A Time Management Workshop
Distance Learning: Do you have Time?

Presented
By
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1.0 Introduction

This workshop is designed to provide information about time management for students who are considering enrolling in a distance education program. Distance education programs offer an alternative method for students who may have barriers to the “traditional” on-campus programs. “Time planning and management, which refers to budgeting time effectively, has been highly correlated with academic achievement. Research suggests that students who keep careful records of time spent on assigned learning tasks begin to recognize patterns in their own use of study time and develop an appreciation for the value of effective time management and its impact on academic achievement” (Dabbagh and Kitsantas, 2004). Preparing for your time as a distance learner is an important factor as it can lead to a successful learning experience.

2.0 Lesson Plan: Distance Learners Workshop

2.1 Objective/ Outcome

- To assist potential distance students in time management skills in preparing for learning through the distance education format.

2.2 Skill

- Ability to manage time more effectively as a distance learner.

2.3 Target Audience

Distance education has gained in popularity. “An estimated 1.2 million students in the United States-seven percent of all post-secondary students-enrolled in wholly online degree programs in 2005” (Kamberg, 2007). Distance learners are diverse, though they are “generally adult learners, mature, employed, and have family obligations. They have higher motivation and are willing to take responsibility for their own education. Distance learners are self-directed, study on an independent basis. They learn in a variety of ways and take control over their learning” (Sacchanand, 2002). Distance learning, while convenient and flexible, can be a demanding and exhausting venture while at the same time rewarding for personal growth and professional development.

2.4 Material needed

The materials needed for this workshop will include a computer with Internet access and a data projector. Workshop participants will be given handouts for time management. At the end of the workshop, they will be given workshop evaluation forms.
2.5. Program

2.5.1 Introduction

“Good evening and welcome to this workshop. My name is Nancy Klinefelter and I am a graduate student pursuing a Masters of Library and Information Science degree at the University of Washington through their distance learning program. I earned my bachelor’s degree in communications through Old Dominion University’s distance program as well. As you can probably tell, I am well-versed in distance education!”

“On a more personal note, I am married to my wonderful husband Gary and we have four very busy teenagers. Also, I work full-time as a Digital Imaging Librarian for Group Health Cooperative.”

“I would like to ask you some questions now. By show of hands….”

At this point, I will ask the participants to raise their hands to the following questions:

- “How many of you are employed? Full-time? Part-time? Self-employed?”
- “How many of you have obligations that make it difficult to go to school on-campus? Families? Other activities?”
- “How many of you are simply curious and may pursue a distance program, but do not know where to start?”

“Well, you have all come to the right place. The reason I am having this workshop is to share what I feel is important in preparing for a distance program and that’s time management. I hope that when you leave tonight, you will have a better idea about how to manage your time for distance learning should you decide to pursue it.

“You are all part of the growing population of people deciding to return to school. Many of you may want to return to school for professional development or for personal enrichment. Regardless of the reason, the traditional method of attending school poses a barrier for you. Also, I chose to hold this workshop in the evening. For most of us who work, have families, or have other daytime activities, the evening time is when school work tends to be done.”

“We will first start with a discussion and powerpoint presentation about time management, then we will watch a short entertaining video. Then we will spend some time going over the handouts.”

“At the end of this workshop, I would appreciate it if each of you will complete the workshop evaluation. This will help for designing this workshop as well as other workshops in the future.”

“Thank you again for being here. Before we get started, does anyone have any questions?”

I will answer questions.
Discussion

I addressed the Attention and Relevance concepts of Keller’s ARCS model by asking questions relating to activities that pose as barriers to the “traditional” method of attending school. As a group activity, it is intended to gain a general consensus of the group without eliciting personal information. Also, the questions serve to let all participants know that their busy lives are something they share in common. I shared my educational background with the group so they would know that I have personal experience with distance education. Sharing some personal information about my family and work life further demonstrates to the group that they are not alone; that it is possible to pursue an education while managing everyday life. Participants will gain a better understanding of time management and its relevance to distance learning.

2.5.2 Body of the Lesson

Skill 1: Effective Time Management

Steps

- Lecture with Powerpoint presentation
- Video on time management
- Review handouts
- Class Activity (time permitting)

Method

This workshop is designed to meet the needs of diverse learning styles based on McCarthy’s 4MAT framework (1997). Each step of the workshop provides an opportunity for participants to experience, reflect, and participate. The powerpoint presentation combined with discussion allows participants to engage in open dialogue to further enhance their learning and share experiences. The video relates to visual learners which enhance the powerpoint presentation by showing an example of a student’s problems with time management. The hand-outs offer students an opportunity to examine and evaluate how they distribute their time on any given day. Finally, the crossword puzzle was added simply for fun. Each step of this workshop reinforces the next step to help participants learn strategies for time management.
Task

- Powerpoint Presentation: This presentation will be used to explain strategies for effective time management.
  - Purpose of time management
  - Important components of effective time management
  - Setting goals
- Video- a short video of a student getting assistance with his time management skills from a fairy.
- Review handouts
- Class Activity
  - Time management crossword puzzle

3.0 Evaluation/Conclusion

Summary

I will summarize by highlighting some specific points from this presentation.

“I know it seems like there is a lot to do to prepare for a distance program. There were times when I thought I was going to pull my hair out! However, with careful planning, prioritizing, and goal-setting, you can successfully complete a distance program while managing your other daily activities. Time management is personal, yet essential for incorporating distance learning into our busy lifestyles.”

“I hope this workshop has given you ideas and suggested ways for you to manage and balance your time whether you decide to seek a distance education or simply for your daily activities.”

