

# 'Assignment Planner'

## Quick Quiz



### For You To Do:

Answer YES or NO to the following questions:

1. Have you ever been late handing in an assignment? Y / N
2. Do you ever leave an assignment to the last minute? Y / N
3. Have you ever had good intentions but ran out of time to finish your assignment and had to rush at the end? Y / N
4. Do you think you are at all addicted to cramming? Y / N
5. Do you sometimes procrastinate when it comes to working on an assignment? Y / N

"Are you addicted to cramming? Break the cycle and start actively planning and scheduling."

### Special points of interest:

"Just trying to do work on an ad-hoc basis can make you feel like a swimmer struggling against the current. You need a plan!"

*Fail to Plan  
and you  
Plan to Fail*

## How to use the 'Assignment Planner':

- Ensure you are clear about the requirements of the task – if you are not, see your teacher for clarification as soon as possible.
- The day you are given the assignment, that night find a quiet space and time and brainstorm every thought that comes into your head about the assignment. Think about what would be required to complete the task, what sorts of research you will need to do, what steps are involved to finish the task and any ideas you have about the task. Record absolutely every thought that comes into your head to start with – let your creativity roll and don't discount any ideas. Try and jot down all your initial ideas for about 10-15 minutes.
- Use the grid over the page to organise and structure your thoughts.
- Estimate the time it will take for each section of the task. Err on the side of overestimation rather than underestimation.
- Decide when you will schedule each step of the assignment. Your initial plan may change due to other work commitments, but it is important to have a framework towards which you work. Write a reminder for each step into your homework diary.

# 'ASSIGNMENT PLANNER' GRID

## Time Management Technique 3

Place the assignment planner in a prominent position above your desk but also write the scheduled steps into your diary as homework for those days. Reschedule when necessary but try and stay close to your schedule. Be aware of how much 'slack' you have in your schedule and when you are just going to have to knuckle down and complete those steps.

Other brainstormed ideas and thoughts about the assignment:	Assignment steps to complete:	Length of time required to complete step:	Time scheduled to complete step:
	Steps related to preliminary planning and working out what needs to be done:		
	Steps related to research and gathering information:		
	Steps relating to organising the material you collect:		
	Steps relating to writing drafts of the assignment:		
	Steps relating to completing the assignment and working on final presentation elements:		

# 'Using Quadrants'

Quick Quiz



**For You To Do:**

Answer YES or NO to the following questions:

1. Do you think of yourself as an effective person? Y / N
2. Do you ever get bogged down in trivial tasks? Y / N
3. Are you good at focusing on working on what is really important in helping you learn and understand your subjects? Y / N
4. Do you always have a clear picture of why you are doing each piece of work you do and how it will help you reach your goals? Y / N

"Prioritising gives you a better sense of how to distribute and focus your time and energy."

## How to 'Use Quadrants':

**Special points of interest:**

Try to avoid letting your emotions make the decision about what to work on.

Try to plan ahead where possible to ensure that you can always find plenty of time for Quadrant 1 tasks.

"Keep an open mind and experiment with new techniques. Not every technique will suit everyone but you won't know till you try."

- You may have heard of Dr Covey's excellent book 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People'. Dr Covey introduces the idea of quadrants to help you decide where to allocate your time.
- You just have to consider 2 things. What is the urgency of the task? Sort everything into urgent and not urgent first. Now how important is the task? Once you have determined the answer to these questions you can slot each task into one of the quadrants below:

<p><u>Quadrant 1 – do first</u> Tasks that are IMPORTANT and URGENT</p>	<p><u>Quadrant 2 – do second</u> Tasks that are IMPORTANT but not urgent.</p>
<p><u>Quadrant 3 – do third</u> Tasks that are URGENT but not important.</p>	<p><u>Quadrant 4 – do fourth</u> Tasks that are not urgent and not important.</p>

- The aim is to focus on doing what is really important – not necessarily what is urgent. This can be a real twist in thinking for many students.

# 'USING QUADRANTS' GRID

Time Management Technique 8

1. Take each of the tasks you need to do, decide first if it is urgent or not then how important it is.
2. Complete Quadrant 1 tasks first. People usually do this naturally.
3. Now work on Quadrant 2. Many students focus on Quadrants 3 and 4 before Quadrant 2. They are not focusing on what is really important. This is the whole aim of this technique - to focus your energies in the right direction and avoid getting bogged down in low priority tasks.

<p><u>Quadrant 1 – do first</u> Tasks that are IMPORTANT and URGENT</p>	<p><u>Quadrant 2 – do second</u> Tasks that are IMPORTANT but not urgent.</p>
<p><u>Quadrant 3 – do third</u> Tasks that are URGENT but not important.</p>	<p><u>Quadrant 4 – do fourth</u> Tasks that are not urgent and not important.</p>

While you may find it easy to distinguish between urgent and non-urgent goals, deciding how important something is can be difficult. If you are having trouble, rank each of the tasks as either A B or C. Then it is easy, A goes into the important category, C goes to the unimportant. Then you take the B categories and reclass these into A B or C. Keep repeating this until you have finally decided where each task belongs.