

Letter to the Editor (By Jackson Chan, 6C)

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my heartfelt concern regarding the overwhelmingly prevalent phenomenon of 'deadline fighting'. While advocates peddle such a practice on account of efficiency and work-life balance, it is my firm conviction that doing assignments at the last minute jeopardizes their quality of work life as well as learning progress. In the following, I would like to share my thoughts and advice on this issue.



First and foremost, completing one's work in split seconds will lower the quality of work immensely. In other words, deadline fighting creates a sense of time insufficiency which ends up making us rush through assignments. Take my personal experience as an example, I used to resort to putting off my composition assignment and puzzling Physics homework to the last minute. Yet, instead of seeing skyrocketing work efficiency, most of the time I lack the time to ponder on those questions and research on those conundrums. Running out of time, my work turns out to be messy doodles with unclear thoughts and unbacked arguments. By the same token, students who use deadline fighting as an expedient will suffer from the lack of time, decimating their creativity, prudence and preparation, culminating in lower quality of work and failure in exams. Therefore, deadline fighting will only put the quality of work in jeopardy without boosting efficiency.

Besides worsening the quality of work, it has also beaten the purpose of assignments — learning. The ultimate goal of homework, which is a complement of learning during lessons, supplements lessons immaculately with exercise, thought stimulation, and guides. Rushing through assignments within a short period of time, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for us to have our knowledge with the exercise and faster profound understanding of subject knowledge. For instance, I have seen many, galvanized by a desire to instantly complete assignments during the last minute, blindly follow the knowledge and instructions from books without attending to their meaning and skills. While it seems gratifying, this practice, if persisted long standing, will only create a facade that we have known everything since we copied perfectly from the books, eluding us from practicing the skills and acquiring the knowledge from books. Eventually, self-cheating assignments become a way to deceive ourselves but not test ourselves and train

our skills, if deadline fighting is to be continued.

Aside from decimating learning progress, deadline fighting is equally detrimental to our biological clock, and so is health. In an exam-oriented society like Hong Kong, assignments normally come in large numbers from multifarious subjects. Should we procrastinate and leave them uncompleted to the last minute, a tremendous amount of assignments will be piled up, forcing us to sacrifice our sleeping time immensely to get rid of the host of work. Hence, we end up diverting our sleeping time for homework, deferring our bedtime and wreaking havoc to our biological clock. Worse still, from my personal observation, what we put off are normally not easy tasks, but something that demand herculean efforts to complete such as English composition and bewildering Math questions. Consequently, tremendous mental pressure will be accumulated, combining the effect of lack of sleep and immense pressure. It is crystal clear that deadline fighters will not accomplish a better work-life balance as they claimed, but merely a nightmare to their sleep and health.

Yet, how should we combat such a habit if we are the ones who fall prey to it? It is my unwavering belief that only clear planning can do so. That is to say, we must plan a few days in advance as to how and when to complete those ‘menacing’ assignments. For example, we can use to-do-lists to note how many assignments needed to be completed and when. Thus, we can urge ourselves and trick our mind into believing there is urgency to finish them on time, similar to what ‘deadline’ has created for deadline fighters. Meanwhile, clear actions such as studying notes and completing past papers should be written alongside the tasks on the list, so as to let our mind readily follow the tasks and actions with ease and expedite our progress, eradicating procrastination due to frustration about the difficulty of work.

‘Actions do speak louder than words’. It is high time we eradicated deadline fighting with immediate actions.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Wong

(716 words)