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Kenneth A.

Kiewra

**Career
Guiding
Principles**

**Accountability
Groups
as a Motivation
Regulation
Strategy**

**Putting
Research Into
Practice—
Strategies to Self-
Regulate Learning,
Work, and Careers**

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Putting Research Into Practice—Strategies to Self-regulate Learning, Work, and Careers

Editorial

Joseph C. Tise

Scholars at all phases of their careers need to engage in self-regulation, and particularly, to employ self-regulation strategies to maintain forward progress. I view models of self-regulated learning (SRL) as applicable not only to granular academic tasks and specific learning situations but also to broader, longer-term career pursuits such as tenure, a promotion, securing grants, teaching, mentoring, and establishing a clear line of research. However, often we learn to self-regulate these aspects of our careers through personal trial-and-error experience—or, if we are fortunate, through one or two close mentors.

Fortunately, this *Times Magazine* serves as a forum to exchange ideas, advice, and inspiration. Accordingly, this month’s theme of the *Times Magazine* relates to how professionals engage in self-regulation sub-processes *as they pursue their career-related goals*. I hope that all readers, regardless of career rank or duties, may find some valuable tips or inspiration from these contributions our colleagues worked so diligently to produce.

The contributors to this issue were diverse, and all provided insightful advice for successful self-regulation. Kenneth Kiewra offers seven self-regulation principles that guide his career, which he garnered from 25 interviews with the world’s most productive educational psychologists. These principles relate to the self-regulation processes of goal setting, self-monitoring, and strategy use.

Antonio Gutierrez de Blume, Associate Professor, discusses how he employs effective time management strategies to take control of his work and ultimately, non-work life. Gutierrez de Blume firmly believes, as I do, that a healthy work-life balance is crucial to success in both realms. One such strategy he uses is to block (and fiercely defend) specific chunks of time for writing. I use this strategy as well and wholeheartedly implore you to do the same if you do not already.

Professor Emerita and former student of Barry Zimmerman, Linda Sturges, presents four lessons she learned over her 40+ year career. These lessons align with Zimmerman’s model of SRL as she emphasizes the importance of knowing the requirements for your career goals, creating a

plan to meet those requirements, monitoring your progress, and periodically evaluating the plan you are enacting or did enact.

Anna Brady and colleagues report on the utility of forming writing groups. They outline three types of writing groups, all of which help maintain each writer’s accountability and progress. Their recommendations are excellent ways to set high-quality goals, sustain motivation, and monitor progress toward goals.

Jennelle Malcos, Teaching Professor in biology, describes in her contribution the power of recognizing gaps in knowledge. Malcos aptly describes how she identifies those gaps and uses them as the basis for goal setting to remedy the gaps. She further describes how she leverages help-seeking and peer-learning strategies to help her achieve career success.

Ying Wang, Postdoctoral Scholar, provides three main pieces of advice she has adopted as an early career researcher. Wang reminds us that writing is *not just* typing—it includes reading, outlining, and other prep work too. She outlines a system to track active projects and manuscripts to help her monitor her publication progress and demands on her time. Finally, she echoes points from other contributors about the importance of a social support system to maintain morale and receive instrumental support.

Taylor Young, an Educational Psychology graduate student at Penn State, provides an organized recap of strategies she used in her first year of graduate school. These strategies focus on realistic goal setting, reframing “to-do lists” to “today’s goals” lists, and dedicated planning time on Friday afternoons.

Finally, Yan Dai, an Educational Psychology graduate student at Auburn, details her use of a self-monitoring log to track her time management and progress toward specific educational and publication goals. Yan uses the log to also compare and contrast her understanding of

particular concepts when used in the classroom vs. research scenarios—for example, factor analysis techniques.

Regardless of the particular career position we find ourselves in—an emerging or established researcher—the exchange of ideas, tips, and anecdotes can prove helpful to all. It remains vital to not only self-regulate our learning but also to self-regulate our career pursuits on a broader scale. Many of the same principles and established best practices can be transferred from academic learning tasks to our research, teaching, mentoring, and other professional pursuits.

One needs only to have the goal of improvement, plan for and engage in strategic action, and periodically reflect upon those goals, plans, and strategies.

A RELATED PUBLICATION

“Executive functions (EF) have been theoretically implicated in multiple text comprehension. Yet, the contributions of EFs to comprehension and integration of multiple texts have not been tested empirically, and instructional supports for text integration grounded in EFs are only beginning to be developed. Using a conflicting-text paradigm, this study examined the roles of EFs, based on measures of learners’ reported EF use and EF skills, and a text-embedded intervention, designed to elicit readers’ EF and metacognitive engagement, in comprehension—integration of conflicting informational texts. Structural equation modeling was employed to test a proposed indirect effects model in which EF use and skills and the text intervention condition predicted comprehension—integration, both directly and via reported cross-text elaboration; academic achievement was controlled...”

