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The Task /Time Management Component of the Learning to Learn System

James B. Cook

Western Michigan University

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THE TASK/TIME MANAGEMENT COMPONENT OF THE LEARNING TO LEARN SYSTEM

by

James B Cook

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Psychology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1989
The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of a task/time management training (consisting of breaking large tasks down, planning and practice) on academic task completion for 29 students in an undergraduate psychology study skills course. A training package and individual training and practice were provided by self management coaches. A multiple baseline across groups design was used. Individual meetings were conducted between self management coaches and students to assess the percentage of task completion based upon a 10-point scale. The mean group task completion scores did not show a significant rate of change as a result of the intervention.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to my committee and the other instructors in the Psychology department, along with the Learning To Learn staff.

James B Cook
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The task/time management component of the learning to learn system

Cook, James B., M.A.
Western Michigan University, 1989
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Research has shown that students with academic skill deficits benefit from study skills programs (Greiner & Karoly, 1976). Kirschenbaum and Perri (1982) found that multiple component interventions that focus on study and self-regulatory skills are more effective than single component interventions. These self-regulatory skills are often labeled self-control, self-management or time management. They invariably consist of self-monitoring or self-observation, planning, goal setting, data keeping and some form of self reward. The lack of time management skills as a major contributing factor to below average performance in school is suggested by the findings that programs that stress both study skills and self-regulatory skills (time management) are more effective than those that only stress study skills.

Yancey (1983) and Jager (1984) noted that strict specific point contingencies in grades and weekly meetings (which are similar to the task/time management skills of planning, goal setting and self-reward) are important in improving and
maintaining academic performance. These two studies, along with others that have produced successful results, use some form of contingency management with the use of rewards or self-rewards for successful completion of tasks. For example, Yancey (1983) found that undergraduate students on academic probation performed better than a control group on relevant measures with a contingency management approach. The students were required to complete worksheets to receive credit for the self-management course. Among these was a daily accomplishment record. The students earned points for completing their daily accomplishment record, updating their graph and study center attendance. Students in the experimental group averaged a semester grade point average of 2.14 as compared to 1.71 for the control group. This study used components of time management, such as self-monitoring, task analysis, planning and weekly scheduling.

The use of time management training programs results in an increase in a targeted behavior, such as instructional behavior, even when the subjects do not know this behavior is being observed. For example, Maher (1983) found that a time management training program resulted in a higher percentage of time spent in instructional behavior for teachers. This is significant because the observers were told that the project was to develop procedures for observing teacher instruction, and so they could not have
(1982) found similar results when they compared their training manual (which required practice) to a time management self-help book with volunteers employed at a residential school for retarded citizens. Also, they found that the use of an instructor along with the training manual resulted in higher outcomes at follow-up as compared to just using the manual. Both of these studies clearly support the idea that time management training is most effective when participants have some practice in the various techniques and practice appears to be an important aspect if improved performance is to be maximized.

Time management training incorporates self-observation and self-monitoring (these two concepts are very similar and in the future I will use the term self-observation when referring to these two similar concepts) as important concepts in the overall training. Kafner (1970) suggests that self-observation has a triggering effect in self-adjusting behavior and results in a feedback loop that continues to adjust behavior in response to feedback as it is received.

It has been established that self-observation alone can lead to an increase in the targeted behavior (Greiner & Karoly 1976; Johnson & White 1971; Mahoney, Moore, Wade & Moura 1973). These findings point out that self-observation is an important part of time management and could be the main reason for the reported results. However
self-observation alone may not be effective when dealing with students' lack of study skills. Greiner and Karoly's (1976) study addressed the problem of self-observation by having groups that included "self-monitoring" and "self-monitoring" plus planning. The "self-monitoring" plus planning group performed significantly better in study habits than the "self-monitoring" group. All groups, except a control group, received training in study skills. This training would tend to rule out the possibility that the results were caused by a difference in study skill ability. This supports the finding that time management training is an effective way to increase targeted behaviors (such as task completion rates), and is not just the result of increased self-observation.

