

# Personal Assessment

In order to assess myself properly, I have been monitoring my performance with regard to lectures, working in my own time, and also within my social activities for the last two weeks. I have strengths and weaknesses that I am already aware of and so they will be included also, but the purpose of the exercise is to give me a chance to be honest with myself to the degree that I can highlight problems to be addressed within an action plan. This action plan will allow me monitor and assess my progress in rectifying or eradicating my weaknesses as best as possible over the next twelve months.

## Strengths

I have highlighted several aspects of my personality and work ethic that I regard as strengths within myself. This is important as use of these strengths could be incorporated when tackling my weaknesses in my action plan.

Problem Solving	I regard myself as an effective problem solver. I am good at lateral thinking and can usually come up with some kind of solution to the problems I face.
Flexibility	I hold a wide range of skills, and can switch between them quickly and effectively. I love to learn and use new skills and as a result am always looking for ways to apply them.
Initiative	I am good at spotting a situation early and taking the initiative to prepare for it. I do not need to be told to do everything required of me and am quick to act on a decision.
Can cope with pressure/stress	I have no problem detaching myself from a situation should related stress begin to affect me. I regard the ability to take a step back, breath easy and genuinely switch off from a problem for a desired amount of time as very important in managing stress levels. As for pressure, I work as well if not better as a result of it. I find it difficult to self motivate at times and thrive on being under pressure to complete a task in hand.
Self confidence	I have never really had a problem with self confidence. I enjoy playing to a crowd and am not afraid to throw in my two cents regardless of the situation. It's important to have your say.
Assertiveness	I have had a natural sense of assertiveness since childhood. I had a very assertive upbringing and have applied that not to just my work ethic but also to my personality. It's a huge factor in effective communication and therefore a huge factor in success, and I regard this as one of my strongest traits.

Resourcefulness	I like to use what is around me to the full. I am always trying to think of new ways to do things and to solve problems and am skilled in using the bare minimum or the most readily available to do so.
Imagination and creativity	I am a real thinker, and am usually brimming with different ideas on all manner of subjects. I enjoy creative work more than any other as the creation of something entirely new and unique to your self is an incredible experience. I always try to build a little creativity into my work, regardless of its nature.

## Weaknesses

The following are aspects of my work ethic and personality that I will need to address in the near future. Whilst thus far I have managed to work around these problems, my progress and success at University and in a career would be made a lot easier should I address them.

Numeracy	I do not deal with numbers very well on the fly. Whilst I do not have a major problem with simple arithmetic, I do not have a head for more advance mathematics and usually feel the need to seek help or to delegate maths intensive work.
Time Management	I often get caught up in silly little things that needn't be addressed in any great hurry in favour of more urgent work loads. I also have a tendency to leave things a little late or to plan work into insufficient time frames.
Planning	I tend to get caught up and consumed by an idea very easily. I tend to have so much enthusiasm for a topic I am interested in that it has a negative effect on my planning. I tend to skip through the planning stage and sometimes miss it out entirely as a result. I also often plan things to absolute deadlines and do not allow myself enough margin for error.
House keeping	Again, due to my enthusiasm for a project that I am enjoying, my housekeeping can often go to waste. I am comfortable working in an untidy manner, but obviously this is not the case for everyone, and so this can have a negative effect on people working around me.
Punctuality	This is a problem due to my occasional weakness in planning - I do not always allow myself a reasonable amount of time to complete a task or to make a journey do to a lack of the application of margin for error or delay.

Self motivation	I can sometimes find it very hard to motivate myself to complete a task or job should there be little or no pressure from and external source to drive me on. I am more than capable in taking the initiative to get something started and/or finished without being told, but if there is no pressure to complete it I have been know to work slowly and at a lesser quality. I not only thrive on pressure, but sometimes depend on it.
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The areas highlighted above will be addressed in my action plan, and I hope to rectify them in some way or another over the following twelve months.

# Action Plan

Following my personal statement, I have highlighted several key areas that I need to address in order improve my overall efficiency at work.

