



HER RESOURCES

A collection of resources designed to provide practical tools for women undergraduate students.

Setting up accountability

Often we are full of great ideas but when it comes to execution our motivation wanes and we fall short on seeing them through. Setting up a system of self-accountability can help us bring our goals to completion. This issue of Her Resources will guide you through tips on how to make accountability a personal endeavour. We are hoping that you will find your own way to leverage the tools below and adjust them to fit your needs and style of work. We want you to remember that the personal accountability system is not supposed to weigh down on you. Quite the opposite, it should lift you up and bring you closer to actualizing your vision.

"I AM APPLYING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL NEXT YEAR, SO I HAVE A NOTE ON MY MIRROR THAT SAYS "FUTURE DR. CAPUTO". SEEING THIS EVERY MORNING REMINDS ME WHY THE SMALLER TASKS I NEED TO COMPLETE MATTER AND HOW THEY DIRECTLY RELATE TO MY PURPOSE. THIS MAKES ME MORE LIKELY TO COMPLETE A BIOLOGY CHAPTER I PUT ON MY TO-DO LIST THAT DAY."
- BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING MAJOR



Tools

1

Be clear about your goals and make them visible. When setting up a system of self-accountability, you need to be clear on what you are holding yourself accountable for. Check our handout on Setting SMART goals for tips on how to set measurable, specific, and time-bound goals. Once you have those, create visual reminders to remember why the tasks at hand are important. This can for example take form of creating a vision board that reminds you of the big picture and the larger purpose behind the smaller steps.

2

Reward yourself. Rewarding yourself for getting the job done can be more effective than doling out penalties (and much more enjoyable!). Treats can range from taking an evening off to indulging in your favorite food but there really are no limits. You know best what works on you. However, make sure to reward yourself only after you have completed the task at hand. If you are worried about your discipline, ask a friend to help you by being a “referee”.

3

Ask for help. Holding yourself accountable does not imply that you have to do it by yourself! Yes, it's true that ultimately only you are responsible for your actions and choices but we all have times when we need some help. Your close ones can boost your morale and help you keep going when you feel like giving up. If there are people in your circle who share the same goal, you can become accountability partners and work towards it together.

4

Be patient with yourself. We fail all the time and that's okay! Don't be hard on yourself in case you don't accomplish everything that you set out for yourself. Instead take it as a learning opportunity. Did you set too many goals? What can you do differently next time? Was there something lacking that could have helped you stay on track? If you start feeling like you have failed, remind yourself of all the things that you have already accomplished. Be patient and kind to yourself. We are all learning.

Apps that help with Self-accountability

Toggl- This app allows you to track the tasks you completed on a given day and how much time was spent on them. This way, you can easily check if you spend too much time on tasks that should not be time consuming.

StickK- You can bet a small amount of money that you will complete your goal. Record the tasks necessary to reach your goal, and a “referee” (a friend, roommate or family member) will verify whether or not you actually completed the task. If your referee sees that you did not complete it by your self-imposed deadline, you will lose the money and it will be donated to charity or sent to a friend you are betting against.

Trello- This app connects you with teammates so you can hold one another accountable for the assignments. The team leader can view everyone's progress and assign tasks.

Todoist- This customizable to-do list can help you write down your daily/weekly/monthly tasks.

Moodnotes- This app encourages you to take time to reflect on your day.

A note from one of the authors

“I have always struggled with keeping myself on track to accomplish my personal goals and I often feel guilty when I do not finish my to-do lists. I have tried many techniques to develop this skill (with many failures), and once I found the ones that worked best for me and my lifestyle, I stuck with them and I eventually saw results. I found the most success when I was kind to myself and surrounded by supportive people.” - Julia Caputo