Although research has clearly shown that some form of time management training improves grade point averages when added to a study skills program, no research has determined the efficacy of adding a task/time management training to the learning-to-learn study skills program, which the Western Michigan University's Center for Research on Learning and Self Management is currently using to address students' academic skill deficits. The Learning to Learn system does contain a task/time management segment that consists of having students take data on themselves, interpret this data, breaking large tasks into smaller ones, using timed breaks as rewards and using a checklist to
schedule tasks. The task/time management component discusses the steps but provides no detailed practice, and as Hanelet al. (1982) have shown, for time management training to be effective practice is essential. I added an explicit time management training and practice component, with the expectation that it would improve the effectiveness of the Learning to Learn program's task/time management component. Stated otherwise, the hypothesis is that a specific task/time management component that includes practice will increase the percentage of academic tasks completed each week more than a task/time management training that does not include practice.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects were 29 students enrolled in the 1:00-3:00 p.m. session of Psychology 397 (Methods of Inquiry) for the Winter term (1989) at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. These students were recommended or required to take the Learning to Learn course because they were enrolled in one of four special programs for students classified as high risk. The four programs were: (1) Alpha Student Development program, a freshman probationary program for students who have low high school G.P.A.s and high ACT scores; (2) Links Program, a freshman program for students with low reading scores; (3) Martin Luther King Program, a freshman probationary program for students who have both low high school G.P.A.s and ACT scores; and (4) the College of Arts and Sciences program, a probationary program for readmitted students.

All students were used to help control for motivational variables that can result from using volunteers and to ensure that the educational content of the course was equal for all students. Motivational variables that can result from using volunteers are numerous; among these are enthusiasm, a belief
that volunteering can increase the grade received in class, etc. The subjects were randomly assigned to one of three groups using a multiple baseline intervention. There was no attempt to control which remedial program the student was in at the time they were assigned to a group. The only difference between the groups was that the training occurred at four, eight and eleven weeks for groups I, II and III respectively.

**Setting**

The general setting was the Center for Research on Learning and Self Management at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. The students met between 1:00-3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday for Psychology 397 classes and for meetings with skill mastery and self management coaches. The skill mastery coaches were responsible for teaching the students the Learning to Learn skills. The self management coaches were responsible for collecting data on the students' task completion as well as implementing the task/time management training.

**Materials**

The students received instructional packets for the task/time management component. This packet provided examples and detailed instructions on how to use the various forms. Several forms were required to be filled out weekly.
by each student. The forms were a Daily Activity Record, Weekly Planning Form and two graphs (one for cumulative points earned and one for weekly points earned). After the task/time management training, a Daily Planner was required to be filled out. The self management coach filled out a self-management agenda form which listed all tasks from the weekly planning form.

Procedure

Psychology 397 has a contingency managed base for assessing students' task performance. Contingency management is a process in which a reward or self-reward is earned when a task is completed; not completing the task results in either the loss of the reward or loss of opportunity to earn the reward. The contingency management form for Psychology 397 is the Weekly Planning Form.

The students attended weekly Psychology 397 lectures and meetings with the self management and skill mastery coaches. The students completed the following forms: Daily Activity Record, Weekly Planning Form, graphs and, after the task/time management training, a Daily Planner.

The self management coaches received training in the correct procedures for filling out the forms that students were required to turn in, use of the syllabus to determine weekly tasks, and use of the self-management agenda form to record points for task accomplishment.
The self management coaches provided the students with training on how to complete the Daily Activity Record and Weekly Planning Form and graphs. They also recorded points earned (from a ten point system) for completion of tasks and provided clarification for students.

The task/time management training was given to the self management coaches, who in turn provided the training to the students. The training consisted of instructions on breaking a large task into components, using the Daily Activity Record to discover how long a student took to do a particular component of a task, and then using this information to determine how much time the total task would take. The students were shown how to break a large task into fifteen minute segments and the proper way to use the Daily Planner

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable was task completion which was measured by the number of points earned on the Self-Management Agenda Form. The Self-Management Agenda Form had a maximum of ten points. These points were based on completion of tasks listed on the Weekly Planning Form. The number of points awarded was based on percentage of tasks completed from the Weekly Planning Form. The students listed tasks on the Weekly Planning Form from class syllabi which were then verified by the self management coaches. These
points represented the accomplishment of the students' weekly tasks, and the results were then compared across a multiple baseline with the intervention occurring at weeks four for Group I, eight for Group II and eleven for Group III.

