



10 WAYS TO MAXIMIZE SUCCESS IN AN ONLINE PROGRAM

- 1. Work ahead.** Many e-learners count on their weekends for the bulk of their school work. If that sounds like you, use the weekend before a Unit begins to do the readings and prep so you'll be ready to join discussions, engage in activities, and begin assignments.
- 2. Be strategic.** Yes, all "required" readings, tasks, and assignments need to be completed, but not all deserve the same amount of time or energy. Skim course notes, assignment descriptions, and discussion questions to determine which course content can be scanned more superficially and which needs to be mastered at a deeper level.
- 3. Block out "school" time.** Schedule chunks of time throughout the week, not just in 1 - 2 days. Leave flex time or "white space" at the end of the week to accommodate projects that took more time than anticipated or to make up for time blocks that got hijacked by other demands.
- 4. Spend your time wisely.** Know your own "peak" times and use them for tasks that require your deepest focus and highest energy. Use lower energy times for tasks that need your attention but that you find a bit easier to do.
- 5. Do the Math.** Carefully examine assignment descriptions and grading rubrics. Although each grade may be reported out of 100 (i.e., as a percentage), it may be worth very little of your total for the course. If discussion participation is worth 20% over 5 weeks, for example, that means each week contributes a maximum of 4 points to your total grade. Earning 70% instead of 90% translates to a grade of 2.8 instead of 3.6 out of 4, just over half of one percent difference! This isn't intended to minimize the value of discussion participation – many students report that the discussions are where their greatest learning occurs. However, it may decrease your stress on the occasions when you receive a lower grade than you'd hoped for.
- 6. Allocate time and assignment "real estate."** Grading rubrics provide clear guidance about how assignment components are weighted or prioritized. Use rubrics as planning tools to determine relative amounts of time and space to devote to each section or task.
- 7. Access support.** Find out what help is available to you through the program and, if required, seek out additional support online or within your community. Your instructor, teaching assistant, or student advisor all want you to succeed. Ask them for feedback about the types of supports that might be helpful (e.g., writing lab, study skills tutorial, editor, connecting with a research librarian), as well as for suggestions about where to find those needed resources.
- 8. Jump in early.** Preliminary research that clearly indicates a correlation between how actively a student participates in the first few days of online course discussions and the final grades they receive for that course. It may be that students who are actively engaged in discussions are customizing their learning, resulting in higher achievement – or it may simply be that students who don't procrastinate do better!
- 9. Read – and learn from – feedback.** Instructors use a variety of approaches and tools to provide feedback (e.g., "track changes" and/or comments within a document; comments on the grading criteria or where assignment grades are uploaded). If you don't see detailed feedback, ask for it. Then, apply it to your next assignment.
- 10. Buy a style guide.** There are a variety of style guides that shape academic and professional writing (e.g., APA 6th Edition, Chicago, MLA). Clarify whether or not a specific style is required for your program and purchase the actual guide (rather than relying on snippets of information from various websites). If no guide is specified, choose one style, buy the guide, and use it to apply the style consistently.

UPCOMING COURSES

Make sure you read our [course catalogue](#). It is full of important information for students on program structure and policies.

Not sure what training fits for you? Contact our [Student Advisor](#).

Starting Soon . . .

- **Career Development Foundations, Emerging Theories, and Models - Sep 9th**
- **Researching Workplace Trends, Career Information, and Employment Possibilities - Sep 16th**
- **Helping Skills to Facilitate Career Development - Sep 23rd**

Coming Fall 2015 . . .

- **Career Coaching Skills - Oct 7th**
- **Work Search Essentials 1: Resumes, Cover Letters, and Career Portfolios - Oct 14th**
- **Understanding Diverse Clients - Oct 21st**
- **Work Search Essentials 2: Interview and Negotiation Strategies - Oct 28th**

[Click here](#) for our full 2015 course schedule.

Keep in mind that we can arrange special sections of any course for intact groups; we also facilitate workshops on a wide variety of topics. [Contact us](#) to learn more.

DID YOU KNOW?



Upcoming Conference

The 2016 Society for Vocational Psychology Conference will be held at Florida State University May 16-17, 2016. The program submission deadline is September 28th. Learn more at www.svp2016.fsu.edu

Life Strategies' President, Dr. Roberta Neault, is looking forward to teaching an 8-day career counselling intensive for graduate students at the Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou, China. She then heads to Japan for the Asica Pacific Career Development Association and the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance conferences.

Canada Career Week is November 2-6, 2015. This year's theme is *Decent Work, Healthy Lives*. How will you celebrate?

National Career Development Association is hosting a Career Practitioner Institute in Richmond, October 2015! With keynote addresses by Dr. Mark Savickas and Dr. Kris Magnusson this small regional conference is not to be missed! [Click here](#) for details and to register.

NEW RESOURCES

Webinar Wednesdays

Recordings from all of Life Strategies' Webinar Wednesdays are now available. "Live" webinars return September 9th; next up, the *Ethics of Advocacy*, followed by *Skills Assessments* on September 16th. Email info@lifestrategies.ca for more information or to register.

Upcoming Webinar hosted by Conference Board of

Canada. Leadership is Half the Story—A Fresh Look at Followership, Leadership and Collaboration is taking place Wednesday September 6th at 11:00 am ET. [Click here](#) to register.



Welcome Back!

We are thrilled to welcome Cassie Taylor, our indispensable Program Coordinator, back from maternity leave. Miles Wilson Taylor was born April 29, 2015 to Cassie and her husband Patrick. Life Strategies is a very family friendly workplace . . . Miles is not the first baby to come to the office and we hope he won't be the last!



604.856.2386
info@lifestrategies.ca
www.lifestrategies.ca