

Secrets to Senior Success



11 Secrets to Achieving Your Personal Best in the Senior Years

A manual of tips and techniques from the experts:



**Enhanced Learning
Educational Services**
"the study skills specialist"



Human Connections
Helping People Change Lives



THE RESEARCH DEN
PLAN. RESEARCH. WRITE.

For single, individual and personal use only. Copying not permitted. Schools, educational organisations or groups must purchase a group license version from www.enhanced-learning.net

First Published 2012 by Enhanced Learning Educational Services and Human Connections
Copyright © Enhanced Learning Educational Services and Human Connections 2012

Reproduction and Communication by others

Except as otherwise permitted under the Act (for example for the services of the Crown or in reliance on one of the fair dealing exceptions i.e. a fair dealing for the purposes of research or study) no part of this resource may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, communicated or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission.

Copyright

To allow ELES to continue producing resources to support teachers, parents and students, we rely on your personal integrity to adhere to the copyright standards. Please do not make copies for other people or distribute in any form to anyone else. This would be a breach of copyright and a prosecutable offence. This resource has been purchased for individual use only. Schools, educational organisations or groups must purchase a group license version from www.enhanced-learning.net.

For further information:

Prue Salter



www.enhanced-learning.net
info@enhanced-learning.net

Rocky Biasi



www.humanconnections.com.au
info@humanconnections.com.au



**Enhanced Learning
Educational Services**
"the study skills specialist"




Human Connections
Helping People Change Lives

Record of Completion

Date Completed	No.	SECRET:
	1	Understanding the point of the senior years makes it a more meaningful experience. <i>By Prue Salter</i>
	2	There are ways you can get yourself more motivated to do your work for school. <i>By Rocky Biasi</i>
	3	Setting and writing down specific goals helps you move closer to achieving them. <i>By Rocky Biasi</i>
	4	There is a certain amount and type of work you will have to do and there are ways to be efficient and effective in how you do it. <i>By Prue Salter</i>
	5	Making your study notes as you go throughout the year makes exam time much less stressful and helps improve your marks. <i>By Prue Salter</i>
	6	Small actions and continuous improvement can make a big difference to overall results. <i>By Prue Salter</i>
	7	Essay writing does not have to be a painful process; there are steps you can follow to write great essays. <i>By Bronwyn Hall</i>
	8	If you think studying just means reading your notes over and over, think again. <i>By Prue Salter</i>
	9	If you get a bad mark, it is not the end of the world; it is an opportunity for learning - if you can just look at it a bit differently. <i>By Rocky Biasi</i>
	10	There are ways you can control and manage the stress you may experience in the senior years. <i>By Rocky Biasi</i>
	11	Not everyone knows exactly what they want to do when they leave school. <i>By Prue Salter</i>

SECRET 1:

Understanding the point of the senior years makes it a more meaningful experience.

 Read and highlight what you think are the most important points in the following 3 pages.

So you are or are becoming a senior student.

Welcome!

The first thing you have to get clear is the whole point of senior studies. Sometimes we get so focused on the marks and the end results, we forget about the journey along the way! Understanding what the senior years are REALLY about, makes it much easier for you to be motivated to actually make the most of the senior years.

 Before we start, what do YOU currently think the point of the senior years is?

.....

.....

.....

HOW IMPORTANT ARE RESULTS?

So let's examine some ideas around what the senior years are actually all about.

I guess we have to look at marks and academic results first. We can't deny that results are an important part of the senior years. They are just not the only important part! The marks you achieve will determine to some extent the initial path you take after school. Now not everyone needs certain marks to follow a particular path after school, as many people will start working, or find an apprenticeship or do a training course. But if you are thinking about going to university, here are some important facts to remember:

- Even if you don't get the marks you want, and don't get into the course you want, there are always other paths to get you to where you want to go. Many students start off in a related course, make sure they get good grades, then transfer after a year to the course they really want. It might take you 4 years instead of 3, but big deal, university is a nice life! Having an extra year there before you have to go out into the real world and

actually start working is not necessarily a bad thing.

