GO2GRAD

TO ENHANCE, TO EMPOWER, TO ENRICH

NEWSLETTER

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SELF-LEARNING
RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW TO CONQUER
YOUR NEW SEMESTER

BREAKING
DOWN 5 DIFFERENT
TYPES OF BLENDED
LEARNING

3 GREAT SELF-LEARNING RECOMMENDATIONS

By: Ole Krarup

Whether you are still in school or want to keep your mind active while pursuing other goals, brushing up on your knowledge might not be a bad idea. Luckily for you, the age of self-learning is upon us. There are so many free audio books, lectures, and tutorials on any conceivable topic online that it's difficult to know where to begin. Check out my personal recommendations below and get started learning at your own pace.

BLUE1BROWN

Whether you want to pursue Quantum Mechanics and Machine Learning, or just want to pass that one stupid Calculus class so you can get on with your life, I highly recommend checking out this YouTube channel by the mathematician, Grant Sanderson. Using beautiful animations and step-by-step guides, otherwise complicated math and physics topics are explained so anyone can follow along.

THE HISTORY OF ROME

In this marathon podcast, Mike Duncan traces the origins, rise and fall of one of the most influential societies in human history. The lessons that can be drawn from his chronological explanation of Rome's evolution are extremely relevant today - wars with other ancient nations, the internal conflicts between plebians and toga-wearing aristocrats as well as the spread of language, trade, and culture in the Mediterranean. If nothing else, it is an exciting, real-life tale of struggle, triumph, treachery, and decline that makes Game of Thrones look like a tea-party.

BASIC ECONOMICS

Why do some companies succeed while others fail? Why is a beachfront property so expensive? And how many shoplifters does it take to put a convenience store out of business? All these questions and many more are answered by economist Thomas Sowell in this audio book. Through real-life examples that are easy to remember, core lessons about economics are illustrated. Check it out, whether you fancy yourself an entrepreneur or just want to understand your spending habits better.

Hopefully, these recommendations are enough to spark your interest. There is a lot more great learning material out there, so don't hesitate to explore it!
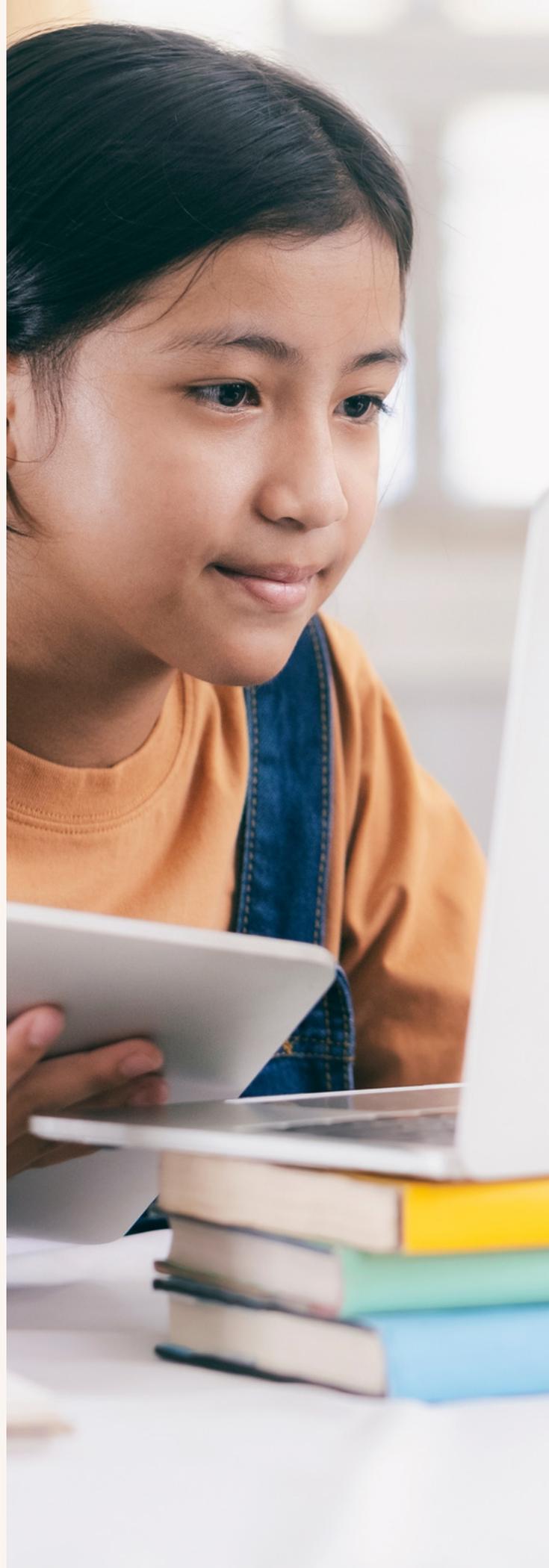
ARC MATHS

