

# Tips for successful time management

This document will provide you with several tips that could help you use your time more efficiently.

## Why time management?

- Creating a well-planned and realistic schedule brings structure to your day and helps you keep track of specific goals and tasks instead of just staring at an endless list of “to-dos”.
- A lack of time management often leads to deadline pressure. Take a couple of minutes out of your morning to think about which tasks you want to finish that day. This lets you avoid time pressure before it even has a chance to build up.
- Systematic time management frees up your energy: Doing everything at the last possible minute limits your potential.
- Even though it may sound counterintuitive, time management lets you be more creative: During your planned “downtime”, you can relax completely and forget about your to-do list for a while.

### *Five golden rules of time management*

- 1. Goal-oriented action is your basis for success: Define your goal and divide it into smaller tasks.*
- 2. Set priorities: Delegate or ignore tasks that are less important.*
- 3. Set up a goal plan for your tasks and add a timeline.*
- 4. Create a weekly schedule and think about which tasks you want to finish in that specific week.*
- 5. Set realistic goals and find out how much time you can really spend on specific tasks.*

## Setting your priorities: Separating the important and the insignificant

- In order to set priorities, you have to know how important and/or urgent the tasks at hand are.
- Important and urgent tasks should be finished as soon as possible. Important but not really urgent tasks can be scheduled for a later time. Insignificant but urgent tasks should be delegated if possible. Insignificant and non-urgent tasks are time-wasters that you should ignore.
- Reevaluate your priorities regularly: A task that can be rescheduled today could become very urgent after a couple of weeks.

## Long-term planning

- Find some general information about the general prerequisites for your program of study. Are there certain exams you have to pass, or a specific amount of credits you should earn every semester? Don't forget important elements like internships and studying abroad!
- Start planning “backwards” - find out when you are supposed to be doing an exam for a specific subject and write down how much time you will need to prepare for that exam.

## Short-term planning

- Short-term planning should consist of a practical daily and weekly schedule that is perfectly attuned to your individual needs.

- Taking regular breaks helps you to be more focused for longer periods of time, which in turn facilitates successful studying. Breaks should not be seen as a reward, but as an absolute necessity. Enjoy them without feeling guilty.
- Life will throw unexpected tasks at you that require immediate action. In order to be prepared for these situations, it is important to not plan away all of your time. A buffer of around 40 percent of all available time helps you deal with unexpected complications.

**Setting goals: The first step on the road to success**

- Take inspiration from your big goals, but divide them up into smaller goals and define what you have to do exactly to get where you want to be. The corresponding tasks should be divided into smaller ones until you feel like you can handle them.
- Defining exactly what your goal is, makes dividing that goal into the necessary steps a lot easier.