QUIT YOUR WAY TO THE TOP!

Quit complaining!
Quit blaming the past for your present!
Quit making excuses!
Quit procrastinating!
Quit blaming others if things don't turn out right!
Quit being close-minded!
Quit doubting yourself!
Quit saying, "If only..."!
Quit basing your life on what other people say or think!
Quit refusing to get up after a fall!
Who ever said a "quitter" can't win?
You just need to choose what to quit, and
NEVER QUIT ON THE BASIC ESSENTIALS
FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE...
Whatever they may be for you.

Good luck and always enjoy life!!!

--Pete Zafra--California

WRAC Handout #3, MS Word Filename: SUCCESS, Revised October 20, 1998)
"A dream without a plan is still only a dream." - Martin Luther King

GOAL SETTING

The purpose of this exercise is to help you think clearly and concretely about your professional, educational and personal goals. Goals are the things we consciously want to attain, accomplish or achieve. Setting goals is a powerful tool because with them we give our energies a specific focus and we establish a mind-set that enables us to see ourselves as ‘in charge’ of our lives.

Why Goals? And Why can’t I just keep them in my head?

- By setting goals you increase your motivation. You are challenging yourself to reach new levels of performance.

- Research has shown that goal setting enhances performances in all areas of life.

- When you set yourself goals you are in control – self efficacy

What are Goals?

- Realistic, achievable and challenging
- Flexible
- Precise and measurable
- Yours not anyone else’s
- In writing

Part A: Long Term Educational and Professional Goals

Long term goals are major accomplishments and achievements that you are willing to work at to obtain. You can plan your educational goals on a 10-12 month timeline or academic calendar.

For the next 3 minutes brainstorm about what educational goals you want to achieve. On a separate sheet of paper write as many educational and professional goals you have for yourself. Don’t censure yourself – just write. Once you have at least six take the top three goals which you most want to achieve and transfer these answers to the list below.

1.

2.

3.

Part B: Mid term goals.

Mid term goals are the objectives you can accomplish in two to five months. Such goals as completing the semester with a high GPA or a specific career level fall into the ‘mid term’ category.
Directions: go over your long term goals listed above. Read them aloud if necessary. Choose ONE goal on which to focus your attention. Then on the separate sheet of paper brainstorm again a list of goals you want to achieve in the next two to five months that would lead to the accomplishment of your ONE goal. List as many mid term goals as you want. Review your list and choose the top three that you feel will best allow you to achieve your goal.

Part C: Short term goals
Short term goals are the ones you can accomplish in 2-3 weeks. These goals should be specific and can include specific coursework, i.e. I will complete a solid draft of my 15 page paper. Think of your short term goals as your “Action Goals” because they require action now!

Directions: Go over your mid term list in the previous section and select ONE goal. In another brainstorming session generate lists of short term goals that will help you achieve the one mid term goal you want. Again, write as many as you want – the more the better. Choose the top three on your list and transfer to this page.
Personal Time Survey

The following survey shows the amount of time you spend on various activities. When taking the survey, estimate the amount of time spent on each item. Once you have this amount, follow the directions given. This will give you the total we spent on the activity in one week. After each item’s weekly time has been calculated, add all these times for the grand subtotal. Subtract the subtotal from 168 to find out how many hours you have a week that are available.

1. Number of hours of sleep each night  \[\text{[ ]} \times 7 = \text{[ ]}\]

2. Number of grooming hours per day  \[\text{[ ]} \times 7 = \text{[ ]}\]

3. Number of hours for meals/snacks per day (include preparation time)  \[\text{[ ]} \times 7 = \text{[ ]}\]

4. Total travel time weekdays  \[\text{[ ]} \times 5 = \text{[ ]}\]

5. Total travel time weekends =

6. Number of hours per week for regularly scheduled functions (clubs, church, get-togethers, etc.) =

7. Number of hours per day for chores, errands, extra grooming, etc.  \[\text{[ ]} \times 7 = \text{[ ]}\]

8. Number of hours of work per week =

9. Number of hours in class per week =

10. Number of average hours per week socializing, dates, etc. Be honest! =

There are 168 hours in a week which leaves you [ ] hours to study.
Study Hour Formula

To decide how many hours you need to study each week to get A’s, use this rule of thumb:

- Study 2 hours per hour in class for a lighter class,
- Study 3 hours per hour in class for an average class, and
- Study 4 hours per hour in class for a difficult class.