RACHEL DUNSMORE, CREATOR

"I've designed ARC Maths to help students retain the maths skills and knowledge that they are taught at school, by interrupting the process of forgetting. The handwriting recognition technology sets it apart from other online learning tools. It can recognize even complex algebraic expressions, so we've been able to move beyond multiple-choice questions and students can input answers in a way that more closely resembles their schoolwork.".

# BREAKING DOWN 5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF BLENDED LEARNING

By: Rozy Abo Mazid

Due to the current global pandemic, schools and institutions of higher learning are forced to adapt to a different form of teaching and learning that limits physical contact between students and teachers. These different forms of teaching and learning will include the virtual form and the blended method. Higher institutions of learning have settled on distance learning relying greatly on the virtual form of teaching. However, schools are attempting the method of blended learning, and to prepare students for what to expect with this new mode of learning, we will break down five different types of blended learning.
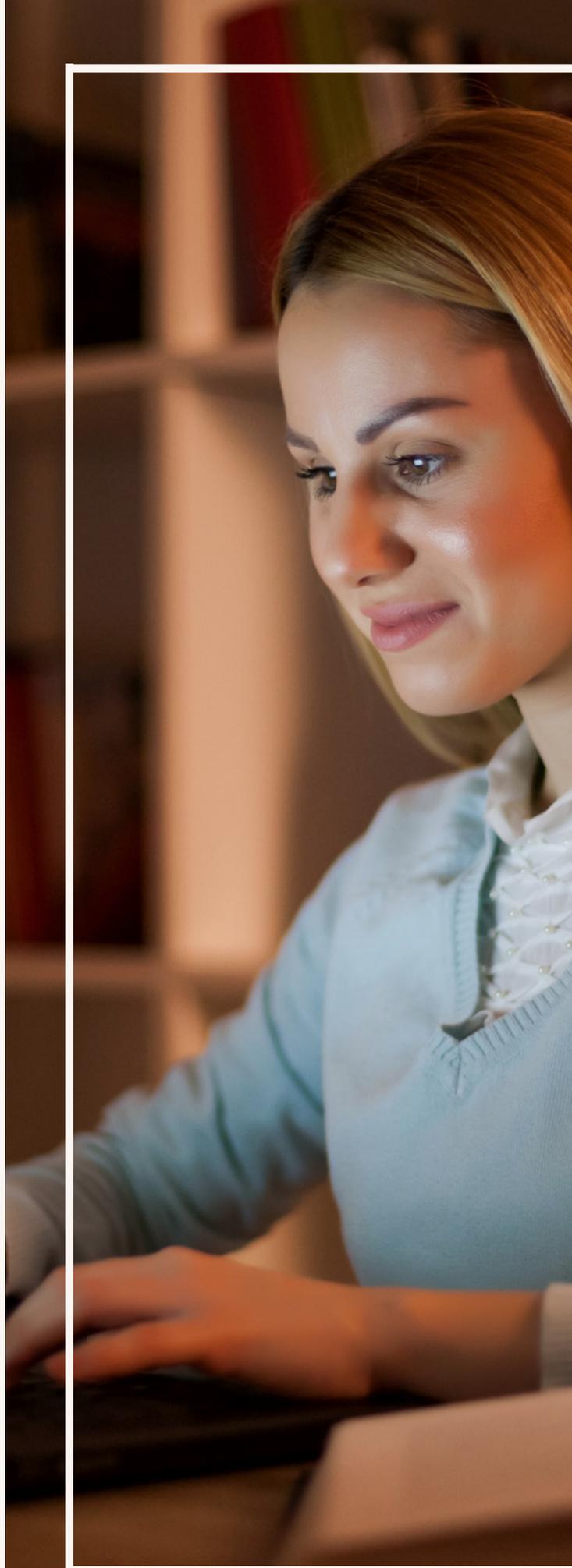
STATION ROTATION