- There are always multiple paths to get to where you want to go in life. The marks make it quicker, easier, but if you are truly passionate about a career you will find a way to get there. Never think there is only one way to get to the career you want.
- It is very unlikely that the career you begin when you leave school is the career you will still be in when you retire. It is expected that your generation will have around 10 different careers in your lifetime.



Briefly summarise in your own words the main points this section is making.

.....

.....

.....

And in the end, there is more to school and life than good marks. Lots of people who are very successful in life were not particularly good at school. In fact many people leave school and find out they are actually good at a whole heap of stuff, they just weren't particularly academic.

Now you might say, well if the marks are not the most important thing, and if there are always other paths to get to where you want to go, and good marks at school is not necessarily correlated with success in life, then why bother to study? Why have we bothered to write a whole resource for students about how to study better and get the best marks possible in the senior years?

REASONS TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE SENIOR YEARS

There are a number of reasons why you want to make the most of the senior years and put maximum effort into your studies:

1. KEEP DOORS OPEN

You want to have as much choice as possible at the end of Year 12. At this age your ideas change a lot, so you want to make sure that you aren't closing off any possibilities for pursuing particular careers or courses. Remember the marks can make your path easier.



No-one expects you to know exactly what you will do at the end of Year 12, but hopefully you have some ideas. What possibilities are you currently considering for after Year 12?

.....

.....

.....

2. DEVELOP SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

School is NOT just about exams and marks. Exams and marks are actually a very small part of the whole experience of school (although it doesn't feel much like that in Year 12).

- It is the learning and experiences you have during the senior years that is really important. The senior years are about new experiences, about learning, about developing skills, about interacting with others, expanding the way you think, fostering creativity... and much more.
- Now you might be saying something like, 'but I sit in class and I think to myself we're never going to use this in the real world'. To be honest, lots of the content you cover in class you may never use in life! But often the content is just a vehicle to teach you certain skills. If we want to teach you how to think critically, you may analyse a piece of Shakespeare, to teach problem solving skills Algebra will help your brain develop problem solving circuits. So when you get that feeling that what you are learning is a waste of time, then stop and think beyond the content, what are the skills your teacher is trying to develop?
- In addition to skills of communication, analysis, critical thinking, by making the most of the senior years you will also develop useful life skills such as organisational and time management skills. It is almost like you are put under all this pressure so that you will be forced to get these coping and management skills in place before you head out to the real world.
- As mentioned earlier, it is likely that no matter what you start doing you will probably change careers in your lifetime. Not to mention having to get certified along the way, pass promotional exams and so on. This means you have to learn how to learn, become what we call a 'lifelong learner' so that when you are confronted with something new, you know how to learn, you know how to study, and you know how to pass exams.
- Some of the most challenging skills to develop are self-discipline, persistence and the ability to stick with things and to make yourself do things even when you don't feel like doing them. Another challenging skill to develop is resilience, how to cope when things don't go your way, when you don't get the marks you want or when things get difficult. Being able to pick yourself up and try a different approach when things don't work out is one of the most beneficial life skills you can develop during the senior years. When you think about it, the senior years are uniquely placed to help you develop all of these skills!



Briefly summarise in your own words the main points this section is making.


.....

.....

.....

3. WALK AWAY WITH NO REGRET

One last reason to study... After a while, when you have left school for some time, the marks don't really mean very much anymore, you get on with your life and you are in a new stage. But the feeling of how you approached the senior years can stay with you. You want to walk away with no regrets, being able to say 'I did the best I possibly could, I may not have got the best marks, but I got the best marks I was capable of'. And that is a good feeling to walk away with, rather than feeling that you blew off 12+ years of schooling because you just couldn't be bothered putting the effort in.

 Do you feel like you can take this approach during the senior years? How different would this be from what you already do?


**Not everyone can get the BEST marks
But you can get the best marks YOU are capable of.**



SECRET 2:

There are ways you can get yourself more motivated to do your work for school.

The reason we started with understanding what the senior years are about is because a critical factor in getting motivated is having a "big why". Think about times when you are really motivated - about anything - and now reflect on WHY you were so motivated.

