

How to Focus and Stay Motivated in an Online Learning Environment

We know online learning can come with its own set of challenges. Here are some tips to increase focus and motivation when learning in an online learning environment. A shift in your attitude and approach can make all the difference.



DREAMS, GOALS. MOTIVATION:

When you are struggling to motivate yourself during online learning, visualize the importance of why you are working toward your goal(s), your degree(s), and your career(s) of choice.

Emotion(s)

How will you feel once you have realized your dream? How will you feel when you reach your goal(s)? Proud? Accomplished? Secure? Confident?

Support System

Who will be surrounding you once you have successfully reached your goal(s)? Family? Partner? Friends? Colleagues? Who can support you to stay on track with your goals (i.e. accountability-buddy)?

Tangible Rewards

What things will you have acquired once you are a professional in your field? House? Car? Travel? Financial aid to others? Keep your eyes on the prize.

FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS!

When you are having trouble staying focused, determine what is causing you to get off track and address or reduce the distraction.

External Distractions – noises/notifications, motion in your area, tab clutter on your web browser, clutter or insufficient materials/tools at your workstation, temperature setting, roommate/family member... Some suggestions: clean and organize your space, get comfortable, wear noise-cancelling headphones, communicate to others about your study hours, set phone to “Do not disturb” while studying

Internal Distractions – hunger, fatigue, inner thoughts, feelings... Pay attention to what is disturbing you. Eat and sleep on a regular schedule. Take deep breaths to calm your mind and body or talk to a friend or counselor. Sometimes internal distractions are about avoiding uncomfortable feelings (stress, overwhelm, guilt, boredom, etc.).

ONLINE LEARNING BENEFITS

Flexibility and Convenience

- Asynchronous classes provide material you can use to learn on any connected device
- Study on your own schedule and around academic supports such as Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction (SI), YouTube, Khan Academy, and more!
- Save time on commuting and allocate this time toward your studies or other responsibilities
- Make progress towards your degree to advance your career while maintaining your work schedule

Same High Quality

- Universities must meet certain criteria and curriculum standards
- You get virtual interactions with your professors and virtual collaboration with other classmates
- Some students prefer online courses to manage social anxiety or challenges focusing in-person
- Increase of technology skills and adaptability in utilization of software to prepare you for the demands of the working world