Follmer, D. J., & Tise, J. (2022). Effects of an executive function-based text support on strategy use and comprehension—integration of conflicting informational texts. *Reading and Writing*, 35, 1731–1758. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-022-10257-7>

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Amanda Ferrara, generously and efficiently, served as the copyeditor of this issue of the *Times Magazine*.



My Career Guiding Principles

Kenneth A. Kiewra

I am delighted to be included in this exploration of successful career practices. The investigation of successful scholars is a research topic of mine (Flanigan et al., 2018; Kiewra & Creswell, 2000; Kiewra et al., 2021; Patterson-Hazley & Kiewra, 2013; Prinz et al., 2020). I have interviewed about 25 of the world's most productive educational psychologists to learn how the experts do it. This *Times Magazine* issue provides a wonderful opportunity to offer my own insights and advice. Here are seven self-regulation principles that have guided my career. They pertain to goal setting (1, 2, 4), self-monitoring (2, 3, 4, 7), and strategy use for resource, time, and motivation management (4, 5, 6).

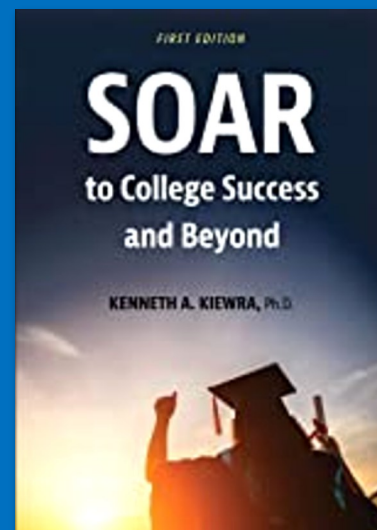
1. **Conduct pioneering research.** Careers are too short to follow the crowd, conduct the umpteenth study on advance organizers or the testing effect, and become a footnote to others' work. Follow your bliss and go where your interests lie. I was among the first to study note taking in 1980 when note taking was outlawed in one of my graduate classes. Can that be a good practice, I wondered. I developed and investigated the SOAR method when I sought an empirically- and theoretically-based way to improve teaching and learning. I pioneered research investigating parents' roles in talent development when seeking ways to help my son excel in chess. I was the first to interview productive educational psychologists when looking to improve my scholarly productivity. Moreover, I am now studying productivity in the wisdom years as I contemplate my waning career.
2. **Integrate research, teaching, and service.** All career aspects should pull in one direction. There should be no wayward steps. I teach courses on teaching, learning, and talent development based on my research. I have written books on these topics that serve scholars, instructors, parents, and students. All of my consultancies link to my scholarly work. I make it a priority to both advance new knowledge and take educational psychology to the people.
3. **Write for your neighbor.** Former *Journal of Educational Psychology* editor Joel Levin told me that a manuscript must pass the Friend Test to merit publication, meaning that a friend unfamiliar with the area would understand and enjoy it. Effective writing is simple, straightforward, interesting, and jargon-free. I strive to make all my writing—from journal articles to books—friendly.

4. **Find your rhythm.** There is a rhythm to my workday. I schedule my classes, so they meet in the evenings just one day a week to free up large time blocks for scholarly work. I work from home most days, focusing on scholarly work each morning when my mind is freshest, exercising midday to rejuvenate, and then returning to my scholarly work or attending to routine tasks in the afternoon.
5. **Take a walk on the wild side.** Research confirms the health and creative benefits of walking, particularly in nature (Oppezzo et al., 2014). I have been on the move as a runner, hiker, or walker throughout my career, usually logging 90 minutes of aerobic exercise daily. This routine has kept me healthy and happy and allowed me to reflect and think. Some of my best ideas have evolved while on the trails.
6. **Do not let things get cold.** Getting started on something new is difficult. Football icon Don Shula said, "The start is what stops most people." Also problematic, though, is letting things get cold and ignoring an ongoing project for too long. Once I start a project, I strive to remain committed and vigilant until completion. I work relentlessly on it and schedule competing projects for a later time. However, once a project is completed, I let it sit for a bit and let my mind revisit and reconsider what has been done. Invariably, I find improvements.
7. **Keep your radar operating.** In the famous book *The Alchemist*, author Paulo Coelho writes, "When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." Seems accurate to me. The wisdom years project was set in motion when a colleague casually mentioned her father's retirement and how to help him remain active. When I mentioned the wisdom years idea to my wife, she directed me to an informative book by local author John Rosenow, who also became one of the interviewees. Reading the local newspaper, I happened along a story about the debut play of a professor-turned-playwright. I interviewed her. Mentioning the project to my nature-exploring daughter, she recommended interviewing the Wander Women, who quit their jobs and sold their homes to explore the American wilderness. Universe conspiring? Maybe. Alternatively, maybe my radar was latently transmitting and striking essential targets. Keep your radar pulsating.

