

Getting Ready for Success!

Now that you've decided to continue your formal education, how can you make college a success while still meeting work and family obligations? Check out these expert tips to help you during that all-important first term:

1. CONGRATULATIONS on your decision - Don't panic! Just RELAX!!

While it may be unsettling to step into a classroom environment you haven't been in for some time, remember the experience you're bringing to the table.

2. Plan your timeframe, be flexible, be accountable.

Make an appointment with an education counselor who knows the requirements of your academic program. Map a plan to complete the program within your desired timeframe. Don't forget that flexibility is inherent in the academic plan. If you feel the workload isn't flowing well, then there's room for change. Balance and flexibility are keys to success.

3. Invest in a quality organizer/day planner.

Annotate all of your exam and project dates. Be sure to write down reminders of when your projects are due, so they don't sneak up on you. Also, be sure to start a list of the phone numbers of fellow students. It will come in handy when you're working on group projects and need to call each other.

4. Schedule your study time, use it, and guard it!

Do yourself a favor and schedule uninterrupted study time several days a week. You'll need this time to do research, write papers, and work on projects. Dedicated study time will allow you to complete your assignments faster, and in a quality manner by allowing you to focus on the goal at hand.

5. Form study groups.

Study groups are great tools to use for brainstorming, tutoring, and collaborating. Get in the habit of getting together before exams or when other projects are due. Throw around ideas and use the synergy to your advantage. Help someone out who may not be grasping the material. Chances are you'll retain the information better after thoroughly explaining it to someone else.

6. Don't procrastinate.

While certain situations arise that need to be dealt with, be sure to stick to your study program as closely as humanly possible. With your time being divided by family, work, school, and community events, it's critical to stay on track lest you run out of time.

7. Own a laptop or a personal computer

While many students get by with desktop computers at home, laptops make working on papers anywhere a breeze. With laptops you're not chained to your desk at home. If you get sent away on business by the boss, you can take the laptop with you and not miss a step.

8. Plan and cook ahead of time.

You may be running from work to class and not have time to cook a nice dinner. Plan your meals ahead of time, cook them, and package them in containers you can throw in a microwave before class. This will save you from having to eat fast-food every night before class. (It'll also save you many unnecessary pounds!)

9. Schedule down time.

Be sure to take personal time. Remember to take care of yourself and schedule gym time, salon time, reading time - whatever time it takes for you to feel rejuvenated. Life is a journey, not a destination.