

Three Self-Management Tools to Help Your Child Master Online Learning

By Essie Childers, Virtual Success Coach

Parents, and success partners, do not assume your child knows how to manage their time. In my Learning Frameworks class, I gave my students an online Excel spreadsheet to list their daily activities and the number of hours it took to complete them. Several students' activities totaled 28–30 hours, which made me realize everyone could use a refresher in time management. Whether or not this is your child's first online class, it is essential to manage one's time effectively. Without the regular structure of in-person classes, students can struggle with setting up their days, leading to procrastination and additional stress. Parents, to help your new online learners successfully manage their time, here's a few self-management tools I share with my students each semester:

Prioritize Next Actions

A next actions list, or to-do list, is where you record items to be completed, but not on a specific day. For example, you may have a list of 10 things to complete within the week. In choosing which items are important and urgent, students can review the [Time Management System](#) described by Stephen Covey.

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Quadrant I</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis • Pressing problems • Deadline driven projects 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Quadrant II</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship building • Finding new opportunities • Long-term planning • Preventive activities • Personal growth • Recreation
Not Important	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Quadrant III</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions • Emails, calls, meetings • Popular activities • Proximate, pressing matters 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Quadrant IV</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivia, busy work • Time wasters • Some calls and emails • Pleasant activities

Source

The Time Management System shows [four quadrants](#) indicating each task's importance and urgency. Is it urgent to wash your car? Probably not. So, you could wash your car later in the week. Using a next actions list, paired with the Time Management System, will help your students prioritize their tasks.

Get a Monthly View

Wait! I already created a weekly to-do list. Why do I need a monthly view? Creating a [monthly calendar](#) is an excellent way to record one-time events. The best part is that the events are listed chronologically. Students can take the syllabus from their classes and mark all of the due dates of their quizzes, exams, and assignments on the calendar—using a different color for each class. One can use either a traditional paper calendar or the calendar on their smartphone, but this way, they can easily view their entire workload for the month. Then, if they notice two exams listed on an upcoming Monday, they can make the wise decision to stay home that weekend and study.

Create an Online Schedule

Help your child create a next action list and a monthly calendar. Now comes the fun part where they need to learn how to become self-regulated learners. It is best to write down precisely what must be completed on given days in creating an online schedule. This schedule includes more than attending online classes. Students should consist of study times, lunch, breaks, time to visit with professors, work hours, etc. The most important thing here is to make the schedule and then stick to it. Consider the example below of a [HyFlex](#), eight-week class. In this scenario, the student has two courses for the first eight weeks with no classes on Friday.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:45 - 9:00 a.m.	ENGL 1301	ENGL 1301	ENGL 1301	ENGL 1301	Laundry, market, create next actions list
Take a break and prepare for the EDUC 1300 class.					
Noon - 1:15 p.m.	EDUC 1300	EDUC 1300	EDUC 1300	EDUC 1300	
Take a break and complete ENGL 1301 homework. Visit with a professor. Conduct library research, etc.					
2:00 - 5:00 p.m. - Open for homework, work, exercise or personal errands					
6:00 - 7:30 p.m. - Dinner and visit with friends					
7:00 - 10:00 p.m. - Homework					

Writing items down on a schedule like this helps students avoid procrastination and feeling like there "aren't enough hours in the day."

Our students will be facing enough challenges this fall. As parents, we can help alleviate some of their [anxiety](#) by helping our children to manage their time effectively. Encourage them to use these time-management tools, and you will help set the stage for their success this year and beyond.

For more student success tips and connect with a virtual success coach, visit www.mvitaconsulting.com.