References are available upon request from
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Kenneth A. Kiewra is a professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and studies teaching, learning, and talent development. Recent achievements include his listing among the Top 2% of the Most Cited Researchers Worldwide, receiving his university system's highest honor for teaching, publishing *SOAR to College Success and Beyond* (Cognella, 2022), and being featured in Héfer Bembenutty's *Contemporary Pioneers in Teaching and Learning* (Volume 2).





Linda J. Sturges is a Professor Emerita (Mathematics) and former Vice Provost for Institutional Assessment at SUNY Maritime College. She earned her doctorate in Educational Psychology, under Barry J. Zimmerman's advisement from the CUNY Graduate Center.

The Long and Winding Road to Professor Emerita Linda J. Sturges

Thank you for the opportunity to share my lessons learned and insights of 40-plus years of professional development. My journey is a product of the times and taking control of the professional goals I set for myself.

My story starts in 1980 as a high school mathematics teacher inspired by a sorority sister to apply for an adjunct teaching position at SUNY Old Westbury. Teaching higher-level courses in a high school were at a premium and adjunct instruction provided the opportunity to teach the calculus sequence.

In the fall of 1984, I accepted a full-time leave replacement at SUNY Maritime College. Maritime College is a specialized institution that offers students an opportunity to earn a Merchant Marine license in addition to their degree. Honestly, I was so happy to teach there that I did not think long-term. Would I be able to remain there as an instructor?

Lesson #1: Ask questions and make sure you find someone to advise you.

I said part of my story was a product of the times. The procedures for tenure follow SUNY guidelines; campuses flesh out requirements specific to the institution. The enumeration of requirements at my campus was not evident, and the long and winding journey began.

I take full responsibility for not being proactive in understanding the specific requirements for continuing the appointment. I could be tenured without a doctorate as mathematics

was a service area and not a major. I concentrated on teaching and joined an assessment committee for service.

In 2001, I was granted continuing appointment as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics, assumed the assessment committee chair, and was much wiser by then. After my long tenure journey, the road to promotion became clear as a tenure/promotion matrix was developed. There are five areas to address for promotion (and tenure).

Lesson #2: Consider what you are already doing to meet requirements and what still needs to be developed.

Research would be challenging, and I looked for other ways to meet this component. Assessment of student learning was a new facet of institutional reaccreditation. This was the area I chose to develop my expertise in addition to teaching the catalog of mathematics courses (*mastery of subject matter and effectiveness in teaching*).

I now chaired an important committee, served on another committee for *service*, attended conferences on assessment (*continued growth*), and in 2003 I started a doctorate to broaden my *scholarly ability*. Educational psychology addressed student learning, and the quantitative methods component appealed to my mathematics background and enhanced my ability to analyze assessment results. Now I have a plan of action.

Lesson #3: Devise a strategy to meet campus tenure/promotion requirements.

I was fortunate to become involved in SUNY-wide assessment groups, developed and led indirect assessment methods, such as alum surveys and worked with departments to develop learning outcomes and assessment methods. I was progressing through my doctoral studies. I was promoted to Associate Professor in 2004. I continued with this plan, expanding my assessment activities, presenting at conferences, and continuing my service at the college and system level. Be intentional!

Lesson #4: Evaluate your plan.

Although I struggled for tenure, once firm guidelines were in place, the road to promotion was straight. An annual academic report was developed to serve as a source of information to base considerations on reappointment, promotion and discretionary salary increases.

Now I have an opportunity for self-reflection and course correction. Have you noticed the long, winding road straightened out once I employed Dr. Zimmerman's cyclical self-regulatory processes?

To summarize: the forethought phase begins with proactively seeking an understanding of the requirements to meet your professional goals. Self-evaluate your status against the criteria and develop a process to meet other requirements. The performance phase includes enacting the strategies you have developed. These are deliberate actions and are taken over time. Lastly, self-reflect at a minimum annually. If that committee you serve on does not meet your needs, find another or volunteer to chair a committee. Become visible!

The cycle serves you for as long as it takes to meet your goals. I did have success with the assessment. I became a Middle States peer reviewer and developed a professional development course assessing student learning. I continued to teach and develop my skills. If I were trying to engage faculty in assessing their students' learning, I should model that behavior.

I earned the professor's rank and concluded my career as the Vice Provost for Institutional Assessment. May the road rise to meet you!

Using a Personalized Metacognitive Self-Monitoring Log in Coursework and Research

Yan Dai



Yan Dai, MEd, MA, is a doctoral student in Educational Psychology at the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership & Technology (EFLT), Auburn University. Her research focuses on motivation and self-regulated learning, online learning, and cross-cultural comparison study.

