Task Management Groups

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Characteristics

› continuous
› weekly sessions 1½ hrs
› aim: studying regularly

› weekly study plans

› reward & punishment

› self-help group ritual
Targets

› Motivation maintenance
  • Reaching a distant goal step-by-step

› Fighting temporal shortsightedness:
  • getting students to keep to the job at very short terms (week)

› Habit formation:
  • allowing a very long period of controlled habit formation (year)
Rules

- Completing weekly study task
- Attending every week
- Being on time always
- Making telephone call to partner every week
Effective components

› Allowing controlled behaviour for long period of time (→ habit)

› Group support (→ self-acceptance)

› Causing multiple small success experiences (→ self-efficacy)

› Promoting social learning
Task management (1)

› individual planning in weekly study tasks
› SMART-rule for task characteristics
  • Specific
  • Measurable
  • Acceptable
  • Realistic
  • Timed
Task management (2)

> rituals of self-help group
  - punctual attendance
  - strictly keeping to the rules
  - no excuses allowed
  - social rewards
Session details (1)

> Personal study plans

> Personal monitor forms

> Schedule students-boosters
Session details (2)

› First 15 minutes: students & boosters in pairs
› Second 15 minutes: changing roles
› Product: new weekly personal study plan
› Next 5-10 minutes: completing monitor forms
  • Plenary
  • By group supervisor
  • No excuses; business-like
› Next 30-35 minutes: presenting weekly plans
  • Plenary, by student, presentation & explanation
  • Group formally approves
› After: coffee & cake (informal; reward group attendance)
Booster role

› Assisting in drafting study plan
› Evaluating completion previous plan

- No prescription for size of the task
- Student himself remains responsible
- Every group member is booster in one planning round
Monitoring system

› Personal monitor form in public
› Check of every rule
› Symbolic reward (+) and punishment (-)
› Sanction by rule transgression
  • Transgression = 2 minuses in 3-week period
  • Warning: 3 plusses in next 3 session for rule transgressed
  • If minus in warning period: group member expelled
Group supervision

- By relative outsider (e.g. student counsellor)
- Role of “games master” or “host”
- Business-like on monitoring
- Helpful at study plan presentation
- Informal during coffee
Results

› popularity

› enthusiastic testimonials of group members

› good systematic process evaluation assessments
More information

Thank you for your attention

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