“Please take some time, excuse the pun, to look at the handouts. The time management questionnaire is designed for students, but will give you an idea of how much time you may need as a student.”

“As I mentioned at the beginning of the workshop, there is an evaluation form I would like you to complete. It’s completely anonymous and confidential and will be used in designing future workshops like this.”
“Thank you for coming and have a great evening!”

**Discussion**

I addressed the Confidence and Satisfaction concepts of Keller’s ARCS model by actively and positively engaging in the discussion of time management. Throughout the workshop, I shared some personal stories, some good and some unfortunate, of my experiences as a distance learner. It is my belief that when students feel confident about the instructor that they will gain more confidence within themselves.

**Participant Learning Assessment**

Learning assessment in time management would occur through active discussion throughout the workshop. Time management strategies will differ among individuals. Each will develop his or her own strategy. I observed participant behavior and non-verbal cues; from time to time pausing to ask questions or to clarify main points. This formative type of assessment further allows me to adjust the workshop while in progress to assure student learning and understanding of time management concepts.

### 4.0 Further Training

Time management is an individual process. As such, potential distance learners need to assess their personal style for managing tasks. The following websites, though there are many more, offer additional suggestions for managing time:

- Study Guides and Strategies- [http://www.studygs.net/index.htm](http://www.studygs.net/index.htm)
- Helium- a website for writers, but offers valuable information for students as well- [http://www.helium.com/](http://www.helium.com/)
- Many college websites offer information about distance programs.
5.0 Bibliography


[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se8Xncrpn24](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=se8Xncrpn24).

Time Management for Life: How to Balance Life and Academics. 
Appendix A: Workshop handouts

Time Management Questionnaire

Answer “YES” or “No” to the following questions.

1._____Have you estimated how many hours you need to study this semester?

2._____Do you tend to complete your assignments on time?

3._____Have you estimated how long it takes to read one chapter in each of your textbooks?

4._____Do you begin working on long-term assignments at the beginning of the semester?

5._____Do you make lists of things to do in your head rather than on paper?

6._____Do you participate in social activities even when you know you should be studying?

7._____Do you schedule time to study for exams?

8._____Do you have a job that requires more than 20 hours a week?

9._____Do you know exactly what tasks you are going to do when you sit down to study?

10._____Do you do the assignments from your favorite class first?

Give yourself one point for each YES answer to all questions except 5, 6, 8, and 10, and one point for each NO answer to questions 5, 6, 8, and 10. Total your points. A low score indicates a need for help with time management and a high score indicates use of effective time management techniques.

(courtesy of University of Buffalo, Buffalo, Ny) http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/timeqw.doc.


**Improving time management skills**

**Action Plan**

As another exercise in the crucial skill of time management, it is suggested that, as things come up that need to be done, you list them on the printout form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items in order of Importance/Priority:</th>
<th>Special preparation required?</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.g.: <em>Finish Seminar</em></td>
<td>Photocopy overhead transparencies</td>
<td>Tomorrow pm</td>
<td>Buy acetate sheets from SU shop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week beginning: 2/23/2010

**Courtesy of:** University of Gloucestershire: Personal Development Planning: PDP for Students: Learning and Personal Development (LPD), http://www.glos.ac.uk/pdp/pdpstudents/ldp/index.cfm
Improving time management skills

Daily To Do List

1. Each day refer to Personal action plan and choose appropriate items for action.
2. Schedule these items into their appropriate time slots:
   a. Be sure that you have planned to work on one item of major importance every day.
   b. Schedule your most difficult work during your periods of peak mental effectiveness.
   c. Try to allow for some spaces throughout the day so that you are not overly pressured.

To Do List

Day: 2/23/2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items in order of Importance/Priority:</th>
<th>Time Allocated</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: E.g.: Return books to Learning Centre</td>
<td>15 min 8.45-9am</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>4 books to return to FCH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time Management Crossword Puzzle (courtesy of pbskids.org)

Across
4. Something you wear that tells time, or staring at the area between your arm and hand. (2 words)
8. Kids sometimes hate to get this from teachers, but it's an important part of learning school lessons.
10. Dropping an activity because you don't have enough time for it is not the same as being a_______.
11. These can compete for your attention while you're trying to get important things done.
14. Putting off until later what you could be doing now is called_______.
15. If you get everything done with time to spare, you can kick back and_______.
16. Use one of these to plan out your month.
17. How much time, or money, you have to spend is called your_______.
19. It's what you do when you're in a hurry, or famous monument "Mount_______more."

Down
1. Deciding what things to spend your time on means choosing these.
2. We can't slow down or get more time, but we can learn how to________ it.
3. It provides entertainment and education, but it can also lead to a lot of wasted time.
5. You might get a"______toy with purchase," or spend some "________ time" by yourself.
6. Things that require time and effort over several weeks, months, or years are called_______. goals. (2 words)
7. Something that can easily take too much of your time, or spider's silk stretched across the globe. (3 words)
9. If you don't have enough time for all the clubs, sports, and activities you're signed up for, you're_______.
12. Experts agree you should get about eight hours of this a night.
13. You can carry this around to record your daily tasks and responsibilities.
16. It's usually easier to just do a household_______. than complain about it.
18. We set these for ourselves to help us get things done.
Answers
Appendix B

Workshop Evaluation

What did you learn from this workshop that will be the most useful?

What aspects of this workshop were the least useful?

Do you wish more time or explanation was provided for any topics covered in this workshop? If so, what topics?

Are there topics that you wish were covered in this workshop? If so, what are they?

How would you change about this workshop to make it more useful for future participants?

Do you think you will have better time management skills as a result of this workshop?

Is distance learning in your future plans?

Anything else? Any and all suggestions and/or comments welcome.

Thank you!