For many doctoral students, self-regulation is a crucial strategy for academic success. Metacognitive self-monitoring is one of the invaluable self-regulation strategies that can be used in coursework and research. Metacognitive self-monitoring refers to the mental tracking of an individual’s performance processes and outcomes (Zimmerman, 2013). I regularly conduct self-monitoring, record my progress, and make adjustments with a personalized metacognitive self-monitoring log. The log depicts my learning and research improvement over time in behavior. It increases my awareness of time management, learning strategies, and the efforts I devote to learning and research, helping me renavigate and adjust accordingly. As a result, I worked effectively, coming out with six journal publications, a book chapter, and twenty-one conference

presentations in the first three years of my Ph.D. program, and I have won a prestigious Auburn University Outstanding Doctoral Student Award for 2021-2022. I am sharing my experience to give you some insight into how to use self-regulated learning strategies to help your academic success. An Example of Using a Self-Monitoring Log In most cases, I make my research linked with a class topic so I can practice and extend coursework with my research. Meanwhile, I can reach out to the course professor for help if I have questions about my research. Therefore, the log linked my coursework and research. However, the research (manuscript) does not necessarily have to link with the course topic, and the log can be used with any research and coursework learning, respectively. For instance, I took an Applied Psychometric Principles class while working on a psychometric evaluation manuscript. I created the following log and engaged it weekly to monitor and record my learning and writing progress (See Table 1). In Week 8, for the Psychometric Evaluation class, I was not satisfied with my comprehension of EFA and CFA. I self-identified my understanding level as 4/5. Furthermore, I identified the main problem: I got confused about the criteria for using EFA and CFA though I knew their definitions by words. The same question also hindered my psychometric evaluation research. Aware of the problem, I sought help from the TA, then figured out the differences between EFA and CFA and the situations using them. Afterward, I conducted a self-evaluation of the improvement I had made. The entire process was self-monitored and recorded in the log. Similarly, I conducted self-monitoring and recorded the

research process. On top of that, since my research was an extension and practice of my coursework, I recorded what I could use from the class in my research. That way, the intertwined course-taking and manuscript writing were reciprocal. Tips for Using a Self-Monitoring Log (1) Create a Self-Monitoring Log Early. It takes time to write a manuscript, and coursework is also very time-consuming. Thus, if you want to complete the manuscript by the time you complete your class, start self-monitoring as early as possible, preferably before the beginning of the course. Do not wait until the course begins because you will be too busy to set up a self-monitoring protocol. (2) Reserve Time for Publication. We commonly prioritize urgent activities, such as course assignments, since there is a due date. However, it is also vital to make sure that you make time in the log for your long-term academic development and career. (3) Keep the Log Updated. Keeping the log up to date with your coursework and manuscript development is essential. Engaging in reflections and recording unsolved problems and unanswered questions is also crucial. When improvements are made, keeping them in your log is vital so you can return to them later when self-evaluating. (4) Keep the Log(s) as a Portfolio of Your Academic Growth. The Ph.D. journey can be very lonely and may sometimes yield self-doubt. The self-monitoring log(s) can remind you of how much effort you have put into each task and the tremendous progress you have made. I hope you will find these suggestions helpful to surviving and thriving on your PhD journey.

References are available upon request from Yan Dai yzd0038@auburn.edu

Table 1 A Self-Monitoring Log for a Psychometric Evaluation Course and Manuscript Writing (Week 8)			
Week 8 Coursework		Research (Manuscript)	
Class Module #	Module 7 Structural Validity, CFA & EFA	Section	Methods
Time Spent	6 hours	Time Spent	15 hours
Comprehension Level	4/5	Completion Degree	2/5
Questions/Problems	What are the differences between EFA and CFA? How do I decide which one to use?	Questions/Problems	Shall I use EFA or CFA in my research?
Help-Seeking	I made an appointment with the TA during her office hour. The questions I would ask are 1. The difference between EFA and CFA 2. Criteria to decide which to use	Help-Seeking	I made an appointment with the TA during her office hour. Intuitively, I think I should use EFA since the instrument is newly developed without sufficient validation.
Solutions	TA gave detailed explanations and recommended books and articles: Articles: Byrne 2012-Ch2; Enders 2010-Ch11; Li & Lomax 2017	Solutions	The discussion with TA confirmed my thought that EFA should be used in my research.
Improvements made	I understood the differences between EFA and CFA and the criteria to use them.	Progress Made	I identified I needed to use EFA in my study, conducted a EFA using M plus and started to draft the Method section.
Brief Summary	I understood the concept and application of EFA and CFA by reading, taking class, help-seeking, and associating with the ongoing manuscript.	Brief Summary	The present study focuses on psychometric evaluation on a newly developed scale, EFA should be used for the structure validation of the instrument. EFA can also be used in similar psycho metric eval studies in the future
What I learned from class that can be used in the manuscript: YES Class readings: Furr Ch 4, Ch 11 Instruction: See class notes Assignment: M plus coding for EFA and CFA Feedback from professor/peers:			



As an early career researcher, it is particularly important to maintain my academic productivity. I am still learning how to do so effectively as a postdoctoral scholar. I am fortunate to be given the autonomy and resources to conduct my postdoctoral research. However, this also means I must learn more about what works for me in a new environment. During this learning and transitioning journey, I have tried several strategies and learned things I did not know about myself in graduate school. Below I humbly share some strategies that I found helpful.

