



# *Strictly Classified*

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## **Deadlines!** **Why They are Important and How to Meet Them**

Whether we like them or not, deadlines are important. Things have to get done. Books need to be ordered. College catalogues have to go out. Employees need to be paid. The list goes on. If a supervisor sets a deadline, it is usually for a good reason and it is important that you do your best to meet it. Both institutions and individuals need structure to maintain organization, meet obligations, accomplish goals and deliver services. Deadlines help to provide that structure. While a life without deadlines may sound nice to some, ultimately work has to be completed and having a bunch of things hanging over our heads indefinitely only creates stress. Additionally, it is important to recognize that our professional reputation in large part hinges on whether or not we are reliable. Employees who produce high quality work and meet deadlines will have a solid reputation. The following pointers will help you meet your next deadline!

### **Tips for Meeting Deadlines**

- To begin, it is essential that both you and your supervisor are clear on agreed upon deadlines and expected outcomes. If you sense that you and your supervisor are not on the same page, ask for clarification. This can be achieved through a conversation or by emailing your supervisor a brief outline noting your understanding of due dates and expectations and ask for confirmation.
- In order to keep track of all of the projects you are responsible for, make a list indicating the deadlines and keep it handy.
- To make large projects more manageable, break them down into smaller increments. Have a start and finish time for each increment.
- It is a good idea to build a cushion into your project timeline. If unanticipated hiccups or delays occur, a cushion will help to ensure that you are still able to meet your deadline. Additionally, you want to avoid the downfalls associated with waiting until the last minute. Procrastinating on important tasks often results in stress and lower quality work.
- Be sure to regularly set aside blocks of time to work on the assigned project. If possible, avoid taking calls or checking emails during this block of time. Directing all of your attention to the project will enable you to make more progress and do better quality work.
- Throughout the duration of the project you should communicate with your supervisor to make sure you are on target. If it looks like you will need more time or additional support, bring this to your supervisor's attention immediately. Open and regular communication will ensure that your supervisor will not be taken off guard if you fail to meet the established deadline. Additionally, you may secure additional resources or assistance.
- If you negotiate an extension, be sure to meet your new due date.

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David Iwata, Chair ■ Henry Jones ■ Ann Young-Havens ■ Karen Martin, Personnel Director ■ (213) 891-2333