson (2010), Macan et al. (2000), Hafner et al. (2014), Pintrich (2004), Zimmerman (2002), Crede and Kuncel (2008), and Steel (2007) confirms that structured time management yields higher grades, greater motivation, and reduced stress. The Pomodoro Technique and Eisenhower Matrix translate these principles into daily practice. Students who manage their time wisely do not merely meet deadlines; they realise their full academic potential.

6. Reference List

- Britton, B.K. and Tesser, A. (1991) 'Effects of time management practices on college grades', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83(3), pp. 405-410.
- Cirillo, F. (2018) *The Pomodoro Technique*. New York: Currenecy.
- Cottrell, S. (2024) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 6th edn. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Covey, S.R. (2004) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Free Press.
- Crede, M. and Kuncel, N.R. (2008) 'Study habits, skills and attitudes: the third pillar supporting collegiate academic performance', *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(6), pp. 425-453.
- Hafner, A., Stock, A., and Oberst, V. (2014) 'Decreasing students' stress through time management training', *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 29(1), pp.1-17.
- Levin, P. (2007) *Skilful Time Management*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Macan, T.H., Shahani, C., Dipboye, R.L. and Phillips, A.L. (2000) 'College students' time management: correlations with academic performance and stress', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82(4), pp. 60-768.
- Nonis, S.A., and Hudson, G.I. (2010) 'Performance of college students: impact of study time and study habits', *Journal of Education for Business*, 85(4), pp. 229-238.
- Pintrich, P.R. (2004) 'A conceptual framework for assessing motivation and self-regulated learning in college students', *Educational Psychology Review*, 16(4), pp. 385-407.
- Steel, P. (2007) 'The nature of procrastination: a meta-analytic and theoretical review of quintessential self-regulatory failure', *Psychological Bulletin*, 133(1), pp. 65-94.
- Zimmerman, B.J. (2002) 'Becoming a self-regulated learner: an overview', *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), pp. 64-70.