 Write down and reflect about a time when you were really motivated - about anything.

.....

.....

 Now write down WHY you were so motivated.

.....

.....

.....

WHY AM I DOING THIS?

Having a "big why" or an inspiring or compelling reason to do something is a necessary first step in accessing your motivation. So if you have not completed Secret 1, "Understanding the Point of the Senior Years", go back and do it!

WHAT IS MOTIVATION?

By the way, what is motivation? Well my simple definition is that motivation is a feeling, an emotional state that creates an excited, passionate energy that drives us (sometimes effortlessly) to take action.


The common mistake is that we "get motivation or that someone or something gets us motivated". The truth is that motivation is within us all. We don't have to wait for someone to get us pumped up or something to change for us to be motivated.

You may be thinking, "That's great, but how do I access inner motivation?" That's easy when we are doing what we love and feel happy and successful doing it.

The real question is, how do we get motivated to do what we know we need to do, but don't really want to do? That is much harder to do, but you manage to do it most days! Secret 2 will focus on the two most powerful strategies that drive human behaviour. By the way, you are actually already using these strategies. I want to help you become more aware of them and to use them to push past procrastination.

You know the experience when you receive an assessment task, you take some small steps to getting started, but perhaps the motivation may not be that strong at the start. However, the night before the assessment is due...regardless of motivation or whether you want to or not, you may be up all night completing the task.

Some students tell me that they can only get motivated to do the task at the last minute. But is it really motivation or could there be another reason you have the energy and effort required to stay up all night completing the assessment?

 Think about a time when you worked for hours the night before a task was due. List some reasons why the energy and effort was there at that time and perhaps not so when you first received the task.

.....

.....

.....

If your answers were similar to the thousands of responses I receive when I present to students, then your answer would be similar to, "I have to do it because it's due" and "If I don't get it in there will be big consequences."

Let's analyse why we are not that motivated when we receive our assessment or task until the last minute. It may not seem like rocket science, but what happened was that when we first received a task it didn't seem urgent and we indulged in more **fun and pleasurable activities**. However, the night before the task was due we became energised and motivated enough to put in the required effort to complete the task (even though we would rather do something else) because we wanted to **avoid the pain** that would come with our non-completion.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Our need to avoid pain and desire to gain pleasure are biologically driven and are the controlling force in our lives. People are driven by the need to:


1. Avoid pain
2. Gain pleasure

Mostly we will do far more to avoid pain than we will to gain pleasure. To change your behaviour, you must focus your attention on:

1. How not changing your behaviour will be more painful than changing it
2. How changing will bring more and immediate pleasure.

You must change what you link and associate PAIN and PLEASURE to in order to change your behaviour.

TIME TO TAKE ACTION

 Complete the table below. Column one has been completed as an example.

	Example	1	2	3
1	List 3 things you know you should do to make sure you achieve your personal best in senior school.	Study notes.		
2	What pain have you associated to doing these things?	- It's boring - I don't know how to do study notes - I'm too behind and don't know where to start.		
3	Rate zero to 10 (0-10) zero being no pain and 10 being absolute unbearable pain. How painful would doing this be?	↕ 5		
4	What was the pleasure you took from not doing these things in the past?	- I could hang out with friends. - Playing sport, having fun.		
5	What will it cost you if you don't do anything about this NOW?	- My exam results won't be as good. - I'll have regrets & disappointment.		
6	Rate zero to 10 (0-10) zero being no pain and 10 being absolute unbearable pain. How painful would it be to NOT take action on the issue you identified?	8.5		

TWO TOP TIPS:

1. To take action on the things you need to do (row 1) the pain rating in row 6 needs to be bigger (more painful) than the pain rating in row 3. That's because we would do far more to avoid pain than to gain pleasure.
2. So you need to think about how you can make the things you need to do for a successful senior school experience (what you identified in row 1) more fun and pleasurable.

5 MORE STRATEGIES TO ACCESS INNER MOTIVATION

1. TAKE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ACTION

Can you find ways to accept enjoy or be enthusiastic about what you're doing?