<b>ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>IDENTIFIED ACTION</b>
Numeracy	To improve my numeracy skills and to better my understanding of basic level maths.	This is a basic case of applying effective learning skills and investing the time required to improve my skills. Additional tutoring is also an option.
<b><i>Time Management</i></b>	<i>To</i> enhance my ability to allow an accurate and realistic amount of time to complete activities and work loads.	To apply the theories and methods highlighted in our time management handouts. I intend to employ the 'analyse and eliminate, Insulate, concentrate, and review' method. I must also learn to say no to activities that may upset my time management schedule. I will also begin to record the amount of time I actually take to get activities done, and incorporate my findings to better plan my time.
<b><i>Planning</i></b>	<i>To</i> enable myself to plan effectively, and to better analyse projects so as to formulate a more effective planning process.	I must learn to break large projects down into smaller manageable sections. Also, I must better record exactly what I want to achieve and produce with a project before I begin to plan. That way I will be sure to include all factors, and hopefully my efforts to improve my time management will better my ability to plan effectively also.
<b><i>House keeping</i></b>	<i>To</i> keep on top of my organisation and filing, and to maintain a manageable and tidy working environment.	To employ better filing techniques so as to organise my work more effectively, and to file or tidy away materials that I no longer need as soon as I am done with them. I intend to invest some money in better folders and separators
<b><i>Punctuality</i></b>	This problem is linked to planning. I intend improve my punctuality by bettering my foresight and preparation.	This will be improved should my enhanced planning and time management skills get better through the above actions. Also I intend to make a conscious effort to fully prepare for activities the day before I undertake them as opposed to leaving it till the last minute. I also intend to incorporate

<i>Punctuality Cont.</i>		a system where by I in someway fine myself every time I am late for an event.
<b>Self motivation</b>	To improve my ability to stay motivated without relying on the pressure of a deadline to complete a task.	Here I intend to break projects down into smaller sections and set myself individual deadlines for each one. That way, I can apply the pressure I need to get my work done to individual sections of my work.

### **Factors that may help the achievement of my objectives**

My objectives in numeracy could benefit from learning with another person, either someone in a similar situation or someone already familiar with the concepts I am trying to grasp.

My time management skills could more than benefit with the use of a diary and effective use of wall planner. Also, the involvement of my colleagues and friends in my effort to be more disciplined with my time could be a beneficial factor.

My planning skills could benefit from my improvement in time management. Also, seeing the results of effective planning in my colleagues work should be an encouragement.

In order to improve my house keeping I will have to invest in some materials, i.e. filing systems, folders, dividers, a good hole punch etc. The fact that I will actually have to spend money to improve this aspect of my work ethic should be a good source of motivation; I want to get value for my money and that is dependant on my success.

### **Factors that may hinder the achievement of objectives**

I tend to put up a mental block when it comes to numeracy - it is possible that if I do not get results relatively quickly that I will become disillusioned with my objectives and give up.

My time management could suffer if my friends and colleagues are not supportive in my efforts to improve. If constant offers of alternative and more appealing activities come my way whilst I am trying to manage my time effectively, I may become side tracked and lose sight of my goals.

My efforts to improve self motivation via breaking my projects down into smaller sections and applying a deadline to each may not work as the pressure induced by them will come only from myself.

### **How might helping factors be increased?**

Overall, the best helping factor is one of realising the benefits of your efforts. Should the action plan reap rewards, it will be motivation enough to continue or enhance its application.

## **How might the effect of hindering factors be lessened?**

I personally tend to work better with external encouragement. My hindering factors could be lessened considerably with the involvement of both my tutors and friends, specifically with self motivation, as I could ask my tutors to assist me in breaking down my work and setting deadlines for each section to be handed in. That way, the pressure that I need to work more effectively does not come purely from myself.

### **Actions to be taken:**

#### **By the end of the first month**

- ◆ Purchase the appropriate equipment, i.e. Hole punch, dividers, diary, folders, filing cabinet etc.
- ◆ Organise my current work load into a realistic time plan and maintain it.
- ◆ Effectively apply the research into effective planning techniques and time management covered in this module.
- ◆ Keep a log of my punctuality both at lectures and personal meetings and ventures.

#### **By the end of 3 months**

- ◆ Find a willing partner in improving my numeracy skills, and begin to test myself in this area on a regular basis.
- ◆ Review my punctuality and assess improvements, taking into account my efforts to prepare for activities well in advance.

#### **By the end of 6 months**

- ◆ Review the effectiveness of all aspects of my action plan.
- ◆ Make any appropriate adjustments to the plan where the results have been less than successful.

#### **By the end of 12 months**

- ◆ Complete another personal assessment to see if any other aspects of my performance have suffered as a result of my improvements elsewhere
- ◆ If needs be, construct a second action plan covering anything I feel requires more attention or anything highlighted in the new personal assessment.

An Initial review of the action plan will be carried out on 20<sup>th</sup> of February.