

Monitoring

Definition: Work checking habits. Checking your own performance while working or shortly after finishing a task. Keeping track of the effects of your efforts. Monitoring is a difficulty for people who often rush through their work and make careless mistakes

Basic approach:

- 1) Provide a CUE to monitor progress
- 2) Increase attention to errors
- 2) Build a time to REVIEW into every task (include in checklist)
- 3) Write it down

A timer or a Reminder posted near a work area can provide the cue to check progress and/or errors. A reminder can be placed on a keychain, in a binder or some other area that is in plain view while working. The cue can be subtle (e.g. a picture of a Stop sign or Slow sign).

Build in editing and review time into every task. There can be a rush to be “done”. This can often be corrected by forcing the person to go back and do it “right”. The next time they may be less likely to “rush and do it twice” versus “do it carefully ONCE”. Try to convince yourself that doing it once correctly will actually take LESS time overall. Carpenters say, “measure twice, cut once.”

Set goals for accuracy, not speed of completion. Tracking accuracy on a chart so progress can be seen, is helpful. Rewarding accurate completion may also help.

Videotaping a work session and reviewing it with the coach with the goal of creating a more efficient and effective strategy can be helpful.

Verbal cues while working can be helpful. “OK, I am going to read the directions carefully so I don’t waste time doing all these problems the wrong way.”

Working in groups with people who are naturally good at monitoring may be helpful. People are natural at learning from the modelling of others.

Review the consequences of NOT monitoring work. The extra time needed. The lower marks on assignments or tests. The waste of materials that must be discarded. Doing a job improperly can be hazardous in the workplace. Sometimes making a link between dry school work and the way that could be dangerous in a real job will help students pay attention. Instead of thinking of the assignment as a mere math task, pretend it is the calculation for the safety systems in a nuclear power plant.

Create self-awareness about which tasks are more difficult or vulnerable to error and build systems to support the individual in those tasks. The awareness itself should allow them to slow down and be careful.

Adapted from Ylvisaker and colleagues (1998)