YES / NO / SOMETIMES

I hope you answered yes! That's because **how we feel has a lot to do with what we do and how we do it**. Enjoyment, Enthusiasm or Acceptance will help you take effective and efficient action. We have all had an experience when we do a task and it takes hours longer than what it should have because we were not in the best emotional state.

The truth is we will not be enthusiastic or enjoy some tasks. That is when bringing acceptance to it allows us to focus on what needs to happen. The alternative is to continue the argumentative self-talk we have about "hating" the task or this task is "stupid", or "why do I have to do this" etc.

When you are doing a task that you find hard to enjoy or be enthusiastic about, bring acceptance to it by focusing on realistic self-talk such as, "I don't want to do this task, I think it is a stupid task and I hate it, but I know it needs to be done so I may as well focus and get it done as effectively and efficiently as possible so I'm not spending wasteful time focusing on why I don't like it."

2. CREATE ENERGY

Do you take care of your body? Exercise, breaks, enough sleep, eat well, drink enough water?

YES / NO / SOMETIMES

When we are feeling tired and sluggish it's very hard to get motivated to take action. While this seems like common sense many people neglect looking after themselves physically and wonder why they don't have the energy to do what needs to be done.

3. CREATE EMPOWERING SELF-TALK

Do your thoughts and emotions generally help you achieve what you want?

YES / NO / SOMETIMES

WE DO WHAT WE THINK ABOUT! That is because what we think and focus on creates how we feel and our emotions drive our behaviour. How do you behave when you feel relaxed, happy and excited? Compare that to when you feel tired, stressed or worried (see Secret 10 for how to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts).

4. FOSTER A STRONG PEER INFLUENCE

Do your friends and family support and encourage you in your goals?

YES / NO / SOMETIMES

The one common thing successful people throughout the ages ensure is that they have successful people around them. That may include, friends, family, mentor/s or a team. In many ways the level of health, happiness, prosperity, success etc. we have is a direct reflection of who we spend time with.

5. ADOPT A CHUNKING APPROACH

*Do you break large tasks down into manageable parts?
Do you reward yourself after you complete each part?*

YES / NO / SOMETIMES


Remember, emotion drives behaviour. When we become overwhelmed with the amount of work we need to do we experience psychological pain. In the table above you discovered that humans will do anything to avoid pain. Breaking large overwhelming tasks into small manageable parts helps us focus on a small task, feel better when it's done and that contributes to our desire to do more.

SECRET 3:

Setting and writing down specific goals helps you move closer to achieving them.

With motivation in place, it's time to decide what you are going to aim for.

Hundreds of millions of people around the world know that setting and writing goals is an essential step in achieving what we want. Although this is common knowledge and something all successful people do, the majority of people fail to set and write down their goals.

 *As you read, highlight the key ideas on this page. Were you aware of this information?*

THE POWER OF SETTING AND WRITING GOALS

Tony Robbins cited an old study conducted in 1953 at Yale University. The study interviewed the graduating class with a series of questions including, how many had a clear specific set of goals with a written plan for their achievement. Less than 3% had a specific goal with a written plan. 20 years later in 1973 the surviving class members of the class of '53 were interviewed again to find out what their lives were like. The 3% of people who had specific goals and a written plan for their achievement appeared to be happier, more well adjusted, more excited about their lives as a whole. While these attitudes and emotional responses are subjective, there was a response that was quantitative. The group of people who had written goals were worth more in financial terms than the other 97% of the class that did not have goals. This is just one of the thousands of examples and studies that illustrate the power of goal setting.

Goal setting is a powerful process for thinking about your ideal future, and for motivating yourself to turn your vision of this future into reality.

 *Can you think of 5 examples where you have set goals and attained them?*

WHY SETTING AND WRITING GOALS WORKS

1. Regardless of who we are we all have goals we want to achieve no matter how big or small or how far away or soon we want to achieve them. You would NOT set out on a major journey with no real idea of your destination. Setting goals helps us become clear on our destination (what we want to achieve) and having a written plan gives us direction (how we are going to get there).

