

Success in Studies for Adult Students (Part 2)

By Daniel Theyagu

In the last segment I shared with you some of the trials and tribulations of being an adult learner. Embarking on an academic pursuit is a big decision and one which as an adult learner you have to think through carefully. If you intend to further your studies as an adult learner or you are already in the process, here are a few strategies that you should adopt to ensure success in your studies.

1. Get Tune in with your Academic course

By this I mean that you should be completely clear about everything the academic program that you are doing entails. How long is the course? Is it examination based or assignment based or both? What is the amount of time you are required to spend studying? Are the resource materials easily available? How can you get them?

These questions may seem easy to answer, but do take note that once you decided that you want to upgrade your academic qualification it is metaphorical to the analogy of climbing a very tall mountain. You have to be prepared mentally, emotionally and physically for the challenge that is to come.

2. Talk to your family and involve them in your studies

Your family is the bastion of your success. As an adult learner you will inevitably have to balance your personal development interest with that of your relationship with your spouse, children, siblings etc. By getting your family involved in your studies, you will create a supportive environment and they may not feel neglected

that you are not paying any attention to them. As you go deeper and deeper into your studies you might have to study late at night or wake up earlier in the morning to keep up with your studies. This will certainly take its toll on your family life and your relationship with them.

By talking to your family on what you are doing in your studies you are not only revising what you've learnt but also are able to spend time with them such that they do not feel neglected.

3. Talk to your boss

It is also important that you should talk to your boss so that he/she is aware of your intentions. Further, if the studies that you are taking involve examination you could forewarn your boss on when you might have to go on leave and prepare your schedule without too much disruption in your job. The worst thing that might happen to you is just before examination you have a crisis to settle in your office and that is going to affect your performance in the examination.

4. Identify your weak areas

Everyone has got their own inherent weaknesses in their studies. If there is a particular subject that is part of your syllabus that you know you are weak in, you will have to acknowledge this and put in extra effort to ensure that you clear the module. Try not to avoid these weak areas in the hope that your effort will be compensated in your strong areas. Most academic courses tries to give a wholesome approach to their discipline and it is important you are not demotivated just because you have a few weak areas.

5. Learn to summarize key points of lectures

There are many proven techniques of note-taking and note-making that you can use, to summarize the key points of your lectures. I've seen many adult students going into frenzy before examination as they carry tons of notes and heavy books because they have not consolidated their information effectively during the term.

When you are able to summarize your lecture notes it shows that you are clear about the concepts taught and this will also hone your essay writing skills.

6. Engage your Lecturer by asking questions

Asking questions is one of the best ways to learn. When appropriate clear any doubts that you might have with your lecturer. As adult learners you might feel shy to ask questions for fear that you think the question might be a stupid one and others might laugh at you. Take note by you asking the question you might just be clarifying a very important point that others might have wanted to ask but felt the same way as you did. Remember you are going to sit for your own examination and your classmates are not going to help you. This is one aspect that you've got to help yourself.

In the next segment I will share with you some effective tools on you can study your subject such that you are able to comprehend them efficiently.

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