Independent Variable

The independent variable was a task/time management training intervention which consisted of training in how to break large tasks into smaller ones and using a Daily Planner to schedule tasks into 15-minute segments. The independent variable was introduced into three groups across a multiple baseline with the trainings occurring at weeks four, eight and eleven.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The data from all three groups were analyzed by visual inspection and showed a general upward trend in mean scores that did not change between baseline and intervention. No statistical analysis was done because of the lack of difference between baseline and training. Also, all three groups had no data gathered in week one as indicated on the three charts (Figures 1, 2, 3) because there were no tasks scheduled for completion.

Group I had a Mean of 7.2 points before training as compared to a Mean of 9.76 after the training. Using the first four data points there is a positive slope of approximately .5 (see Figure 1), and, except for minor variations, the mean scores continue to follow this pattern until they reach the ceiling of ten points. These means show a clear ascending pattern which cuts across both the baseline and intervention, suggesting that the intervention had no effect on the dependent variable.

Group II started out with higher weekly mean scores than group I (Figure 2), but from week four on the mean scores are virtually identical with group I. This group also showed an upward tendency (Figure 2) as did group I. This would
FIGURE 1. MEAN SCORES FOR TASK COMPLETION
FIGURE 2. MEAN SCORES FOR TASK COMPLETION
FIGURE 3. MEAN SCORES FOR TASK COMPLETION
seem to indicate that in Group II the independent variable had no effect on the dependent variable.

Group III fluctuated around a weekly mean of 9 points for the first eight weeks (with weeks two, four, and six showing the same upward trend evidenced in groups I and II) before finally stabilizing at just under 10 points. This would indicate again that the independent variable had no effect on the dependent variable.

The data indicate that the independent variable had no effect in any of the three groups. Therefore, there is no reason to use a statistical test to evaluate the between group differences in mean scores, as all three groups show an ascending pattern in the mean scores; furthermore, groups I and II mean scores were virtually identical from week four on even though the groups were in different experimental phases.

The results of this study seem to indicate that the task/time management component had no effect on the students' performance of tasks. The baseline period had two forms that were required to be completed. One was a Weekly Planning Form and the other a Daily Activity Record. Either one or both of these could have affected the results of the study. The Daily Activity Record involved self-monitoring, and self-monitoring has been reported to increase rates of studied behavior. The Weekly Planning Form (a class requirement) is basically a contingency management form
which has also been shown to increase rates of behavior (Yancey, 1983).

Social Validation

Voluntary exit surveys that assessed how useful the students found the forms and the training, were completed after the final exam. Twenty out of twenty five students (80%) taking the final exam completed the survey. Four students were exempt from the final because they had earned enough points for an A in the class and did not complete the survey. Consequently, the upper 15% of the class had no input in this survey.

Survey findings (see Table 1) indicated that most students felt the task/time management training helped them to complete their tasks, and they were able to break down large tasks into either component parts and/or 15 minute segments.

The forms were rated as being useful, "sometimes" or "always" more frequently than "not useful." The Daily Planner was listed above the midpoint by more students than the other two forms, with the Weekly Planning Form being the form least preferred by the students.
Table 1
Results of Student Survey
Number of Student Responses to Each Choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(not at all)</th>
<th>(sometimes)</th>
<th>(always)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Did you find breaking tasks down into 15 minute segments useful?
   | 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 2 |

2) Did you find breaking tasks down into component parts useful?
   | 1 | 0 | 8 | 8 | 3 |

3) Which of the above two ways did you prefer when breaking your large tasks down?
   15 MINUTES | COMPONENTS | NEITHER |
   | 5 | 10 | 5 |

4) Do you feel you can break large tasks into smaller tasks or components?
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5) How useful was the Daily Activity Record?
   | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 |

6) How helpful was the Weekly Planning Form in helping you plan your weekly tasks?
   | 1 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 2 |

7) How useful was the Daily Planner?
   | 4 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 2 |

8) Did the task/time management training help you in completing your tasks?
   | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 1 |

18

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CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

Task/time management consists of a set of skills: self-monitoring, planning, goal setting, data keeping, self reward and breaking large tasks into small ones. Only two of these skills (planning and breaking tasks down) were evaluated in the Independent Variable task/time management training. The other skills were introduced at the beginning of the term because they were an ongoing requirement of the class and/or to control for students' use of self monitoring.