2. Dr. Maxwell Maltz in his book *Psycho-Cybernetics* points out that every creature on the planet has a goal-seeking mechanism. That is, when we know how to activate it (and this section will help you do that) our brains will drive us towards our goal. Napoleon Hill in *The Law of Success* wrote this about the power of goal setting: '*Any definite chief aim that is deliberately fixed in the mind and held there with determination to realise it finally saturates the entire subconscious mind until it automatically influences the body toward the attainment of that purpose.*'

So goal-setting - having a chief aim and fixing it in our minds - is an important part of achieving what we want and being successful.


GOAL SETTING TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

It sounds easy to just say you really need to set goals and have a plan for achieving them. The reason why many people don't write goals is because they have not experienced success setting and writing goals. Here are some tips to help.

SMART Goals

A useful way of making goals more powerful is to use the SMART mnemonic. While there are plenty of variants (some are in parenthesis), SMART usually stands for:

- **S** - Specific (or Significant).
- **M** - Measurable (or Meaningful).
- **A** - Achievable (or Action-Oriented).
- **R** - Realistic (or Rewarding).
- **T** - Time-sensitive (or Trackable).

 Have you heard of this concept before? As each component is explained below, highlight the main points to remember in each section.

SPECIFIC: A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

- *Who: Who is involved?
- *What: What do I want to accomplish?
- *Where: Identify a location.
- *When: Establish a time frame.
- *Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- *Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be, "Get in shape." But a specific goal would say, "Join a gym and workout 3 days a week."

MEASURABLE: Create concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the achievement of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to the continued effort required to reach your goal. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as:


- How much? How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

ACHIEVABLE: When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities and skills to achieve your goals.

REALISTIC: To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective which you are both *willing* and *able* to work toward.


TIMELY - A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there's no sense of urgency. If you anchor your goal within a timeframe, "by May 1st", then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

TIME TO TAKE ACTION

 Use the table below to set 4 SMART goals for school. An example has been included.

INTENTION	GOAL				
	SPECIFIC	Measurable	Attainable	Relevant	Time Based
What is it that you want to achieve?	Who? What? Why? Where? When?	How Much? How often? How many?	Achievable?	Is it important to what you want to achieve ultimately?	When?
Increase my study.	I will increase my study by 5 hours a week because it will give me the best chance to achieve my personal best and help me enjoy and be prepared for Senior School. I will increase my study at school and home. I will start this week.	I will increase my home study by 5 hours a week and do an extra hour Monday to Friday.	I can achieve this goal because it is important to me and I have done it at times previously.	Yes, I don't want to have regrets at the end of Senior School.	Starting now for 3 months then I will review my goal.

SEVEN COMMON GOAL SETTING MISTAKES

 Read through the 7 common mistakes and rank them from 1 (one you make most often) to 7 (one you are least likely to make). Then check you have not made these mistakes on the previous page.

Mistake 1: SETTING UNREALISTIC GOALS Rank

The key to setting goals is to make them realistic and challenging. Setting low or easy goals will not motivate or inspire you. On the other hand setting unrealistic goals that overwhelm you will lead to frustration and failure.

Mistake 2: FOCUSING ON TOO FEW AREAS Rank

Many people focus solely on their work when they set goals. However, you can't neglect activities that bring you joy and happiness. Make your goal setting a balanced approach that includes several areas of your life.

Mistake 3: UNDERESTIMATING COMPLETION TIME Rank

If you don't estimate goal completion time accurately, it can be discouraging when things take longer to achieve than you think they should. This can cause you to give up.

Mistake 4: NOT APPRECIATING FAILURE Rank

No matter how hard you work, you will fail to achieve goals from time to time. We've all been there, and it isn't fun! However, your failures are what ultimately determine your character. They also contain lessons that can change your life for the best, if you have the courage to learn from them. So don't be too upset if you fail to achieve your goals - just take note of where you went wrong and use that knowledge to reach your goals next time around.

Mistake 5: SETTING "OTHER PEOPLE'S GOALS" Rank

Some people (family, friends, or teachers) may want to influence the goals you set. Perhaps they feel that they know what's best for you, or maybe they want you to take a certain path or do certain things. It's important that you have a good relationship with these people and listen carefully to their advice. However, striving to achieve a goal that you don't want will not work!