Station rotation is common in elementary schools as it refers to a system where students are divided into groups. Each group will rotate through different stations and the end result is that all the groups will have completed all the stations by the end of the class session. These stations can consist of an online learning station, a student to student learning station, and a group station where the teacher guides the lesson. For a more visual explanation, take a look at the image on the right.
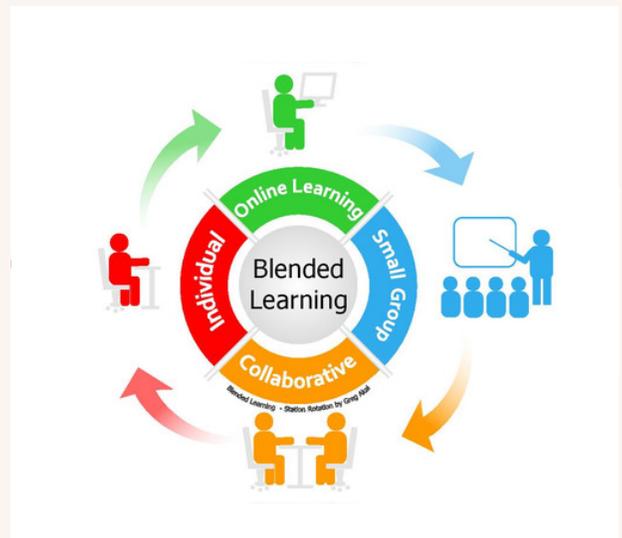
Individual Rotation

The Individual Rotation model allows students to rotate through stations similar to the station rotation type of blended learning. However, the difference between these two types is that an individual rotation consists of one student learning from the stations that he or she prefers learning from whether it is online, one-on-one teacher and student, or in small groups.
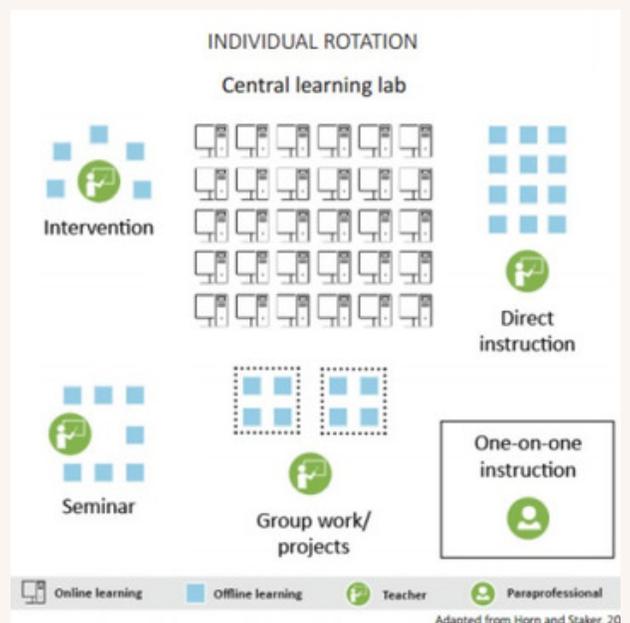
Remote Blended Learning

Remote blended learning, also known as Enriched Virtual, leans more towards the methods of online learning. This type of blended learning allows students to complete their coursework online and provides them with little to no contact with their teacher. Teachers are only called upon only when necessary, which limits the physical contact between student and teacher. The model on the right presents how remote blended learning works.

TRADITIONAL — FLIPPED

lecture | homework activities | lecture | classroom activities
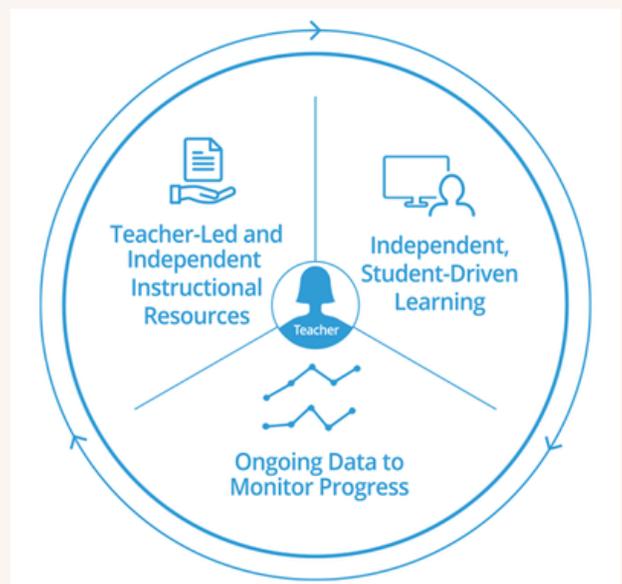
The 'Flipped Classroom' Blended Learning