The Independent Variable (i.e. planning and breaking tasks down) of task/time management training appears to have no effect on the dependent variable of task completion; yet, tracking of the data showed a 90%+ completion rate of tasks. This means that some other variables or skills were sufficient to generate the change. Two of these variables, self-monitoring and contingency management, were part of the course structure.

For example, the students were introduced to a self-monitoring tool (Daily Activity Record) at the beginning of the term. This was done for two purposes: 1) to provide data for both student and coach, and 2) to control for any
student initiated self monitoring. The self management coaches used the data of each student's performance rates of certain tasks, e.g. number of pages read per minute, number of problems solved per minute, etc., to help the student begin breaking down tasks as part of the task/time management training. The Daily Activity Record was introduced at the beginning of the term to control for any self-monitoring, such as keeping a diary or calendar that some students may have been doing independently. The use of a calendar or diary could have resulted in a higher rate of task completion, and many studies, among them Johnson and White (1971), have suggested that self-monitoring can lead to increases in the targeted behavior. This effect alone may have resulted in the improved task performance.

Contingency management is basically the same as the self reward part of task/time management. Contingency management also consists of goal setting or setting a specific time to complete a task in order to receive the reward. The contingency management form used for Psychology 397 is the Weekly Planning Form and is introduced at the beginning of the term. I believed that the task/time management training would increase task completion rates above the task completion rates that resulted from contingency management. As noted in the Yancey (1983) study, the contingency management approach has achieved improvement on relevant academic measures, and so could be responsible for the
The two variables of self-observation and contingency management are normally part of a task/time management training, and, as a result of this study, it would appear that they are responsible for the improvement, and the training component (breaking large task down, planning and practice) was not necessary. These two variables may have caused the increase in task performance in this study, because most of the students did not have a need to use the skills (planning and breaking large tasks down) which were the major focus of this study's intervention.

Another reason that the results did not show a change after training is the contingencies placed on the students by instructors of other classes. Most, if not all, students had tasks due weekly in their other classes (as well as Psychology 397), and so the goals listed on the Weekly Planning Form had to be completed that week in order to earn credit for them. This would have put more pressure on the students to finish all their tasks each week. Also, except for one or two students, there were no long term projects, such as a term paper, required. Therefore, there were no large tasks to break down or that could be left to the next week for completion.

The recording instrument may not have been sensitive enough, with the result that actual differences may not have shown up, or there may have been a ceiling effect. If a
larger scale (100 points) had been used, then not completing one form would have resulted in a different point value than not completing three or four forms. A larger scale also may have counteracted a possible ceiling effect that the ten point scale had, and also a student could be shown to have completed more than originally planned for that week.

The student survey conducted at the completion of the study highlights two main points. The students believe they can break larger tasks into smaller ones and in general they found the training useful.

Being able to break large tasks into smaller ones should be helpful to them in the future. They should not feel intimidated by huge tasks, which are basically a number of smaller ones, and will have some knowledge of how to break tasks down into components.

Further research should include the removal of the self-monitoring or contingency management components to see what effect that would make on the independent variable of task completion. The addition of long range projects would also help to evaluate the ability of the students to break down and schedule tasks. Even though the students indicated that they found breaking down large tasks useful, some pretest-posttest design that would determine if they actually had learned how to break tasks down would be useful.
Appendix A

The Learning to Learn System
The Learning to Learn system is a study skills system based on this basic process. The student will generate questions from sources of information such as text, notes and lectures. The student will then answer the questions and verify that the answers are correct. Finally, the student will take self-tests to prove mastery of the knowledge.

The Learning to Learn System and the following Learning to Learn management forms and instructions were an important part of this study.
What are they? One will be a cumulative graph and the other a weekly achievement graph. The cumulative graph measures how much you have accomplished of the total task; in this class it would be the number of points received. The weekly achievement graph measures how much of that week's task have been completed. The two graphs measure similar data. The cumulative graph shows the total completed as of that week and the weekly achievement graph will only show the points earned that week. The two examples will help you see the difference between the two types of graphs.