Mistake 6: NOT REVIEWING PROGRESS Rank

- It takes time to accomplish goals. And sometimes it can feel that you aren't making much progress. This is why it's important to take stock of everything that you've accomplished on a regular basis.
- Set small sub-goals, celebrate your successes, and analyse what you need to do to keep moving forward. No matter how slow things seem, you probably are making progress!
- You can also take this opportunity to update your goals, based on what you've learnt. Have your priorities changed? Or do you need to set aside extra time for a particular goal activity? Goals are never set in stone, so don't be afraid to amend them if you need to.

Mistake 7: SETTING "NEGATIVE" GOALS Rank

How you think about your goal can influence how you feel about it, and whether you achieve it. For instance, many people have a goal to "lose weight". However, this goal has a negative connotation; it's focused on what you don't want - your weight. A positive way to reframe this goal is to say you want to "get healthy".

SECRET 4:


There is a certain amount and type of work you will have to do and there are ways to be efficient and effective in how you do it.

Now you are feeling motivated and have some goals in place, time to think about what actions you need to take in order to maximise your chances of achieving these goals.

POINTS TO CONSIDER ABOUT TIME REQUIRED

The first thing to consider is how much work you will need to do in the senior years. A few points to consider:

- What you are about to go through is not really normal. It is not normal life to go to school all day, then have to work and study at night. And to have to do that over and over for a period of 2 years. Yes it is not fair. But everyone has to go through this in the senior years. Of course you'll still have fun times along the way, but here's the good news. It is unlikely you will ever have to study again with such prolonged intensity like you need to in the senior years. Even at university it is unlikely to be like this, you will have busy periods, but not this prolonged intensity. You need to keep reminding yourself, every day is 1 day less you have to study like this!
- There is usually a large gap between the work required up to Year 10 and the work required in the senior years. Many students have not had to work real hard up to Year 10, in fact many people have been cruising! The danger is that some students think they can take the same approach in the senior years, and by the time they realise that this is not the case, they are already behind in their work with a string of disappointing marks behind them. Don't let this happen to you. Accept right from the start of Year 11 that the amount of work needed is likely to be more than in Year 10.

 How hard did you work in Year 10? Will you need to change your approach for the senior years?

.....

.....

.....

- This does mean that life may need to be a little different in the senior years. Certainly keep the things you are passionate about, but you may need to cut back on your activities. See friends, play sport, work in a part-time job, but be realistic about how much you can handle in the senior years.



What outside school activities or commitments will you have in the senior years? Do you think this is realistic? Can you foresee any issues or problems?

.....

.....

.....

HOW MUCH WORK SHOULD YOU BE DOING?

So how much time should you be spending on schoolwork? Many schools and teachers are reluctant to put a number on this as different schools and parents will have different expectations, different students work at different speeds, just to mention a few of the factors that affect the time required for school.

However if you have a rough idea of what might be 'normal', then you can adjust your approach accordingly.

So here's a guide. Remember your school and parents might say you need to do more (or less) and in that case their opinion (based on much more specialised knowledge of your personal situation) should take priority over these general guidelines.


Absolute minimum amount of work per night: 1.5 hours (10 hours per week)

Average amount of schoolwork per night most students would do in Year 11: 2 hours (14 hours per week)

Students really keen to do well: up to 3 hours per night (20 hours per week)

During Year 12: 2-4 hours per night (14 to 30 hours per week)

Note that there is both a per day amount of study time (and yes on the weekends too) and a weekly amount. People with busy lives will find it difficult to do a consistent amount of schoolwork each day, sometimes they will need to do less on one day and more on another day - for these people a weekly amount of study time to aim for is much more effective.

 So what do you think of the time guidelines given above? How do they compare to your own personal situation? How much time will you aim to spend on schoolwork each night or week?

.....

.....


.....

WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY DO DURING THAT TIME?

