

Tips for Success

- 1. Understand how to set goals.** Use the SMART goals method to help you as you set your goals. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely. It's easier to reach your goals when you have a clear plan on how to reach them.
- 2. Make planning a regular part of your life.** It's a good idea to sit down at the beginning of the week to plan out your week from everything to family life, schoolwork, your job, and any other commitments. Once you've done that, it's a good idea to spend a few minutes each day either in the morning or at night to update that day or the next day's schedule.
- 3. Ask for help when you need it.** Going back to school will take up a lot of time. It's okay to ask for help. This may be in the form of reaching out to your professor, the office of student success, or it could be reaching out to your family explaining that you need help at home with your kids and/or spouse picking up extra chores so you can study.
- 4. Look at where your time goes.** Sometimes it seems like we have no time to do anything, but when you take a close look at your use of time you find your spending hours scrolling through social media or watching TV. It's important to see where your time is going and try to control them.
- 5. Organize your schedule by like items.** When you must make calls, return emails, run errands you can easily start running in a million different directions at once. However, if you group certain tasks together this helps keep you more productive. For example, set aside 20 minutes to return emails, 30 minutes for phone calls, an hour to run errands. Make sure when running errands, you group them together by the side of town you'll be on so you're not running from one side to the other and back.
- 6. Ask about an alternative work schedule.** Although many students might work the typical 9-5, ask if you can try for an alternative work schedule to make juggling your different roles a bit easier. For example, see if you would work from home a couple days. This would cut down on your commute allowing more time in your schedule. Does a morning or evening work better for you to study? See if you can go into work earlier or later.
- 7. Prioritize the most important tasks.** Sometimes we have a lot on our to-do lists. Take a few moments and list out all the things you must do, and then rank them from most important to least important.
- 8. Don't Procrastinate.** Although, this is easier said than done. Procrastination is one of the biggest timewasters. The best way to beat procrastination is by setting firm goals and mapping out your day.
- 9. Treat yourself.** When you've finished a task reward yourself. This will make you more excited to complete your task.
- 10. Minimize distractions from your phone –** Turn your phone off, switch it to silent or Do not disturb mode when you're in class studying.
- 11. Avoid the perfectionism trap.** Aspire for excellence instead of perfection. Perfection is impossible to achieve. However, excellence is attainable. Although 100 on every assignment might be nice, a 94 on an assignment is an excellent grade and may allow your attention on other things that getting 100 would not.
- 12. Know yourself.** Make sure to schedule your highest priority task when you do your best work. For some it might be early in the morning, for others it might be late at night.
- 13. Sleep. Be Healthy.** Lack of sleep can reduce performance. It's also important to stay active. Trying to get up and going for short walks when you need a study break or do some stretching.
- 14. Build in Flexibility.** As an adult learner you need a flexibility mindset. Things will come up whether it is work, family, or school related. By scheduling in flexibility, you will be able to better manage the unforeseen things that can come up.

- 15. Don't just wait for things to build up.** Sometimes we have small tasks that we keep putting off, emailing and advisor, editing a paper, reviewing notes, etc. Small things like these can be accomplished in the spaces between other commitments. Make sure you are using that time wisely.
- 16. Know when it's celebration time.** Celebrate milestones. Make sure you acknowledge a job well done and give yourself and others permission to be proud of you and the hard work you've done.
- 17. Say no.** It's okay to say not to things that would be nice to do but aren't essential activities that might need to take a backseat for now.
- 18. Be Resilient.** It's important to be able to withstand difficult times. You will go through difficult times in your studies it's important to be optimistic and problem solve how you can get through this difficult time.
- 19. Identify Timewasters.** Pay attention to things that draw your focus away from your studies and assignments. No matter what these are set a goal not to engage in these during dedicated study time.
- 20. Start with the small tasks.** It's always good to start with small tasks first. It helps you to get those quick wins and feel accomplished for when you get to those large projects.
- 21. Only do one thing at a time.** When you attempt to juggle more than one assignment or task you tend to be less productive. It's important to give your full focus on one thing at a time.
- 22. Take Time Off.** As important, as it is to study it's also important to give yourself time off. You need to give your mind a rest.
- 23. You'll have days when you can study more than normal.** Take advantage of those days when you're in the zone. Relax when you're not.
- 24. Break large projects into smaller chunks.** Sometimes large projects can get overwhelming. However, when breaking them up into smaller chunks this makes them much easier to manage and can get you closer to your goal.
- 25. Only think about today and tomorrow.** It's important not to dwell on the past. Did you do poorly on an assignment? Okay, well let's look to the future and how we can do better moving forward.
- 26. Always take notes.** This includes classes, reading, etc. Don't rely on your brain to remember everything. Notes will give you a reference point.
- 27. Brain dumps.** Sometimes we sit down to study but have a lot of things going on in our head. Take 5 or 10 minutes to do a brain dump. Take a piece of paper and write down everything you're thinking off, so you don't have to remember it later.