Why should I use it? There are two reasons for using it. First, it helps you see what you have accomplished of the weekly and total tasks. Second, it tell you how much task is left to do to accomplish your goal.

How do I do it? The cumulative graph, example A, is made with the horizontal line being the weeks of the term and the vertical line being the number of points earned. On the vertical line you will also label the grade value that the number of points is worth. The student in the example earned 10 points in week one and a point is indicated on the graph at 10 points. This is a line graph and all the weekly points will be connected together. The next week the student earned 8 points so for week two the cumulative score is 18 points which you indicate for week two and connect week one to week two. You do this for week three where 12 points were earned for a total score of 30 points and continue this until the course is completed.

The weekly achievement graph, example B, is a bar graph and a bar graph is being used so you can compare the points you earn each week with the points earned on the other weeks. This graph will not take into consideration tests or quizzes and other one-time tasks so you will need to remove their point value from the total points. After you have removed these points you divide the remaining points by the number of weeks in the term to get a weekly score ceiling which was twenty in the example. The example has a total of 180 points for four weeks with 100 points for the final exam. The 100 points is subtracted from 180 leaving 80 points which was then divided by four weeks for a score ceiling of 20 points. The weekly score ceiling is the number of points needed each week to complete everything for the class except tests, quizzes, notebooks and other one-time requirements. In this example the student earned 15 points in the first week and so a line is made at this level and a vertical line was drawn enclosing week one and you have a bar graph for that week. Week two is done the same way with a bar drawn for the 20 points earned that week. You continue this process until the class is finished.

When is it due? The graphs are due during your weekly meeting with your self-management coach and is an ongoing task to be listed on your Weekly Planning Form.

Who grades it? The self-management coach grades it and it will be part of the point value of your Weekly Planning Form.
EXAMPLE A

GRAPH

EXAMPLE B
The Daily Activity Record

What is it? A form to collect data on tasks that you have completed.

Why should I use it? Using this form will help you determine how you are using your time and help you find ways to improve your use of time. It will also show if your study skills improve or if the tasks are becoming more difficult.

How do I use it? There are two basic steps in filling out this form. The first step is to record the amount of time used on each task. There are two ways to record on this form and the first is by listing beginning and ending times on the form (example A). This will allow you to see how you use your study time and the breaks you take. The second way is to list the amount of time used under the correct time of day (example B). So, the first step is to list the amount of time spent on a task using either method. The first method is better as it allows you to see just how you used your time and where you may have problems. One problem students have is taking breaks that are so long they don't complete their work and this would show you how much break time you had between each task.

Secondly, the amount of task accomplished must be listed. How you record the accomplishment will depend on the course and/or the task. Examples include number of pages read and number of problems completed. The examples from the sample Daily Activity Record show how this can be accomplished. Example A shows that the student read ten pages of psychology in ten minutes, while example B shows that five math problems took ten minutes. You will be expected to fill out all the time slots on the Daily Activity Record. This form covers a 24 hour period of time because each person has a different lifestyle and some students work a night shift.

When is it due? This form is due during your weekly meeting with your self-management coach and is an ongoing task to be listed on your Weekly Planning Form.

Who grades it? The self-management coach will grade it and it will be part of the point value of your Weekly Planning Form.

Daily Activity Record Check List

1. Did you enter beginning and ending time of each task or break; or entered the amount of time spent on the task?

2. Have you entered the amount of task you accomplished for the above entered time?
### Daily Activity Record

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>Tues.</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thr.</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
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**Weekly Planning Form**

What is a Weekly Planning Form? It is an instructional tool that you fill out each week to plan your work in Psy. 397.

Why should I use the form? There are two reasons for using it. First, it helps you plan your work for the week so that you can achieve your goals efficiently. Second, it is a record of accomplishment and of utilization of effective learning skills. You earn part of your grade in Psy. 397 through proper use of the form.

How do I use the form? A sample form is attached that describes what goes into each of the 9 cells of the form. There are also 15 blank forms that you will use to plan your weekly tasks in Psy. 397. Your Psy. 397 instructor will make assignments during the first few weeks, telling you how to fill out the form. (Later, your instructor will just make assignments, expecting you to know how to fill out the form.) Your self-management coach will check your work and make suggestions for improvement. Later, your self-management coach may ask you to use the form in planning work for your other courses.