For example, basket weaving may be a relatively light 3-hour per week class. Usually, a person would not do more than 6 hours of work outside class per week. Advanced calculus is usually considered a difficult class, so it might be best to study the proposed 12 hours a week.

If more hours are needed, take away some hours from lighter classes, i.e., basket weaving.

Using your current classes, fill in the following to determine the time you need for study.

Lighter credit hours \[ \quad \times 2 = \ \]  
Average credit hours \[ \quad \times 3 = \ \]  
Difficult credit hours \[ \quad \times 4 = \ \]  

**TOTAL STUDY HOURS** = \[ \ \]  

Compare this number to your time left from the personal time survey. If you are like many students, you might find you are a bit stressed by the comparison.

To ease your anxiety, remember it is not only the quantity of study time but also the quality. The formula is a general guideline. Try following it for a week, and make adjustments as needed.
1. Schedule time (15-20 minutes) after a lecture class to sit with your notebook while the lecture is still fresh in your memory and fill in information that you could not get down in class. Check again the assignment that is due for the next class and write it more completely, putting in any helpful hints that were given in class.

2. Plan to arrive at your classroom 15 minutes before a discussion class. Use this time to read over your notes from the last class as well as the notes you took on your readings for this class. This helps to refresh your memory and make it more likely that you will participate in the class discussion.

3. Make a large calendar of the whole semester and hang in a prominent place. You should be able to spot the whole semester without having to turn any pages. All the weeks should be visible at a glance. Fill in all the major projects, papers or exams, using your course outlines for this information. This will help you to plan ahead for assignments that may seem a long way off, but are actually only one or two weeks away.

4. Using this semester calendar, break up the big tasks. Decide what you need to do to get started; i.e.: choose topics, find sources, check with instructor and write in the dates that you will accomplish each of these smaller tasks.

5. Try to study for the same course at the same time and day each week. If you set aside 1 1/2 hours on Monday and Wednesday evenings to study or complete assignments for a class that meets on Tuesday and Thursday, you will have enough time to study more completely or proofread and rewrite assignments.

6. Plan short breaks in your schedule every 20 to 30 minutes. Concentration falls off rapidly after a certain amount of time and you will get the most from your study time if you get up, walk around, stretch and breathe before going back to your studying.

7. Plan longer breaks with rewards built in after a completed study session. Write a list of things you enjoy doing, ex: calling home, writing a letter, playing a video game, watching a favorite TV show, etc. Use these to motivate you to finish an assignment or complete a study session. Do not allow yourself to enjoy these until you have earned them. This will help you to finish what you had planned in the time allotted and the rewards will seem that much sweeter.

8. Realize that there are fixed commitments over which you have little or no control. Write them in first (classes, labs, meetings, jobs, practices, etc.). Arrange the rest of your week around these.

9. Living takes time. Schedule all the things you need to do in order to function. Showering, eating, cleaning, shopping, laundry, dressing—all need time allotments if you are to be true to your schedule.

10. All work and no play... You need to block off the times you will allow for recreation. Watching movies, shopping at the mall, going out with friends, etc., need to be planned ahead. It is usually easier to get through several days of school work and classes, when you know that you have something fun to look forward to on the weekends. It will be easier to say NO to last minute, unplanned time-wasters, if you know that something better is coming up.

Source: Marist College, Academic Learning Center
1. You get out what you put in
   - Putting off tasks is only a “temporarily” way to reduce stress. This approach only delays and concentrates stress.
   - When you begin a task you leave behind all the worry and anticipation that it is “so big” or “so difficult”.
   - Choose some small aspect of the task and get going right away.

