Interpersonal Relationships

As soon as I walk in the door to my classroom, I greet my Professor and fellow classmates with a smile, inquiring about their days and simply making conversation. I find that when I am happy and friendly, others will feel that way as well. For me, creating a positive learning environment is crucial to a good education. I don't want to walk into a classroom filled with grumpy, unhappy people, or else I won't want to be there either! Creating positive relationships with classmates will also be helpful for me when I need a study buddy or have a question about the homework. Once class has started, I always try and be present and engaged, which means I participate in discussions, pay close attention to what the Professor is saying, and (depending on the class), take notes. After class, I continue to build relationships with both the Professor, by asking questions, and with my classmates, by having conversations and making plans with them. This generates more personal relationships and leads to a better, happier learning environment.

Metacognition

Anyone can be a skilled student. The first thing they need to know is what they need to improve. That's my skill; understanding my weak points as a student, and how I need overcome them. My weakest point is that I have an attention span comparable to a beagle. I'm aware that I need to work on it but right now I just adjust study habits accordingly. I get rid of all unnecessary distraction; friends, Facebook, internet, cell phone, and anything that could possible distract me. If I don't put myself into a distraction free environment then I'm not going to get what I need to done. Another important weak point is my organizational skills. I'm terrible at the necessary daily maintenance. Despite that, I still try to keep all important events and due dates in my notebook, and instead of actually keeping things organized I actually clean up my mess daily. I take everything that I got in the day and file it accordingly. So I'm aware I'm not the perfect student. That's what makes me a skillful student. I try to be aware of anything that I can improve on. If something gets in my way I try to find a way around it. That's how I'm to be a successful student.

When I moved out of the house, my dad only had one last thing to say to me. "Use your common sense. If it's going to be cold outside, put a jacket on; if you've got a project due next week, start it *before* next week; and most importantly, read all the directions before you write your essay or pick your answer." Why? Because it makes sense! Everything you do should, in some way, *make sense*. Otherwise, you're missing a piece of the bigger picture. With every action you take, a little voice in the back of your head should ask, "Am I doing this right? How does this work? Is there a better way?" Each little question you ask yourself should have some sort of answer– and if it doesn't, you better find one really quick! Ask around if you need to, or look it up. Do something, *anything*; whatever it takes to make sense out of the world around you. Common sense is what you use to understand and navigate through everyday life, and while it's not easily defined, it is easily practiced. My best advice to anyone would be to always use it.

Note Taking and Review

One way to be a skillful student is to take notes in class. Just short and concise sentences or only words which are relevant in the class. After take the notes, when studying, those notes will help you to remember what the teacher said or what the topic was about. Doing this everyday would help you to retain all the information given in class and also helps you to prepare for the day of the exam. There are more options, to study, after each day of class, you can bring your book and review the chapters or topics that you did in class. Then you do auto-test to yourself, if your answers are bad, just try to change the questions and do it until you have it perfect.

Every student has their own way of being successful in the classroom setting; whether it be the work ethic or the concentration aspect in class. For me, my skillful talent is being successful in the studying area, specifically taking notes. Most students have their personal rituals of studying for a class and it doesn't always work for others. In order for me to truly process all the material, note taking is the best way for my learning curve. I usually read the specific area or passage once and see if I can summarize it into my own words. Then, I go back into the section and note what the key words are. Vocabulary is useful and can help with understanding the concept of the item. So, every word that is either highlighted, bolded, italicized, or repeated many times, I write it down with a descriptive definition. Each section has its main points that are different from the others. Make sure you analyze in great detail and summarize so you can understand it. As the passage comes to an end, write up some review questions and test yourself to see if you truly understand the information given to you. Writing notes and questions down help with remembering the facts and you can always look back in your notebook. The more specific you are with your notes to your understanding, the better it is for you to succeed in your studies.

One successful study technique involves taking notes in class, reviewing them, and afterwards creating flashcards from your notes. Reviewing notes that you have taken in class is one of the best studying strategies you can use, for it refreshes your brain on what has been taught in class. After studying your notes for a while, you'll get a sense of what material is more important than other material. From there, you can take this more important material and put it on note cards. These flashcards are an amazing studying technique for you can constantly be reviewing the essential information of the material, creating a strategy understanding of the information.