When is it due? Your self-management coach will check it for completeness every week during your regularly scheduled management meeting. Every fourth week you will take some of the concepts from the concepts box (on the form) and enter them in the concept lists section of your course notebook. In addition, every fourth week, you will use questions from the linking questions box (on the form) to use in making a cumulative mock exam for Psy. 397.

Who grades my work on the form? Your self-management coach will grade it. (The coach's grades will be automatically reviewed by the instructor at first; later, the instructor will review the grade only at your request.)

What do I enter in the Index? Enter the date for the beginning of the week planned on the form and enter the grade earned for the form. Every fourth week, make entries to show that you've added to the concept list and used linking questions in making a mock exam.
## Weekly Planning Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Starting Date</th>
<th>Ending Date</th>
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### ANALYSIS

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<th>Initial Knowledge (2)</th>
<th>Plan (3)</th>
<th>Products/Due Dates (1)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(This is the second box you fill in each week. It's a place to describe your initial knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to assignments.)</td>
<td>(This is the third box you fill in each week. State your plan for doing the work. When will you have parts of it done? What learning to learn skills will you use to do each part of the several assignments?)</td>
<td>(This is the starting point, the first box you fill in each week. List every item that is to be completed during the week, e.g. everything that is to be handed in to the instructor, everything your Self-Management coach assigns, &amp; everything you assign to yourself.)</td>
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### SYNTHESIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions (4)</th>
<th>Answers (Key Word) (5)</th>
<th>Checks (References) (6)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>(This is the 4th box you fill in each week. Here you will list the questions you will have to answer to do each assignment. You can use the back of the form when you need more space. List the major questions for the major assignment here, if there is room.)</td>
<td>(This is the 5th box you fill in each week. As soon as you have listed questions, begin answering them. DON'T WAIT UNTIL AFTER &quot;reading&quot; or &quot;going to class&quot; or &quot;going to the library&quot; but write down a few key words or ideas that you think might be in the answers. THIS MIGHT SEEM STRANGE to you at first, but later you'll discover it's useful.)</td>
<td>(This is the 6th box you fill in each week. It will sometimes be a list of criteria for judging the quality or accuracy of your work. Sometimes it'll be a set of page references to show support for the &quot;right&quot; answers to the questions you listed in box 4.)</td>
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### EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts (7)</th>
<th>Linking Questions (8)</th>
<th>Data (9)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(This is the 7th box you fill in each week. After you have completed all the other assignments for the week, use this box to list the new terms &amp; concepts you encountered and learned during the week. Look for the major or most important ones to list here—perhaps 7 new concepts, terms, or ideas each week.)</td>
<td>(This is the 8th box you fill in each week. Use it to record 3-7 questions that link together all the little questions and all the little concepts &amp; terms you learned this week. That is, make up a few &quot;test&quot; questions that you—or an instructor—could ask to test you over all the material for the week and relate it to the rest of the course.)</td>
<td>(This is the last box you fill in each week. Enter the scores or grades earned on each item listed above in the Products/Due Dates box. Note that you'll have to wait until you get the scores so you will fill in this box &quot;next week&quot;. You may decide to list individual scores above and list totals here.)</td>
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<table>
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<th>ANÁLYSIS</th>
<th>SYNTHESIS</th>
<th>EVALUATION</th>
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<td>Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concepts</td>
<td>Linking Questions</td>
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**Weekly Planning Form**

**Name**

**Starting Date**

**Ending Date**

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Appendix B

Task/Time Management Training Package
Task/Time Management Overview

What is it? A way to plan your tasks to accomplish more and use less time. It helps you to break large tasks into small units that can be accomplished in 15 minute blocks of time.

Why should I use it? If you follow this system you will be able to use your time more effectively and use time that is normally wasted.

How do I use it? There are two forms that you will use and they are the Daily Activity Record and the Daily Planner. This process is explained in detail in the handouts Task/Time Management and the Daily Planner. However, the process is one of breaking a large task into individual components and using the Daily Activity Record to determine how long it takes you to complete the smallest unit of that component. You will then multiply the time for doing the smallest unit by the total number of units to determine the time it will take to complete that component. You then divide that time by block of 15 minutes to determine how many blocks of time you need to schedule to complete that task. The number of blocks are divided by the number of weeks you have to do the task and then you use the Daily Planner to schedule the blocks you need to do that week.

