

Obstacles to learning

[Psychology](#), [Motivation](#)



Obstacles to Learning As a thirty-one-year old husband, father-to-be, and professional, I have come to realize that I have many new challenges to face as I start back into school. Challenges I never had to consider ten years ago when I first attempted a degree. I face ever-growing obligations at work, a wife and very soon, a young child, and the motivation to complete a project I started ten years ago. I have overcome the first obstacle, however; I have overcome the guilt that I should have finished this degree many years ago.

Work As a thirty-one-year old professional well into my career, I must face the obstacle of the social stigma of "going back to school." Many co-workers scoff at the idea and remark to me, "you haven't already finished your degree?" My Boss' first reaction was to tell me that perhaps if I had time to go back to school, then maybe he is not giving me enough work. The obstacle to overcome at work will be dealing with the jealousy and negativity in a cutthroat work environment. I feel the best strategy to overcoming this challenge at work is to share with my Boss the goals and objectives I have for completing my degree. I need to make him feel he is a part of "Team Me" and not just sitting on the sidelines. I need to help him realize how important it is to me to complete this degree, and how important his support is to the process. I also need to emphasize that come graduation day, I will be a much more valuable asset to him with the knowledge and experience I have gained. In the book "Keys to College Studying: Becoming An Active Thinker," the authors recommend keeping others informed and keeping track of major commitments on a monthly calendar and using group calendars to stay aware of one another's plans and avoid scheduling conflicts (Carter, Bishop, and Kravits, 2007). I think I will try this with my Boss and co-

workers, and with my family. Family My wife has been a big supporter of me returning to school. However, all that could change with the arrival of our first child in October. Carter points out that no matter how well you plan your time, sudden changes can upend your plans. Any change, whether minor (a room change for a class) or major (a medical emergency), can cause stress. As your stress level rises, your sense of control may dwindle (Carter, 2007). The only strategy I can put in place to overcome this challenge now is to Be Flexible. Carter goes on to say, " Your ability to evaluate situations, come up with creative options, and put practical plans to work will help you manage the changes that you will encounter. Think of change as part of life, and you will be able to brainstorm solutions when dilemmas arise" (Carter, 2007).

Procrastination One of the biggest obstacles I will face will be my tendency to procrastinate. In analyzing this behavior I have found that root of most of my procrastination comes from not knowing where to start. Sometimes it is much easier to procrastinate then to just dive in. Carter recommends a few steps to help fight procrastination (Carter, 2007):

- Analyze the effects of procrastinating.
- Set reasonable goals.
- Break tasks into smaller parts.
- Get started.
- Ask for help.
- Don't expect perfection.
- Reward yourself.

Reading through these strategies has given me a great guideline in overcoming my procrastinating behavior. Particularly, breaking items into smaller tasks and not expecting perfection. Conclusion Claire Ellen

Weinstein, an educational psychologist who has done extensive research on learning, describes active students as follows: " Such learners are diligent and resourceful in their efforts and do not give up easily, even in the face of difficulty. They know that learning is an active process and that they must

take some of the responsibility for doing it... When they encounter problems they try to find what they need to solve them, or they seek help from the teacher or classmates. They view studying and learning as a systematic process that is, to a good degree, under their control" (Weinstein and Hume, 1998). Ultimately, the onus is on me to be proactive in overcoming the challenges to school and learning from my work, my family, and my own motivation. I look forward to meeting these challenges and becoming a little more experienced, a little more seasoned, and a little wiser. References
Carter, C., Bishop, J., & Kravits, S. (2007). Keys to College Studying: Becoming An Active Thinker, 2e. Prentice Hall, Inc. Weinstein , C. E., & Hume, L. (1998). Study Strategies for Lifelong Learning. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.