Factors to Include in Your Time Plan

There are some basic factors that all schedules need in order for them to be realistic and effective:

1. **Prioritize.** Write down all your tasks. Sort them into three groups: 1's, 2's, and 3's. The 1's are essential: do them first. The lower level priorities can usually wait.

2. **Work Time.** Decide how much time the task requires, and how much energy. You may wish to include the task's priority level to help make this decision.

3. **Relax.** Regularly plan time to relax and get it together. This time may range in units of 10 minutes to whole days according to your needs. You’ve earned this time off.

4. **Exercise.** Exercise is essential for superior academic performance. Your brain would not function well if your body is tired. Stress reduces performance. Workout regularly.

5. **Flexibility.** Allow extra time for Unforeseen Obstacles (UFO's) that are bound to arise. Something almost always comes up to derail your efforts. Allow for it.

6. **Floating Tasks.** Floating tasks can be done anywhere, anytime. Carry around a book that you need to read, some cards to review, or a letter that you need to write.

7. **Survival.** Self-sacrifice and denial are necessary during midterms and finals weeks. Scrap everything that’s not absolutely essential for survival.

Compromise

Sometimes drastic change isn’t necessary. Learning to compromise can make your life more effective. Try the following suggestions:

1. **Re-Prioritize.** Change the importance of various tasks. Reconsider the number of hours of work you’re willing to spend per week, the number of hours you want with the family, and the number of hours for yourself. Are you trying to do too much?

2. **Postpone.** Determine the priority of each activity or task and postpone lower level tasks.

3. **Delegate.** Get someone else to do it. Ask someone to take notes for you while you go to a doctor’s appointment. If you’re a good writer but a poor typist, hire a typist!

4. **Speed Up.** Sacrifice excellence for expediency. Get it done!

5. **Give Up.** Drop the activity all together. There is nothing wrong with accepting your limitations and giving up. Strengthen your skills in that area and then try the class again.
6. Do It Differently. Look at anything you do and ask, "Is there another way I can do this?" "Why am I doing this job this way?" "Why am I walking in this direction?" "Why is this room arranged this way?" "Is there a place where I seem to work more effectively?" Or, you may wish to subdivide tasks differently. Leave a certain task out. Spread the task out over different lengths of time. Cut back on certain sub-tasks and concentrate on others. Whatever you may choose, doing it differently often helps to do a task more effectively.

Bibliography