When is it due? The Daily Planner is due during your weekly meeting with you self-management coach and is an ongoing task to be listed on your Weekly Planning Form.

Who grades it? The self-management coach will grade it and it will be part of the point value of your Weekly Planning Form.
Task/Time Management

What is task/time management? Why is it important to me? What are the benefits? Is it difficult to do? How is it done? Read the material below and answer the questions above using the attached examples.

The first step in task management is to collect data. The (attached) Daily Activity Record is a way to collect data on tasks that you have completed. These data can then be used to determine how much time similar tasks will require. This step included computing the amount of time required for the smallest unit of accomplishment. In example A, from the sample Daily Activity Record, the student was able to read ten pages in ten minutes, so by dividing time used, 10 minutes, by task completed, 10 pages, you have a rate of one page read per minute. Another example (example B) is where five problems were done in ten minutes; first you take the time used, 10 minutes, divided by the task completed, 5 problems, and compute a rate of one problem every two minutes. This step is important in being able to use the Daily Activity Record to estimate how long large tasks will take to complete.

We now have a way to estimate the amount of time to complete the smallest unit of a task. This information can be used to determine the time needed to complete a large task. When you have a large task that must be completed, such as reading a text, you can count the smallest units of a task (pages, problems, etc). Using solving math problems as an example, first you find the smallest units and the amount of time required for this accomplishment, as in the above example B, 1 problem every two minutes. You now determine the number of units that the task contains, the text book has 180 problems to be solved before the mid-term exam and you will multiply the total number of units, 180 problems, by the amount of time it takes to complete a unit, 2 minutes, to get the total time the task would require, 360 minutes. This tells you the amount of time needed to solve this task and you will then divide this task into small blocks of time.

You now know the total amount of time required and you will need to determine both the total number of blocks of time needed and the number of blocks to time to be completed each week. The above example of solving problems before a mid-term exam allows you about eight weeks to complete the task. You will want to break the task into blocks of 15 minutes and dividing the total time, 360 minutes, by the time of the individual blocks, 15 minutes, you get a result, 24 blocks. The number of blocks, 24 blocks, are divided by the amount of time available, 8 weeks, to get the number of blocks that must be completed each week-3 blocks. You now know that 45 minutes a week will be required to solve the problems. This task, like most tasks, has more than one component to it. In this task, you will also need to plan time to "read to solve problems" and you accomplish that by going back to the beginning and following the above for each individual part of the task.

You will have determined the time required for each component of the task and the final step is to add all the different components of the task
together to determine the time required weekly to complete the task. The time required weekly for the task should be broken down into 15 minute time blocks. Using the math example, and following the above format, you will find that you need to spend 15 minutes a week "reading to solve problems", 10 minutes doing "mock exams" and 5 minutes to make up examples of the definitions. Adding up these figures plus the time spent solving problems, you will find that you will need to spend about one and a quarter hours a week on this class. This time should be broken down into units of 15 minutes which means that for you to complete this task you will spend five times a week working on the task. Since you are only spending a few minutes five times a week working on the task and the time is small it will be easier to fit into your schedule; such as between classes, waiting for a bus or even just before going to bed. These short periods of studying will allow you to get the most out of your time both academically and socially.

**Task/Time Management Steps**

1. Take the task and break it down into its components.

2. Use the Daily Activity Record to see how much of that component you accomplished.

3. Divide the amount accomplished by the time it takes to complete to find out how much time it takes to do the smallest unit of that component.

4. Count the total number of the smallest unit that you will have to complete and multiply by the time it takes to complete that unit to get total time to complete that component.

5. Divide the total time (minutes) needed for completion by 15 minutes to get the number of blocks of time needed for that component.

6. Divide the number of blocks of time needed by the time left (weeks) to complete the task to get the number of blocks of time to be completed each week.

7. Go back to number 1 and follow these steps for each component of the task and when that is done go to the next step.

8. Add weekly blocks of time needed for each component to get total time needed each week.

Daily Planner

The daily planner is one way to take the weekly goals that will be set when you follow the steps in the task management section. This form is divided into high and low priority sections for each day and include a space where you indicate the date the task is completed. There is a follow up section where you can mark "yes" or "no" when something else needs to be done with that particular task. The example will show how to use this to schedule your tasks.

