Tips for Writing When You Don’t Want to Write

An Action Plan for Writing

1. Consider your short term and long term writing objectives. Work out what writing needs doing now or in the next few days, and what needs thinking about for the future.

2. Make a timetable. This makes the workload organised and manageable. Work out what can be achieved in a day/week/month and be realistic about what can’t be achieved.

3. Plan to write regularly. Short bursts of 20 minutes are often more successful and manageable. Set yourself a daily target; 200 words seem more realistic and achievable than a whole project or assignment.

4. Break big sections of writing into smaller parts. Focus on the individual paragraphs rather than the whole essay.

5. Finish your daily quota of writing at a point where you feel confident in what you are saying, even if it is mid-way through a sentence. When you return to your writing, it will not be so difficult to start again.

Start by writing down any thoughts you have for your essay. This helps to get rid of the expanse of white page. (Remember you don’t need to show these thoughts to anyone else at this stage).

Try different approaches such as mind-mapping, flow charts or free-writing.

Type out any quotations you think you might use.

Try writing in a different location or writing at a different time of day. Make a note of which locations/times suit you best.

Discuss your ideas with others in your group. Discussion can be a useful way of generating new ideas and also encourages you to see other perspectives.

Type out your topic headings, references or bibliography.