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## 17 Essential Time Management Skills

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- 1. Goal setting** Take time to be clear on what you really want to achieve.

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  - 2. Prioritisation** Begin with avoiding/eliminating the tasks which you should not be performing. Then focus on completing the most valuable work you can with the time and resources you have. If you try to act on too many things at once, you may end up not finishing anything.

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  - 3. Self-awareness** Reflect on what and when times you were doing your best and performing to a very high standard. What are some common things you identify? There are many personal preferences that can affect your work. For some, achieving is best in the morning, others later in the day. For some, fresh air, facing the sun, or needing in the background specific kind of music. For others, these things could cause distractions resulting in poor performance.

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  - 4. Self-motivation** Understanding your goals, priorities and Improving your self-awareness assist increasing your self-motivation.  
Other things you can include:
    - reward yourself when you achieve your goal.

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  - 5. Focus** There will always be something else competing for your attention. Single-tasking is the best way to achieve focus. Rather than trying to get too many things done at once, identify the most important and block the rest out. Only then move on to the next task.  
Other things you can include:
    - if necessary, break your task down in to smaller sections.

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  - 6. Decision making** Most decisions you make affect others too. Consider the consequences of your decisions. Ask yourself a range of questions:
    - How much time do I have?
    - Which task to do?
    - What resources do I have available to me? For example, personal energy, equipment, documents, other people
    - What tasks do not get done?
    - When is a task to be completed?
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## 7. Planning

Once you know what you need to do, schedule all your tasks. For example, at school: Place all your send-in/formative/summative/assessment items on to the ONE calendar. You can then look at where your peak submission and stress times are.

- Consolidating all work rate calendars in to the school's Outlook email calendar.
- Bringing forward some assessment where there are peak submission times can help ease potential stress/anxiety.
- Using the calendar tools such as:
  - different colours for the different subjects and assessment
  - notifications allowing a reminder message to pop up giving a visual warning of what's due or to happen soon.
- Using the computer desktop version, or real, Sticky Notes or Tasks that can be deleted/taken off when tasks are done – a sense of accomplishment.
- Include times for health/well-being activities and allow for the sleep that you need. It's important to look after yourself to be able to do your best.

When planning to complete assessment and want to avoid feeling overwhelmed, it is recommended to:

- Schedule in to the time table only certain parts to be focussed on. Use your school email program calendar to set reminders.
- Look at the one chosen part and break it down even further if required.
- Highlight key task, topic, and focus words, for example, explain, compare, and list require different approaches – see *Understanding the question* on page 4 of the [BrisbaneSDE Years 7-12 Writing Guide](#). Use the rest of the guide's resources when appropriate.  
<https://brisbanesde.eq.edu.au/Supportandresources/Formsanddocuments/Documents/Student%20Use/writing-guide-year-7-12.pdf>
- Reword the expectation of the question in your own words and share this with the teacher (or parent/supervisor) to ensure understanding.
- Set a goal for the amount of time to be spent, then put on a timer. Ensure no distractions.
- Do your best. Ask questions to clarify if you need.
- Reward yourself for a productive time achieved.

You may also find helpful leading into exam time – [Test Anxiety](#)

<https://www.generationnext.com.au/2019/03/reduce-childrens-test-anxiety-with-these-tips-and-a-re-think-of-what-testing-means/>

## 8. Communication skills

We work with people on a daily basis. Employers expect a reasonable level of communication skills - written and verbal. The quality of your communication directly impacts the quality of work that gets done. Strong communication skill enable you to build supportive relationships, work better together and achieve more than you ever could apart.

In online lessons, use your microphone regularly.

If having trouble understanding something, speak to your class teacher, work supervisor or another trusted person.

If you are not able to meet a deadline, speak to your class teacher, work supervisor or another trusted person who can help you communicate to others what is needed if you can't for yourself.

If experiencing ongoing personal mental health issues, for example anxiety, depression, where ability to cope and communicate can vary, develop a code word for your class teacher, supervision, and support person so they can be aware of your immediate state of mind and support you in strategies to help you through this time.

### 9. Questioning and challenging

When given a task to do that you are not clear about, question and challenge, that is ask questions to see what the expectations are of you and of yourself. Asking questions in the beginning will save you time in the long-run. For example:

- What is to be done?
- When is it to be completed by?
- How much is required?
- The manner in which to work is to be performed.
- Any other details which impact on your ability to complete the work.

Refer back to *Planning* (skill 7) for tips on how to question and challenge when it relates to assessment.