First, you take the weekly goals from the task/time management section and schedule the 15 minute blocks. The example in the task/time management section requires you to schedule one and a quarter hours a week to complete the task. On Monday you schedule a 15 minute block for "reading to solve problems" and thinking up examples of definitions. The problem solving will take 45 minutes so you would schedule three 15 minute blocks which are set up for Tuesday and Wednesday. Then on Friday you schedule a last 15 minute block for a Mock Exam. There is a yes in the follow-up block because you didn't understand a concept and need to ask the instructor for clarification. The high priority tasks are ones that need to be done either that day or that week.

When you plan your daily tasks on the daily planning form, you will need to list them from most important to least important. The example lists the first task on Thursday as reviewing a concept list and definitions for a test on Friday. The idea is to complete all the task on the day they are scheduled. However that does not always work out and if a task is not completed then you need to re-schedule that task for the appropriate slot. The example has a low priority task on Monday as buying a birthday card and it was not done so it was scheduled again as a low priority task for the next day. The task was listed again on Wednesday as a high priority task when it was not completed on Tuesday because the birthday was on Wednesday. When you re-schedule tasks to a different day you must decide if it can be put on the bottom of the list or if it needs to be higher up. If you did not read the text on Tuesday as scheduled in the example but re-scheduled it for Friday it would have a higher priority than studying the text because you need to read it first.

The low priority section has two basic uses, one is to list tasks that need to be done but haven't any deadline and the other is for tasks that have future deadlines. It is best used for tasks that can be done now but which you might not think about doing because they have a future deadline. Having low priority tasks will allow you to use time that might be wasted. Since all tasks have been broken down into 15 minute blocks these low priority tasks will allow you to use time that might have been wasted as well as helping you to work ahead of schedule. This can help you get a better grade and give you time to study what interests you.
Daily Planner Steps

1. Take your weekly goals from task/time management and set deadlines of day and week.

2. Schedule 15 minute blocks of time on your daily planner as determined by the deadlines set in step one.

3. When you complete a task mark it "completed" on the daily planner and check the follow-up box if you need to do any follow-up.

4. Re-schedule any task that wasn't completed that day. If it was a low priority task determine if it still remains a low priority task. If it doesn't then schedule it as a high priority task.
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|             | LOW PRIORITY  |       |

| **TUESDAY** |               |       |
|             |               |       |

|             | LOW PRIORITY  |       |

| **WEDNESDAY** |               |       |
|              |               |       |

|             | LOW PRIORITY  |       |

| **THURSDAY** |               |       |
|             |               |       |

|             | LOW PRIORITY  |       |

| **FRIDAY**   |               |       |
|             |               |       |

|             | LOW PRIORITY  |       |

| **SATURDAY/SUNDAY** |               |       |
|                     |               |       |
Appendix C

Social Validation Survey
COACH'S NAME _______________________

1) Did you find breaking tasks down into 15 minute segments useful?
   not at all sometimes very
   1  2  3  4  5
2) Did you find breaking tasks down into component parts useful?
   not at all sometimes very
   1  2  3  4  5
3) Which of the above two ways did you prefer when breaking your large
tasks down? Why did you prefer it?

4) Do you feel you can break large tasks into smaller tasks or components?
   not at all sometimes always
   1  2  3  4  5
5) How useful was the Daily Activity Record? If it wasn't useful why was
   it not useful?
   not at all sometimes very
   1  2  3  4  5
   Comments:
6) How helpful was the weekly planning form in helping you plan your
   weekly tasks?
   not at all sometimes very
   1  2  3  4  5
   Comments:
7) How useful was the Daily Planner?
   not at all sometimes very
   1  2  3  4  5
   Comments:
8) Did the task/time management training help you in completing your
   tasks?
   not at all sometimes always
   1  2  3  4  5
   Comments:
9) What part of the task/time management training or tools (Daily Activity
    Record, Weekly Planning Form or Daily Planner) did you find least
    helpful/most helpful?

10) Other comments, suggestion or concerns?
BIBLIOGRAPHY