First, knowing what type of writer I am is important. Compared to graduate school, I have less structured and more flexible schedules, which can sometimes be a challenge for my writing.



Learning How to Maintain Academic Productivity as An Early Career Researcher

Ying Wang

After trying several writing strategies, I realized that I prefer to write individually rather than in a group, and I am most productive on writing tasks in the morning. Therefore, I try not to schedule any meetings between 9 – 11 am. I am also very sensitive to notifications or messages, so I close all my communication apps to focus on my writing.

Of course, it is not realistic to keep writing for the entire two hours every day. It matters how we define writing. I learned from Sharon Zumbunn's "How to Get Published" session from the 2020 AERA Virtual Research Learning Series that writing is not just typing. Instead, writing can be in various forms.

Reading a journal article related to a manuscript I am working on is a form of writing. Knowing the various forms of writing has helped me to set realistic writing goals and allow myself to not type on my computer when I cannot.

Second, I find it helpful to have a tracking system to track all the research projects and manuscripts.

As a postdoctoral scholar, I have started being involved in more research projects than I used to in graduate school. I am more likely to lose track of the projects without a tracking system that works for me. I use one spreadsheet to track research projects and one spreadsheet to track manuscripts.

For example, in the tracking spreadsheet of manuscripts, I have all of my first-authored and co-

authored manuscripts on each row. I then have *writing in progress*, *under review*, *first decision* (*second decision*, etc.), *under revision*, and *final decision* on the columns for me to track the status of each manuscript.

I also use a color-coding approach to tracking. For example, when it is a rejection, the cell would be highlighted in red; when it is an acceptance, it would be highlighted in green. A tracking system like this not only helps me to stay on track but also helps me to realize whether I am on too many projects that overwhelm me. This helps me to be strategic about when to start a new research project.

Third, I need to find my academic support system. In academia, we often encounter rejections or unexpected results and feel uncertain and ashamed (Bloch, 2002). For me, at least, when I have these feelings, I tend to feel a lack of confidence and motivation. This is perhaps true for junior scholars in particular. Thus, a support system is truly needed. I am fortunate to have a support system that inspires me to become a better scholar.

For example, a postdoc colleague at Georgia Tech and I send weekly updates and encouraging words to each other for mutual support. Having a support system like this helps me to normalize rejections and boost my confidence in being a scholar.

Finally, I think we all need to recognize that all the strategies we

employ to maintain our academic productivity are effortful and can be very time-consuming. We all know that there are strategies to become more productive, but they are also not easy to do.

The employment of these strategies itself is a learning process and requires self-regulation. As an early career researcher, I am taking the time to learn to work with myself. Thank you for the opportunity to share, and I hope folks in the same phase find these reflections relevant.

"Knowing the various forms of writing has helped me to set realistic writing goals and allow myself to not type on my computer when I cannot."

Ying Wang is a Postdoctoral Fellow in CREATE-X funded by the Kern Family Foundation since Fall 2021. She earned her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology at The Pennsylvania State University and Master of Education at Temple University. Ying is an educational psychologist who researches how students learn and the effective ways to support their learning and academic and professional successes. In CREATE-X, Ying's research focuses on assessing and fostering students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and mindset.

Jennelle Malcos is a professor in the biology department at the Pennsylvania State University and the Associate Director for the Center for Excellence in Science Education in the Eberly College of Science. She is also interested in helping her students grow self-regulated learning strategies in the context of her courses.

How My Weaknesses Make Me Stronger

I am new to the area of self-regulated learning (SRL). I am trained as a biologist, observing the world around me. It was not until I had been teaching for several years that I began to observe my students' behaviors. What started as creating the perfect lecture soon became me asking questions about the students' behaviors rather than my presentation: Why are some students successful while others are not? What is impacting their learning? Is there a way I can help all students achieve success? Through this line of questioning, I was introduced to the world of SRL and the many components that interact in complex ways to direct or derail student success. I also now recognize the role self-regulation plays in my own life.

I have a specific memory of my biochemistry class at Canisius College in 2001. Working through a pathway, I reached a point where a step did not make sense. Without Google or Wikipedia, I was forced to search through textbooks to figure out the gap in my knowledge. Moreover, I relentlessly asked my roommates for help. I was persistent. I could not rest until I fixed the feeling of being confused. I also had a goal of achieving an "A" in the course. Recognizing (and overcoming) weaknesses is a strategy I have regularly used to advance my career in my past learning and current position.