One of the most famous types of blended learning is known as the flipped classroom. In this form of blended learning, students are provided coursework material and guided instructions online and then are requested to come to school and share their thoughts and ideas with their peers leaving the classroom to be student-led. This type of blended learning benefits the students as it trains them to strengthen their team-building skills when interacting with each other more so than if it was in a traditional classroom setting.

Flex Blended Learning

This type of blended learning relies greatly on non-traditional methods of teaching and learning, and most of the learning is considered to be self-guided. The coursework and the set of instructions provided by the teacher are all online, however, it takes place in a traditional classroom environment. Teachers supervise everything and provide one-on-one or small group instruction when needed. This form of learning aims to train students to be independent in their own learning and in a digital environment. The model on the right demonstrates this type of learning.
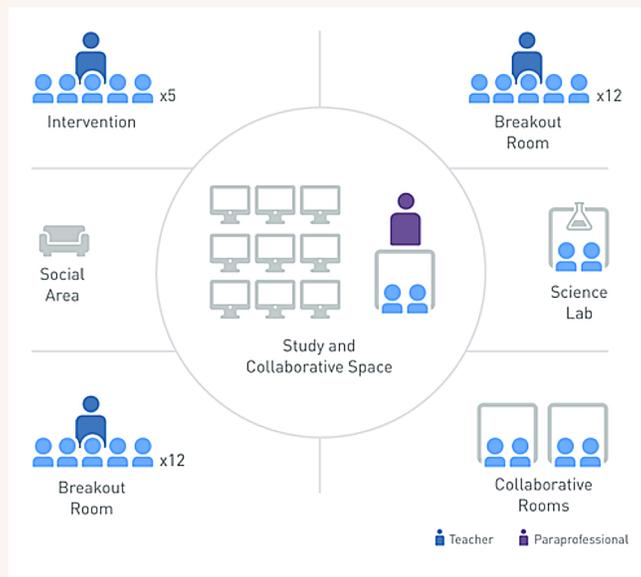
I hope introducing you to these different types of blended learning will ease your transition into this new school year. Keep in mind that using technology in the classroom is not completely new to us students, and trying something different can always seem daunting at first. Embrace the change and see how this change is reflected in your own learning as a student. Perhaps the methods of blended learning will deem more beneficial to you than what you are used to. You will never know until you try, so take a deep breath and dive right in!

OTHER TYPES OF BLENDED LEARNING

PROJECT-BASED

"A model that allows students to use both online learning and face-to-face instruction and collaboration to complete project-based learning."

LAB ROTATION

"A model that allows students to rotate through stations on a fixed schedule."

SELF-DIRECTED

"Students use online and face-to-face learning to guide their own inquiry, achieve formal learning goals, & connect with mentors."

INSIDE-OUT

"Experiences are planned to 'finish' beyond the physical classroom, but still require and benefit from the advantages of both physical and digital spaces."

OUTSIDE-IN

"Experiences are planned to 'start' in the non-academic physical and digital environments students use on a daily basis, but finish inside a classroom."

INDIVIDUAL ROTATION

"A model that allows students to rotate through stations, but on individual schedules set by a teacher or software algorithm."

SUPPLEMENTAL

"Students complete either entirely online work to supplement their day-to-day face-to-face learning, or vice versa.