Remember in high school when that one really nice, kind of easy teacher let you write out a notecard for the test? Or how the even easier teacher let you write out a full 8.5" by 11" piece of paper? For the classes I was able to do that for, I used to write out a notecard and then get to the test and realize I barely even had to use it. For tests I wasn't able to prepare information on a notecard for, I struggled a little bit more. I came to the realization that even though I didn't have to use the notecard, the simple act of writing down a "study sheet", or a sheet with all the formulas and information I needed to take a test, helped me remember the information and better know the content. An important advantage of a "study sheet" is that I can turn eight pages of notes into one concise sheet of essential information, a very helpful practice

for classes with a lot of notes. College, as we all know by now, has a lot of notes, so I carried the practice of creating "study sheets" over to college. Even if the teacher doesn't allow a piece of paper to be brought in for a test, preparing a sheet as if I could take it in with me helps me learn the content. So maybe those teachers in high school weren't just being easy; maybe they knew that if we prepared a notecard, we would learn the information better. Give it a try sometime, maybe it will work for you as well as it did for me.

Sleep

I would consider having enough sleep very vital to being a good student. It is much easier to study and pay attention when you are not tired. Getting enough sleep can help you focus on your studies and make it easier to retain more of the information you are learning. Sleeping is also important in keeping you healthy. The healthier you are the more effectively you can study and the less class you are likely to miss due to sickness. Everyone needs a different amount of sleep and only you know how much time you need to spend sleeping. Make it a point to get the sleep you need, even if it doesn't feel like it will fit into your busy schedule. Try to sleep 8–9 hours a night because all sleep will help you in the long run. Sleep not only because it will help you but because it will make you feel better. Sleep is important to being a successful student.

Many students would agree that classes are sometimes really bored, especially right after a meal. Even though, students who receive perfect scores on their test feel bored during their class. However, it is sufficiently appeared that students can be distinguished by skillful students and less-skillful students in a class. Then, what is a difference between the two groups? Writing skills? Originated academic ability? Or academic interests on subjects? The later one does make a sense, hence, one of the most important abilities which decides a student's ability is how to control one's sleeping. There is a famous example about how sleeping affects one's ability by Napoleon; following to history, he divided sleeping time effectively so that he could concentrate on his works for much more time. Recently, its importance was proved by the book "Harvard students at 4 a.m." We know that sleeping is one of the most essential instincts to maintain our healthy lives. In this paragraph, I do not claim that we have to decrease our sleeping time but strongly persuade that we must control and treat it more effectively. If you accomplish that, you will not fall a sleeping during your class, even after your lunch, and it will enlarge your academic ability.

Study Environment and Mindset

Being a skillful student involves more than one skill set if you want to succeed. All of those skill sets needed do in some way revolve around the central skill of studying. There is no such way as a perfect study method but some are more effective than others. The way that I personally study involves a simple, yet effective process. First, I mentally prepare myself to study; meaning that I get irrelevant thoughts and subjects completely out of my head. Then I find a place that is quiet and not around friends. This I find to be incredibly important because often friends can be the worst

distraction to getting good studying done. Finally, and most importantly, I just bear down and do it. Starting to study is the hardest part but once you get going, it gets easier. Like Shia says, "JUST DO IT!"

Time Management
Throughout all my years of high school and middle school I struggled with the concept of time management. I was an athlete who enjoyed doing many extra-curricular activities. Although these activities were fun and enjoyable, they also took up a lot of my time. Many nights I had to return home at 9 or 10 pm. from school, only to begin on the homework that was assigned that day. As I grew older I found ways to take advantage of my spare time and how to have more efficient study habits. I did this by planning my day out in advance and making smart decisions such as how and when I would study. By doing this I became a much more skillful student. Now that I am in college, every morning I figure out when the best possible time for me to study will be. I look for blocks of time where I have nothing scheduled for at least an hour. I have found that it is very difficult and less efficient to study in small increments of time. Taking breaks is fine, however you will get the most out of your studying if you can spend a longer time studying in one sitting. By eliminating potential distractions you allow yourself to be more engaged in your studies. Objects such as phones and other electronics should not be present. The main focus should be on your work, not on your text messages. It also helps to have a plan on how and what you are going to study. By effectively planning out your study schedule you can make the most efficient use of your time. It also helps to keep you on schedule. Above all else remember why you are studying. When you lose motivation or concentration, it helps to keep yourself goal orientated.