Like other components of self-regulation, recognizing weaknesses does not stand alone. To recognize a weakness, one first needs a goal and second, one needs to plan how to overcome the weakness. Setting goals is a daily habit. Some goals are for the morning or the day, some for the semester, and some for five or ten years from now. Creating a daily "To Do" list is nothing more than a list of immediate goals, while long-term goals may require more reflection and planning.

Using my original career goal of helping students achieve success, I quickly recognized that I lacked knowledge about student learning as a biologist. I needed to rectify this gap. I started talking with other instructors and found a group interested in evidence-based teaching strategies. I connected with researchers in our educational psychology program at Penn State and read papers about SRL. I even became involved in research projects with SRL interventions that could help my students reach success. Finally, when I realized my statistical skills were embarrassingly lacking, I decided to sit in on a graduate statistics class to begin relearning concepts I had not studied for a decade. It was challenging but rewarding when I began to fill in the missing pieces. Moreover, I still have a long way to go.

Through these steps, additional weaknesses emerged, but rather than give

up. I retooled the weakness into a new goal. This requires you to be honest with yourself and be willing to be vulnerable while admitting what you do not know. It also takes courage to ask for help.

This is the final component I will mention: a supportive community. With each of the steps mentioned above, I worked with people with similar goals. I am forever thankful to the professors who answered endless questions and colleagues willing to share triumphs and failures, especially to the researchers and graduate students in educational psychology at Penn State who support my learning in this area. Finding a community to ask for help is critical in overcoming your weaknesses. I credit knowing when and whom to ask for help as one of the most impactful ways to overcome weaknesses and reach my goals.

In summary, the cycle of setting long-term goals, honestly identifying weaknesses, and realistically planning how to overcome the weakness is a normal process I use in my career. I bet many people reading this already do these things and may not consciously connect the process to self-regulation; however, making a concrete connection and dedicating time to the steps makes a difference. Moreover, in flashback to the early example, I did manage that "A" in biochemistry.



Turning “I Should Be Writing” Into “We Should Be Writing”: Accountability Groups as a Motivation Regulation Strategy

**Anna C. Brady, Robin Sayers, Jacqueline von Spiegel,
Yeo-Eun Kim, & Kristin Henkalin**

Researchers have highlighted how an individual’s motivation can change across time and context (Hensley et al., 2021). Most of us have experienced variability in our motivation, while engaging in self-regulated learning strategies is critical. As Wolters (1998) described, individuals, can use motivation regulation strategies to sustain or enhance their motivation. In line with theories of self-regulated learning (e.g., Pintrich & Zusho, 2007), strategy use should align with a particular goal, domain, and context. In practice, individuals may choose

between many different ways of regulating motivation based on their present goal and motivational challenge.

Finding the motivation to write is likely a familiar challenge to most academics. We have utilized an accountability group to overcome motivational challenges associated with writing and related research tasks. Accountability groups can be structured in various ways with different goals. The following section briefly describes our experience creating and engaging in an accountability group. Then, we provide practical recommendations for forming your accountability group.

Our accountability group was formed during the pandemic when everyone shifted to working from home. Mainly due to the unexpected constraints and rearrangements, we found that our motivation to write was lagging, and we were having difficulty staying on track. We formed the group as a space to set goals, celebrate wins, and support one another. Although some members of our group graduated and moved to different positions and physical locations, we continued to meet via Zoom, held each other accountable, and added new members.

(Continued on next page)

Turning “I Should Be Writing” Into “We Should Be Writing”: Accountability Groups as a Motivation Regulation Strategy

Anna C. Brady, Robin Sayers, Jacqueline von Spiegel, Yeo-Eun Kim, & Kristin Henkaline
(Continued from the previous page)

At the start of the semester, our group sets “big” goals. Then our group meets weekly to set smaller goals and check in on past goals while providing support, feedback, and encouragement. These goals tend to focus on research or writing; however, sometimes, goals focus on other high-priority but motivationally challenging tasks (e.g., grading).

During the goal check-in, we share our progress on each goal with the group. We mark our progress on a shared goal-setting sheet (gold = completed, silver = made progress, red = did not make progress).

As people share, other members can celebrate gold goals or help problem solve silver or red goals. Through our group, we have helped members finish dissertations, publish papers, and submit proposals to conferences; we have even written a paper together!

Recommendations for Creating a Writing Accountability Group

Identifying a shared purpose is key to forming an accountability group. There are at least three different structures that groups might take based on this shared purpose:

1. **Accountability groups where members set goals together:** This type of group aims to ensure members are completing high-priority tasks. This format can include celebrating successes and problem-solving. Group members do not need to work on similar projects or even be in the same field of study for this type of group meeting. Instead, they need to have shared concern for each other’s success.
2. **Accountability groups where members read and review one another’s work:** This group is helpful for in-progress writing projects. Outside of the meeting time, members read one another’s work and provided feedback. Meetings are spent discussing feedback and suggestions. For this type of group, it is helpful for group members to be familiar with the content of the work. Thus it is beneficial for members to have shared research interests.