MASTERY-BASED

"Students rotate between online and face-to-face learning based on the completion of mastery-based learning objectives"

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit **TeachThought.com**

UNDERSTANDING BLENDED LEARNING:
WHERE STUDENT EMPOWERMENT COMES INTO PLAY

By: Rozy Abo Mazid

A very general definition of blended learning is that it is a mode of teaching and learning that utilizes the methods of traditional and online teaching and learning. It combines technology and older teaching methods that have proven to be efficient and effective over time, to create a third mode of learning that not only increases student engagement but empowers students as well. Over the years, numerous schools and institutions of higher learning have put this third mode of teaching and learning to the test, thus providing ample data for scholars to construct research surrounding the methods of blended learning. Kenneth W. Thomas and Betty A.Velthouse are two scholars who, after having done their fair share of research, decided to extend the concept of blended learning so that it applies to their cognitive model of empowerment which is based on the intrinsic motivation of a task. Thomas and Velthouse believed that the motivation behind completing a task came from four different factors: choice, meaningfulness, competence, and impact. Keeping in mind what we know about blended learning, we will unravel how Thomas and Velthouse connected the methods of this mode of teaching and learning to their cognitive model of empowerment starting with the first factor, choice.

Choice:

Thomas and Velthouse explain that giving an individual a sense of power in their decision making can be seen as providing them with the option to choose for themselves. They go on to explain that the more control an individual has in tackling a task or even setting a goal, the more empowered they feel towards it. The cognitive model of empowerment reflects this within the methods of blended learning as this method of teaching provides students with the opportunity to choose how they would like to learn. It provides them with two modes of learning, virtual and in-person, and allows them to curate their own schedules where they could dedicate more time to the method that deems more beneficial to them. To elaborate, blended learning does not allow students to choose between the modes of virtual or traditional learning, however, it does provide them with the leniency to create their own schedule where they could perform 80% of their learning online and the other 20% in-person if that is what they prefer. An example of this would be individual station rotation, a type of blended learning.

Meaningfulness:

The second factor is meaningfulness and Thomas and Velthouse state that this factor revolves around an individual's values. They explain that in order for a task to fit into an individual's value system, the person must care about the task. Thomas and Velthouse connect this factor to blended learning by stating that teachers design courses in a way where they appeal to the student's interest. The more the students take interest in the task, the more meaning they give it which will increase their levels of motivation and commitment towards their work. The increase of motivation and meaning towards a task can empower students, as it creates a mindset where students want to succeed at this task.

"

When empowerment is used it is mistakenly seen as synonymous to engagement, or it may be used in the sense of helping disenfranchised members of society develop the capacity to advance socially.

When students start to grasp the concept of self-efficacy in their learning, they will form beliefs around the idea that they can complete a task when they put in the work and effort. Teaching students to guide their own learning and rely on their own abilities to learn without an authoritative figure showing them the ropes empowers them, as it plants the idea of independence within them at a young age.

Impact:

The final factor of the cognitive model of empowerment is impact. Thomas and Velthouse describe this factor by referring to the feeling an individual gets when they help another person. When you decide to open the door for an elderly or help them cross the street, you know your action has impacted them in a positive manner. This is reflected in the methods of blended learning as students are provided with more opportunities to guide their own learning and tackle their own tasks in a way that allows them to feel accomplished. When you feel like you have accomplished something, you know you have made an impact, and that's what makes it so empowering.

After exploring how blended learning can empower a student through the cognitive model of empowerment, can you, as a student, relate to the ideologies behind this practice? Do you feel like you have experienced the feeling of empowerment while practicing this mode of teaching and learning?

To read more about student empowerment in blended learning , click on this **link**.

Competence:

The third factor is competence which is referred to by Thomas and Velthouse as "to the belief individuals have that they can perform a task when they make an effort". Thomas and Velthouse state that competence plays a role in the virtual portion of blended learning. The virtual form of learning requires students to add more effort in terms of trying to understand the material, as it is self-guided leaving them to rely on their own abilities to comprehend the knowledge.

BENCHPREP

ASHISH RANGNEKAR AND UJJWAL GUPTA, CREATORS

BenchPrep helps with exam preparation and assignment management. For online students looking to prepare for graduate school entry tests (GRE, GMAT, LSAT), and other courses, BenchPrep includes innovative games, flashcards, and progress assessment. BenchPrep even analyzes strengths and weaknesses, which helps students focus on enhancing their scores!

CONQUER YOUR SEMESTER PART 1:

SMART GOALS FOR STUDENTS

By: Ahmad Galuta

The first step to achieving any major goal in school, or life, is to figure out exactly what you're aiming for. Writing down your goals is a powerful means to gain clarity over your future and better allows you to focus your efforts such that you end up successful, however you define that.

Today, we will walk you through a simple method for writing down your goals in a structured manner using the S.M.A.R.T framework.