2. Keep the company of successful peers
   - You can gain a lot in the way of motivation just by spending time with successful people.
   - Challenge each other, teach each other, learn from each other.
   - Develop study groups/partner, quiz each other before tests and exams.
   - Talk about your strategies and about your goals
   - Share your fears and work together to overcome them

3. Rethink your approach to exams
   - Exams can be stressful and scary, but use them as an “opportunity” to provide you feedback about the quality of your learning.
   - Instead of waiting until the last minute to study and then waiting until the grade comes back to see how well you’ve done,
   - Set up your study routine to give yourself lots of time to prepare and test yourself prior to the exam.
   - Not only will you develop a sense of confidence that will carry over to the exam, you will have a chance to catch any errors or omissions before you enter the exam room then the exam won’t seem scary.

4. A focus on success
   - Success is all about doing the best you can with what you have. Success is perseverance in the face of challenge; it means rising to the occasion; it means pulling through when times are tough.
   - A positive attitude is a key ingredient in succeeding at university.
   - Take responsibility for making things happen, follow through on tasks, and stay oriented toward your goals will all contribute to success.

5. Staying on top of it all
   - Managing time is absolutely critical.
   - Know what your goals are.
   - Figure out where your time is going and develop supportive routines.

   - Use a Planner, set your own deadlines and look ahead to see what tasks are due in the near future.
   - Learn to balance your school, work, and personal commitments.
   - Procrastinate less.
6. Read the course outlines

- Once you see the course from the perspective of the professor, you'll have a major insight into what (and how) to study for your courses.
- Seeing the course from this perspective is as easy as carefully analyzing the course outline and course description for the goals, objectives, and topics of the course.
- Equipped with the knowledge of what is important in the course, you can organize your approach to the course to focus on the main ideas of the course and their interconnections.

7. Listen actively in class

- Taking notes from lecture is a thinking activity. Effective listening involves:
  - paying attention,
  - developing an interest for listening to the lecture, and
  - avoiding premature judgment of the speaker.
- Pay particular attention to the beginnings and endings of the lecture to gain a better sense of its outline and main points, then summarize and anticipate the direction of the lecture.
- Evaluate the ideas you hear, select important information to record, and ask questions about what you hear.
- Avoid the passive listener approach of trying to “get it all”. Instead, listen for main ideas, key details, and transitional phrases which point to the structure and focus of the lecture.

8. Read with your brain switched on

If you’ve ever found yourself moving your eyes over the words of the text but found your thoughts were off somewhere else, you’ll know how much time re-reading long passages of text consumes. Reading more actively (that is, thoughtfully) can make reading more effective and efficient.
- Read with the aim of understanding and relating the ideas of the text to your existing knowledge, previous readings, lecture material, and the goals of the course.
- As you read along, summarize main ideas, interpret the themes of the reading, think critically, and try to state the material in your own words.
- It isn't necessary to memorize everything written in the text. Instead, focus on reading selectively, extracting information that is relevant to your course and your purpose as a reader.

9. Don’t get stressed out

Your first line of defense against stress may be to reduce your symptoms of stress. Taking a walk, doing yoga, meditating, and “venting” about your stress are common examples of symptom reduction strategies. They are geared to relieve the more common symptoms of stress. Once your symptoms are
Learn to set priorities

Setting priorities for your responsibilities and commitments is very important. Some people do not know how to set priorities and become procrastinators. Using a "to-do list" places items in order of importance. One method is the ABC list. This list is divided into three sections; A, B, or C. The items placed in the A section are those needed to be done that day. The items placed in the B section need completion within the week. The C section items are those things that need to be done within the month. As the B and C items become more pertinent, they are bumped up to the A or B list. Try it or come up with your own method, but do something to set priorities.

Combine several activities

Another suggestion is to combine several activities into one time slot. While commuting to school, listen to taped notes. This allows up to an hour or two a day of good study review. While showering, make a mental list of the things that need to be done. When you watch T.V., shine your shoes or write letters, etc. These are just suggestions of what you can do to combine your time. There are other ideas you may want to try. Above all, be creative and let time work for you.

Conclusion

After scheduling becomes a habit, you can adjust your schedule. It's better to be precise at first. It is easier to find something to do with extra time than to find extra time to do something. Most importantly, make it work for you. A time schedule that is not personalized and honest is not a time schedule at all.

SOURCE: This workshop was taken from: Ten Secrets of University Success: http://www.yorku.ca/cde/lsp