3. **Accountability groups where members write together:** The purpose of this group is to make time and space in group members’ schedules for writing projects. Meetings often begin with members sharing what they will be working on during the meeting. Then, members work independently on their writing projects. These meetings may be conducted in person, over Zoom, or by text by each group member starting their work simultaneously. Group members do not need to work on similar tasks or share research interests for this type of group; however, it is beneficial for group members to value and support each other’s progress toward individual goals and have similar work schedules.

Once a shared purpose is decided, group members can work together to determine the group’s structure, including goal-setting, meeting times, and meeting formats. Although our group centers on writing, accountability groups could center on any domain. For example, a group of college instructors could create an accountability group while prepping courses for the upcoming semester. Regardless of structure or focus, accountability groups are a great way to regulate your motivation through goal setting and social support.

References are available upon request from Anna Brady
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Anna Brady is an assistant professor in educational psychology at Georgia Southern University. Her scholarship focuses on investigating students’ academic outcomes through the lens of motivation and self-regulated learning. In addition, she is interested in the design and evaluation of self-regulated learning interventions in postsecondary contexts.

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Yeo-Eun Kim is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Washington University in St. Louis. She holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology along with an interdisciplinary specialization in Quantitative Research Methods from The Ohio State University. Her research focuses on understanding and improving students’ motivation and self-regulated learning.



Kristin Henkaline is the Research Commons Program Manager for University Libraries at The Ohio State University. Her research focuses on understanding how the classroom context influences students’ perceptions of relevance in history education.



Greetings, fellow scholars. Allow me to share a bit about myself and how I maintain scholarship productivity while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. For me, structure and organization are paramount; thus, for me to succeed, I need to include work activities in my daily calendar, which has now transitioned to Google calendar.

While some may use their calendar to schedule work-related meetings, I extend that to all my professional activities. Related to this, I am not a person who can genuinely enjoy “fun” activities until my work is done.

To be successful, this means that I write a to-do list every day, and I triage those activities, meaning that the most important ones to me are given priority over others; regardless of importance, all daily activities for that day must be completed. If they made it to my list in the first place, they are meaningful and essential to various degrees. I also structure writing and research/scholarly activities in my daily calendar and to-do lists.

An infamous mantra for which I am well known is, “Get stuff done yesterday,” and I take that to heart. The most successful strategy for me regarding writing, which is an activity that may cause some dread and despair, is to block out entire chunks of time around work-related meetings. If this strategy is new to you, it may not be productive to block out 3-4 hours at a time, as it may only serve to frustrate you.

I suggest you begin by blocking 30 minutes to an hour and, at your own pace, work your way up to ever-longer blocks of time. Remember that this will only be effective to the extent that you protect and honor it. These writing blocks are sacred to me, and I will not allow anything to encroach upon them unless there is a critical emergency.

If technology (e.g., mobile devices, television sets, etc.) is a distraction to you personally, ensure that these are either in another space away from you or that you turn them off during these writing blocks.

I do not particularly enjoy working alone, not because I cannot do it or because I lack the self-efficacy to do so, but instead because I feel that working in teams indeed does produce better products.

Reflections on Maintaining Scholarship Productivity with a Healthy Dose of Work/Life Balance

Antonio P. Gutierrez de Blume

I encourage you to work in teams whenever possible, especially when writing grants. However, it is crucial to be selective, strategic, and intentional in selecting with whom to work and on what topics you choose to collaborate. Motivation to produce wanes and withers when one is involved in teams of incompatible individuals or uninteresting topics. In other words, do not simply become a research team member simply to please an external source.

Finally, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential to my way of being. At the core of this is my fundamental belief that my work does not define who I am but rather is only one, albeit integral, part of my life, and thus, I will never permit my work to consume me or take over my life.

It is my policy never to work on weekends. While I understand this may not be ideal for some, if you find yourself working on weekends, especially the entire weekend, consider reflecting deeply on how you manage and organize your time during your typical workweek to uncover potential areas of mismanagement time.

I often find that when I look at my calendar holistically across one work month, I can discover just how much time was spent in tangential, unproductive activities. Consider eliminating these from your daily work routine. Moreover, of course, have fun being a scholar!