### 10. Delegation/outsourcing

School is a time of learning new knowledge and skills. It is important that you personally undertake this and not be done for you. In the workplace, it will be expected that you will have developed a range of skills and knowledge for particular tasks, however there may be times when something is to be done within a time-frame and you not have the time or expertise to complete the task to the highest standard. This is where another person in the business may be assigned (delegated) or the task outsourced (external to the business).

### 11. Coping skills

Things can go wrong from time to time. How you think and react to that can make all the difference. Your thinking and mindset plays a massive role in determining your results. Knowing how to cope with setbacks will help you bounce back quickly and reduce the amount of time lost when things go wrong.

Resources:

- [Coping skills toolkit](https://www.bcbe.org/cms/lib/AL01901374/Centricity/Domain/1760/Coping%20Skills%20Toolkit.pdf) – <https://www.bcbe.org/cms/lib/AL01901374/Centricity/Domain/1760/Coping%20Skills%20Toolkit.pdf>
- [Alphabet of Stress Management and Coping Skills](http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/departments_institutes/cf_center/documents/Alphabet-of-Coping-Skills-Interventions.pdf) – [http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/departments\\_institutes/cf\\_center/documents/Alphabet-of-Coping-Skills-Interventions.pdf](http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/departments_institutes/cf_center/documents/Alphabet-of-Coping-Skills-Interventions.pdf)
- [Beyond Blue – Anxiety management strategies](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety/treatments-for-anxiety/anxiety-management-strategies) – <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety/treatments-for-anxiety/anxiety-management-strategies>

### 12. Stress management

With work comes pressure. Pressure can be a motivator to take action and do a good a job. However, once you feel you can no longer cope with the demands, you move from pressure to experiencing stress.

Stress can have a negative impact on your physical and mental well-being if not addressed early.

Resources:

- [Top 10 stress relievers for students](https://www.verywellmind.com/top-school-stress-relievers-for-students-3145179) – <https://www.verywellmind.com/top-school-stress-relievers-for-students-3145179>
- [Coaching Positive Performance](http://www.coachingpositiveperformance.com) – [www.coachingpositiveperformance.com](http://www.coachingpositiveperformance.com)  
*Convince yourself everyday that you are worthy of a good life. Let go of stress, breathe. Stay positive, all is well.* – Germany Kent

### 13. Working effectively with others

Work effectively with others helps get the job done quickly. It more than just communication. It is important to understand how other like to work; their goals and expectations. Being aware of others strengths and weaknesses, as well as your own, you can work better together for all concerned.

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- 14. Record keeping** You can make effective decisions and provide information quicker when you are 'on top of' what you need to know and what is going on. Keeping good records/notes of the what/when/where/how's is necessary to have a good system. Be consistent, learn to discipline yourself, and keep accurate files. It will save you a great deal of time in the future.
- Ways to help keep record of what you need to do may include regularly referring to:
- work rate calendar
  - using teacher's OneNote resource
  - Blackboard
  - digital/online calendars
  - folder for different subjects and separator tables for learning material, tasks work and assessment (you could even colour code all materials for different subjects)
  - a consistent file naming protocol, for example, subject\_task number\_name
  - saving your digital files immediately in appropriately named folders
  - backing up your digital files on a regular basis
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- 15. Organisation and filing** A continuation of record keeping. For example: Ensure...
- A consistent file naming protocol, for example, subject\_task number\_name
  - saving your digital files immediately in appropriately named folders
  - backing up your digital files on a regular basis
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- 16. Patience** Time management skills is not just about getting more work done. It is ensuring that you get the important work done. If rushing thing, you can make unnecessary mistakes which then means more time trying to fix your errors.
- When planning, think about how long the task may take, what the deadline is, if you have all the resources you require, etc. Include a little bit of extra time in your planning as a backup just in case so you can be patient, not rushing, and do the job properly.
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- 17. Forgiveness** Like patience, forgiveness is a skill too. It is not something that just happens but takes a conscious decision which you must choose to do. While you will make mistakes at time, others will also and let you down. It can be easy to become irate and too emotional to focus on your work in these situations; this can compound in making mistakes and reducing effectiveness due to your own frustrations.
- When something goes wrong, give people the benefit of the doubt as well as acknowledge any part you had to play too. Whether it was you or somebody else who made the mistake, choose to forgive. Accept that it was a genuine mistake, and then focus on identifying the corrective action that you need to take. This way, you will maintain your self-esteem, improve your relationships and reduce the amount of time wasted following the mistake.
- Forgiving is not for your benefit, but for the other person. Forgiveness means to let go. When failing to forgive, you are looking back to past events preventing you from looking forward and moving on. You don't have to like what happened and you font have to forget.
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Source based on <https://www.coachingpositiveperformance.com/17-essential-time-management-skills/>