S = specific (simple, sensible, significant)
M = measurable (motivating, meaningful)
A = attainable (agreed, achievable)
R = relevant (reasonable, realistic)
T = timely (time-based, time-sensitive)

1. Specific:

Your goal should be very specific, otherwise it would be very difficult to focus your efforts and achieve it. Ideally, your goal should answer the five "W" questions: What, why, who, which, and when. What is it that you want to accomplish? Why is it important to you? Who is involved? Which resources do you need? When do you want to accomplish it?

2. Measurable

It's extremely important that the goals you set are measurable. Otherwise, how do you determine whether you've achieved them? Writing measurable goals will allow you to track your progress and performance, but it will also keep you motivated because you know where the finish-line is! To write a measurable goal, try to answer the following questions:How much? How many? How will I know when it's accomplished?

3. Attainable

Is it humanely possible to achieve your set goal? What resources do you need? What actions can you take to edge closer towards achieving your goal? Answering these questions will help determine whether your goal is realistic. It's wise to set high goals for yourself and "shoot for the starts".....just not literally shoot for the stars. Set goals that are realistic.

4. Relevant

This is meant to ensure that the goal carries some degree of importance or value to YOU. Does this goal align with your other goals and vision? Answering yes to the following questions will help you determine whether your goal is relevant: Does it seem worthwhile? Is this the right time? Is it applicable in the current environment/circumstances? Would I suffer without it? Will I greatly benefit from it now?

5. Timely

Every goal needs a target date, just like every race has a finish-line. Knowing where the "finish-line" is will give you a clear indication of where you stand in the "race" and how much is left to complete. Target dates also create a sense of urgency and determination to achieve your goal. It's a commitment to yourself and holding yourself accountable. Goals with target dates will usually answer the following questions:

When will I accomplish my goal?
What can I do this month?
What can I do this week?
What can I do today?

Ultimately, goal setting is the primary step for any significant growth because it provides the clarity and focus needed. S.M.A.R.T is a useful tool that anyone (students and professionals) can use to establish their goals and reach for the stars (not literally!)

If you'd like further instruction on how to write your goals, get in touch with us, or check out our Elevate Program. We provide additional instruction and resources for goal setting and planning, including live one-to-one guidance with an academic expert.

Conquer your Semester Part 2:

Use a Calendar

By: Ahmad Galuta

Do you find yourself struggling to keep up with your workload? Do deadlines and important dates come up without realizing? Do you wish you could get more done, or accomplish new goals, but don't know how or have the time?

What if I told you having a calendar and updating it regularly is key to accomplishing any goal you set out for yourself. Because your goal is specific, measurable, and has a deadline (its SMART!), we can break your goal into smaller tasks and schedule to complete those tasks within your designated deadline.

Here are some tips and tricks on how to set up and use a calendar effectively.

1. Write down your goals and beak them down into manageable tasks.

Use the SMART framework to define your goals. Then, think about all the things that you need to do (i.e. manageable tasks) to accomplish those goals.

2. List your priorities before the start of each week.

Make a list of all the manageable tasks that need to be completed that week and prioritize them based on their urgency and importance.

3. Schedule time in your calendar for all your mandatory / top priority tasks.

This includes time for class, work on a group project, and hockey practice.

4. Schedule time in your calendar for all your other priorities / tasks.

This includes time for studying, completing homework, and fitness.

Tips:

- Usually, the most important tasks are also the hardest and/or most dreadful. Aim to schedule these tasks during a time of the day where you think you would be best able to tackle them. I deal with all my important tasks in the morning, so the rest of the day gets easier!

- Schedule easier tasks during times of the day when you think are less able or less motivated.

- It may be difficult to know how much time is needed to complete your tasks. Try your best and approximate how much time you think you need. You will get better with time.

- Don't forget to schedule time for breaks, extra-curricular activities, and leisure!

To conclude, planning is one of the major keys to success, and a calendar is the most useful tool for planning. If you can set up a weekly schedule and do it regularly, then you can accomplish any **S.M.A.R.T goal** that you set out for yourself. This is because a calendar allows you to allocate enough time to complete all the minor tasks that will eventually lead to achieving your major goals.

If you'd like further instruction on how to get organized and accomplish more while putting in less effort, **get in touch** with us, or check out our **Elevate Program.** We provide additional instruction and resources, including live, one-to-one guidance with an academic expert.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR AMAZING WRITERS

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