A RELATED PUBLICATION

“Monitoring, a regulation of cognition component of metacognition, is an essential aspect of self-regulated learning. Monitoring is recognized as learners’ ability to successfully understand what they are learning, and typically involves metacognitive activities such as questioning, reflection, drawing inferences, and self-generating feedback. However, while extant research converges on the notion that monitoring is a malleable and trainable skill, no investigation to date has systematically explored differences in monitoring accuracy effects. Therefore, a meta-analysis was conducted on research that examined the effect of learning strategy instruction on monitoring compared with a control. The meta-analysis explored how weighted effect sizes varied as a function of learning strategies used, study characteristics, and other potential moderators. A systematic search of major databases ultimately produced 56 independent effect sizes involving 7,667 participants, which were subsequently extracted and analyzed. Across the 56 studies, learning strategy instruction interventions yielded a moderate unbiased grand mean effect size ($g = -.565$; 95% confidence interval $[-.639, -.491]$), indicating improved monitoring accuracy compared to a control. Moderator analysis results revealed that the weighted mean effect size was larger for studies conducted in laboratories with adult-only samples (ranging in size from 101 to 200 participants) that used deep learning strategies, prediction and postdiction confidence judgments, the difference between prediction–postdiction judgments to calculate monitoring accuracy, and multiple-choice response options for the performance test. Weighted mean effect sizes for the type of monitoring measure, research design, learning strategy instruction duration, and geographic location did not vary significantly among studies.”

Gutierrez de Blume, A. P. (2022). Calibrating calibration: A meta-analysis of learning strategy instruction interventions to improve metacognitive monitoring accuracy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(4), 681–700. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000674>



Antonio P. Gutierrez de Blume, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Research at Georgia Southern University, where he teaches quantitative research methods and statistics. His research involves examining metacognition under the theory of self-regulated learning. More specifically, he is interested in how learners monitor their comprehension during learning episodes.

Goal Setting, Reframing, And Planning: A Reflection on Strategies Employed in My First Year of Graduate School

Taylor Marie Young

Among the main reasons I decided to pursue graduate school was to explore my interests in self-regulated learning (SRL) and pursue a career in academia. Throughout my first year of graduate school, I not only had the opportunity to engage with SRL in academic and research contexts but also more personal, career-related contexts. In this essay, I reflect upon the self-regulatory strategies that were effective and helpful for me as a first-year graduate student and developing researcher.

Goal Setting

Goal setting was one of the most effective strategies I used throughout my first year of graduate school. My advisor, Rayne Sperling, supported me in this process; we co-created and set several goals that were important and attainable for me in my first year. For example, my first-year goals included *disseminating research to professional outlets*.

Setting these goals was an important step that allowed me to be successful in my first year of graduate school for several reasons. For instance, setting these goals prompted me to be intentional about my engagement. I sought and accepted opportunities that aligned with my goals. In addition, my first-year goals facilitated harmony among coursework, research, reading, teaching assistant and mentor roles, and service activities. Such alignment allowed me to engage deeply with my research interests (e.g., SRL, reading comprehension, learning from multiple texts) across all work areas.

Reframing

Another effective strategy I used in my first year of graduate school was reframing. Although I tend to adopt a positive perspective, I know that sometimes I need to be more strategic about how I view things; reframing my thought process or language use has helped me maintain more positive evaluations of myself and my work.

For example, after setting my goals early in my first year of graduate school, I noticed that managing my to-do list felt challenging in my first semester.

Sometimes I had negative feelings about my to-do list and worried that I would be unable to accomplish daily tasks. I knew that these feelings were not productive and might hinder my ability to create a more realistic to-do list that would facilitate successful experiences. As a result, I decided to reframe my to-do list as my “Today’s Goals.”

This seemingly simple shift in language facilitated a growth mindset toward my work; instead of tasks that I needed to check off a list, “Today’s Goals” were a reminder that I was engaging in work that would help me achieve my first-year goals. In addition, knowing that goals need to be monitored and adjusted, I started to view my daily work from a similar perspective; if I did not complete everything I intended, I reflected on how I could adjust and set more realistic goals for the next day.

Planning

Planning at various levels was another effective strategy I used in my first year of graduate school. Although I engaged in monthly planning, my weekly and daily planning were especially effective (and fun!).

For instance, to plan my week, I used Friday afternoons to recap the week, gauge what I accomplished and needed to carry over and look ahead to the next week’s responsibilities. Using a planner, I organized all the upcoming week’s

“In this essay, I reflect upon the self-regulatory strategies that were effective and helpful for me as a first-year graduate student and developing researcher.”

tasks by responsibility (e.g., class, research project) and wrote them out.

Next, I estimated how much time I would need for the tasks and when would be the best day to complete them given other standing responsibilities on my calendar. In addition, to plan my day, I referred to my Friday planning session and wrote “Today’s Goals” on a sticky note in my planner every morning. For each goal, I marked whether I planned to accomplish it in the morning, afternoon, or evening.

Overall, goal setting, reframing, and planning were three effective strategies I employed throughout my first year of graduate school to facilitate progress toward my personal and career goals. I am eager to continue monitoring and adjusting my self-regulatory strategies as I develop as a graduate student and researcher!

Taylor Marie Young is a second-year PhD student in Educational Psychology advised by Rayne Sperling at The Pennsylvania State University. Her primary research interests include self-regulated learning, reading comprehension, and learning from multiple texts.

