

## Success Tips and Skills

### Get up on time

- Set two alarms and put one across the room so you have to get out of bed to turn it off
- Or put the second alarm where you know it will bother your roommates so you are more motivated to get out of bed and turn it off in time!
- Set your alarm to go off earlier so you can take your time in the morning.

### Stay on schedule

- If you know you get distracted by checking email or Facebook, make it a rule that you can't do it until after classes are over.
- Figure out how much time you need to dress, eat and get organized and then use alarms to remind you to stay on schedule.
- Try using a set of music as a timer. If you have 30 minutes to get ready, time yourself using different songs. So when the music moves on at the end of a song, you need to have moved on to the next step.
- Set up alarms on your phone or a programmable reminder watch that gets you moving on time.
- Put big clocks in your rooms to be visibly reminded about time passing.

### Keep organized

- Create a "launch pad" by your exit door. Collect all of the things you'll need in the morning the night before (like your backpack, keys, phone, homework, books) and put them on the launch pad.
- Leave yourself a note at the launch pad so in the morning you can remember what's important for that day

### Work with procrastination, not against it

Sometimes it's okay to procrastinate so you have the pressure of the deadline to keep you motivated. But...

- Just be sure to give yourself little deadlines throughout a big project to make the final push more doable.
- If you have to write a paper, break it into the important steps: figuring out the concept, finding research sources, reading and note taking, and finally writing.
- When it's nice out, plan to work at night when the call to be outdoors and playing isn't so compelling.
- Do a moderate amount of vigorous outdoor exercise first, then study.
- Plan for spring fever by taking a heavy load in the winter and a lighter load in the spring.

## Be accountable

- Get a study buddy and make an agreement that you'll each get so much done during a set period of time. Knowing you've made a commitment to someone else really helps. It's the power of accountability.
- Whatever you do, do not take an incomplete. Do whatever you have to do to finish a course. Or you may never finish it at all.

## Study smarter not harder

- To keep boredom at bay, highlight the text you read with different colors or doodle your notes.
- Make audio notes or see if your book has an audio version and listen as you commute to school.
- Use mnemonics to create funny ways to remember stuff.
- Try standing up while you read or read your assignment aloud to yourself using a character voice.
- Get a study buddy.
- Know which classes will cut you slack so you can put energy into the ones that won't.
- Know when you've hit the point of diminishing returns. If you've worked for 5 hours and know that's enough to get an A minus on the paper and it will take 5 more hours to get an A, but there's other work that needs to be done, move on!

## Schedule your study time

- Study 2 hours per week for each course credit. Spend at least 2 hours a day reading – starting on the *first* day of class!
- Think of college as your job and spend at least 40 hours per week on classes and class work.
- Block out the hours you plan to study in your schedule – and “show up” just like you would for a job.
- Apply the principal of exercise intervals to studying. Instead of alternating sprinting and walking, alternate study and play.
- Set a timer and work hard for 30 or 60 minutes then play for the next interval of minutes. Then do it again. Just be sure you quit playing as readily as you quit working!

## Plan ahead to keep on track

- Plan for your week on Sunday night or Monday morning. And plan for your weekend on Friday.
- Review each morning what you want to accomplish to make sure you keep in mind what you want to accomplish.
- Write your top three priorities on a note card to keep with you. Pull it out at lunch and dinner to make sure you are on track to accomplishing the day's agenda.

*And while you're busy taking care of your class work, don't forget to take care of yourself, too!*

### **Keep anxiety under control**

- Exercise regularly – it's been proven to dramatically reduce the symptoms of anxiety.
- Eat right – skipping meals and ingesting too much caffeine or sugar can actually trigger an anxiety attack.
- Get enough sleep.
- Practice relaxation – when you are stressing, do something distracting and fun. Fill your mind with a challenging task and you won't have room to think about your anxiety.
- Try mindfulness meditation – it's been proven to reduce symptoms of anxiety. Check the web for instructions.

### **Get a good night's sleep**

- Don't nap during the day.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol before bed.
- Exercise regularly, but earlier in the day.
- Don't eat a lot before bedtime.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine. Turn off the DS, TV, Internet or Wii at least an hour before your bedtime.
- Associate your bed with sleep. Don't do other things like read, check email, text or watch TV in bed.
- Make sure that the sleep environment is pleasant and relaxing. The bed should be comfortable, the room should not be too hot or cold, or too bright.
- Don't sleep with your pet. They can wake you up at night making it hard to fall back asleep.

### **Keep spending under control**

- Make a budget:** Decide how much you have to spend now **-before** you start shopping.
- Make a list:** Write down what you plan to buy *before* you go shopping.
- Prioritize:** Add up how much the items on your list cost. If your list costs more than you have, decide what things you can wait to buy so you stay within your budget.
- Keep it in cash:** Take only the cash you plan to spend when you go shopping. That means leaving your debit and credit cards at home. Put your spending money in separate compartment in your wallet. **When the money is gone, you are done shopping.** Period. Don't be tempted to use layaway plans to buy things you can't afford.
- Avoid the mall:** If you stay away from where things are being sold, you won't be as tempted to buy them!

