

Study Skill Workshop #1: Habits of Successful College Students

One main characteristic of successful college students is that they act in a “professional” way. In other words, **they treat school as seriously as they would a high-paying career job**. This is demonstrated in their attitude and day-to-day actions/habits. Everything they do shows that school is a **very** high priority in their lives. Some examples:

_____ 1. They take care of themselves physically and emotionally (eating a well-balanced diet, exercising, getting appropriate amounts of sleep, dealing with stresses/difficulties in positive, healthy ways, etc.) so they can have the concentration needed to make it through each class session **and** the stamina needed to make it through the ups and downs of a long semester successfully.

_____ 2. They’re **never** absent from a class meeting unless a **true emergency** arises. Even on those days when they don’t “feel” like showing up or it’s not convenient to do so, they push themselves and attend anyway. “True emergency” absences might include personal illness (being contagious, under doctor’s orders to stay home etc.), family emergencies (serious illness, funeral, etc.), legal requirements (jury duty, court appearances, etc.), or unexpected transportation issues (car won’t start or “dies” on the way to school, etc.).

_____ 3. If they have to be absent, they do three things designed to help them not fall too far behind **and** improve their chances of doing well on upcoming tests and assignments: 1) They call or email the instructor as soon as they know they’ll miss class in order to find out what will be done during that class meeting and anything they will need to do to before the next session; 2) They arrange to pick up copies of any important class papers (handouts, study guides, assignments, etc.) from the instructor. They pick up the material at the instructor’s office, right before the next class meeting, or in some other manner; and 3) they make sure to arrive **at least ten minutes early** for the next class meeting so they can find and copy someone else’s notes completely **BEFORE** that class begins; and

_____ 4. They always come to class prepared. This means consistently having the course syllabus, the textbook (if required by the instructor), a notebook containing past handouts, past notes, paper for new notes, pens, pencils, scantrons on test days, etc.

_____ 5. They are consistently **on time or even a little early** so they can be prepared for the class. Being on time pretty much without fail is a sign of respect for the instructor and class, it’s a demonstration that school is important to them, and it’s an important personal habit to apply to all like situations.

_____ 6. They are **respectful** to the instructor and to classmates at **all** times. This means that they pay attention during lectures regardless of whether or not the topic being discussed is “interesting” (by staying awake, sitting up, working hard to listen, maintaining at least fairly frequent eye contact, etc.). In addition, they avoid doing **anything** that will be distracting to others in the room. This includes having running conversations with classmates, having their cell phone ring, text messaging, or doing **anything** else unrelated to what’s going on in class at that time.

- _____ 7. They realize that most college classes require several hours per week for homework, review, and other types of studying. With that in mind, they schedule time to study and most often choose to study even when other “more attractive” activities come up. They do this regardless of how they feel at any given time because doing well in school is very important to them.
- _____ 8. They work hard to follow all college and course rules and directions, written and verbal. This includes **NOT** being afraid to ask the teacher to repeat/clarify instructions during or after class, reading all written directions carefully, double-checking work for accuracy, etc.
- _____ 9. They make a major effort to turn in ALL homework assignments on time or early, realizing the problems that can be caused by turning work in late (lost points, lower grade, increased stress, etc.).
- _____ 10. They seek to learn from their mistakes and treat disappointments (i.e. low grades) as motivation for doing better on future tests and assignments rather than giving up or getting discouraged easily. They talk to their instructors in such cases so they can improve their performance as the semester goes on.

Which **TWO** of the ten areas do you feel you need to improve in the most this semester? What **SPECIFICALLY** will you do so improvement will happen?

_____ To improve in that area this semester, I will.

_____ To improve in that area this semester, I will.