In order to be a skillful and successful student, I believe it is essential that he student has good time management. Putting off assignments until the day before can lead to very high levels of stress that no one wants. I recommend working on assignments early, but pacing yourself so no too much work is being done in one sitting. If too much is being done in one siting one could begin to "zone out" and not really comprehend what they are supposed to be learning from their work. One thing I do that I have found helpful is working for a set amount of time, and then taking a small leisure break before returning to the assignment and repeating the process. This way, I can make a good progress on my work and feel less stress while I do it. Managing my time has helped me succeed in school while also feeling little to no stress over all of my work.

The best way to manage your time in college is to keep track of everything you do and know how to balance all your work. Firstly, you should choose the most appropriate time for you to start a new day. Knowing yourself will help you choose the suitable course schedule. Then you are likely not to feel tired or get bored in the classes due to exhaustion or sleepiness. Secondly, classes from different areas will keep you remain interested in what you are studying. For example, taking a calculus class with a social science class will bring you a new experience and somehow make you feel refreshed every time you review lesson or do homework. Furthermore, you should use your own calendar (google calendar or something like that) to remind

you of the homework due date or appointment. Therefore, you would be no worried about missing the deadline or important dates. Last but not least, having a mixed schedule, between studying and relaxing creates opportunity for you to enjoy your life, widen your relationships and help you study effectively.

In order to be a skillful student, you must be able to properly manage your time. When I say "manage your time", that doesn't just mean to manage your time for class and homework. Students need a healthy mix of schoolwork and free time. I believe it is most efficient to do homework the day you are assigned it. That way it is freshly in your head so you can think more clearly on the subject. A great time to do homework is in between classes. Chances are you will not have very much time in between classes so you might as well cut down on the amount of homework you will have to do later. Like I said earlier, time management isn't just about schoolwork. It is healthy to get out and have some free time so you can have some fun. Participate in sports, arts, or exercise. Do something that you enjoy so you have something to take your mind off of the stress of your college courses. Make time to hang out with some friends. If you are having trouble focusing on an assignment, just take a break for a little bit to get some fresh air and relax. Make sure you do not get caught up in having too much fun that you forget about doing your homework. Having a planner to write down assignments and when they are due is a great way to remember that you have homework so you can effectively manage your time. That way you know exactly how much homework you have for the day so you can figure out times that you will be able to complete it. If you do not complete the homework the day it was assigned, write down the assignment again on the current day to make sure you do not forget about it. School can be very stressful, but being able to manage your time is a great way to get on the path of being a skillful student.

Prioritization is the key to being a skillful student. If you can decided what is in need of attention immediately and what can wait until tomorrow, you have the best chances at succeeding as a student. I personally begin prioritizing by what is due first. Once completing this list, I note which assignments need the greatest amount of attention and time. With these two lists I'm able to make a schedule for the week. To best organize this schedule I break down the large and time consuming projects into sections. For example, if I must read a book and write a report on it the following Friday, I'll break the book down into five sections and make a note to finish a section a day. This process leaves ample time to write and edit my paper and prevents me from procrastinating the book out. After completing this task for all large and time consuming projects I'll begin by completing the assignments or projects due within a 36 hour window, followed by the "sections" of assignments I need to complete that day. This organization is all thanks to prioritizing, which is an attribute I believe any skillful student should have.

There are surely multiple ways to becoming a skillful student and it is rather a mixture of many factors together than only one attribute. One important attribute of a skillful student is definitely the ability to organize your time wisely. The idea we are going after here is not necessarily to study hard all the time, but smart. My

parents have always told me that organization is 50% of your life. I got a taste of this saying myself when I studied for my International Baccalaureate final exams. Organization allows students to structure your learning in a way that suits your learning style. It also allows you to study effectively and efficiently at the same time. The perfect example is the "last minute student" and the "organized student". While the last minute student will wait until a couple of days before the exam to study everything, the organized student will split up his time over a longer period so that the brain gets enough rest and is able to better process the information. What we always find is that the organized student ends up being more successful. This attribute does not only apply to studying for exams, but life in general as we always find ourselves in situations where organization is the key to being skillful and successful.