Some students say 'well our teacher doesn't give us 2 hours of homework'. That's because in the senior years there are two types of work. There is the compulsory stuff, the work you have to do. Homework, assessments, exams. Then there is the optional work. This is the stuff you choose to do when you don't have much homework. It is different from the junior years, you are not doing the work because your teachers or parents say so, you are working now for yourself, for your future. If you don't have homework, then you should use your home study time to work on things that will help you understand your subjects better.

So, each afternoon:

1. Do homework first. What is due tomorrow, what is most urgent, what work has been set?
2. Then work on any assessments that are coming up, assignments, tests, what do you need to start planning for or working on?
3. Once all of the compulsory work is done, if there is still time left out of your allocated time for schoolwork (between 1.5-4 hours per night, see above), then you begin the optional work to improve your learning in your subjects:
 - make study notes
 - review previous topics
 - do extra questions from your textbook
 - do questions from revision sheets or a study guide
 - practise writing essays
 - do extra reading or research on a topic
 - work on difficult areas of the subject
 - ask your teacher what else you could work on for this subject.

 Is this the approach you have taken in the past? Or do you need to make some changes to the way you think about your work in the senior years?

.....


.....

.....

For many students this is a real change in the way they approach their work. Many junior students are used to just finishing the work as quickly as possible, so they can have as much free time as possible! The thought of doing 'extra' work is just something they would never have previously considered. This is another example of how the senior years are different. But for many students it is a real challenge to move into this mindset. They stay in denial for much of Year 11 until eventually they finally realise, yes, the senior years are different and yes, they have to do more than just the work the teacher sets for them. The sooner you can move into this mindset, the better.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY AT HOME


So now you know how much work you should be doing, and you know what to do during that time. The challenge is now to do it as effectively and as efficiently as possible. You do after all want to still have a life in the senior years! Here are some tips to help you work better at home.

 Tick off the ones you already do:

- Work in half hour blocks and keep schoolwork and personal life separate.
- Don't try and do work in front of the TV, or while Facebook is open, otherwise it will take you heaps longer to get the work done.
- Choose distinct blocks of time to focus on schoolwork. You may even like to draw up a study timetable.

- Plan your time.
- Have a term planner or calendar on the wall with your assessments on it.
- Use your diary to plan when you will do the work for your assessments.
- Each afternoon make a plan of what work you will do and in what order.
- Use your phone to set reminders for work to be done, assessments coming up.

- Manage your distractions effectively.
- Switch technology off.
- Put phones in another room.
- Ask your family to help if you have no willpower.
- Work in a different space like a school or public library.
- Use blocking software to help you if you don't have much discipline - check out 'Self Control' for MAC and 'Freedom' for PC and MAC.

 What are your main distractions? How well can you make yourself work at home? What else could you try?

.....

.....

.....

SECRET 5:

Making your study notes as you go throughout the year makes exam time much less stressful and helps improve your marks.

WHAT ARE STUDY NOTES?

Study notes are where you take all the information from your notes in class, your handouts, your textbook and any other sources of information (like study guides) and you write out in an organised way in point form the information you need to understand or learn or use.

It is not just re-writing your notes from class, it is re-combining all information on a topic to make a new set of condensed notes. Notes are your attempt to narrow down the information you need to learn to the essentials and arrange information from a number of sources in a logical and organised manner. Basically you are gathering everything you need to know and reducing and arranging it in a way that will make it easier to work with and to learn from.

 *Have you made study notes before? What are your notes like? How often did you do them?*

.....

.....

.....

WHY MAKE STUDY NOTES?

- **ALLOWS YOU TO CONDENSE AND ORGANISE THE INFO TO LEARN**
The process of making notes helps you see if you understand the topic and helps you to start getting the information into your long term memory. This is particularly important when you will have exams that will test a number of topics. Trying to read through all the information and retain it can be very difficult, by reducing and organising the information you make it easier for your brain to learn and remember the information.
- **HELPS YOU CONCENTRATE AND RETAIN INFO**
Another advantage is that when we just read through information, it can be difficult to keep focused on what we are reading and absorb the content.

This resource continues for another
30 pages

SAMPLE