Study Skills 4: Planning Effectively and Time Management

There are lots of things we want to do, need to do and would like to have time for. How do we **manage our time** so that we get all the essentials done, and even have time for some extras? We have some techniques you can try.

**‘Pickle Jar’ Theory**

If you have to fit stones of different sizes into a jar, they won’t fit if you put the sand in first. But if you put the **rocks** in then the **pebbles** *then* the **sand**, there’s enough room.

This theory suggests you should apply the same logic to your time: put in the **essential** tasks first, then the**important** tasks, then **everything else**.

Of course, you have to decide for yourself what is ‘**essential’**!

**Backwards Planning**

1. Work backwards from your deadlines
2. Put the **essentials** in first
3. Estimate how long tasks will take to make sure you start them in good time

**Plan your week**

Use the grid below to ‘backwards plan’ your week, putting in the **essentials** first, then the **important** tasks, then any **less important** things you’d also like to get done.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
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