



An Action Plan that Leads to Success

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Indirect Beneficiary

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My name is Jan Nyryssa A. Catando, but my friends call me Jay-En. I am a fifteen-year-old fourth year student at the Fort Bonifacio High School (FBHS). I used to be in the first section

when I was in the first and second grades, but that was a long time ago in elementary school. I started having some difficulty in the third grade. I would get a mark below 80 percent in one subject or another.

I struggled to adjust during my first year in high school. During the next couple of years, I noticed that I would get lazy in the second and third grading periods. My grade point average (GPA) was always above 85 though, because I would rush to pull my grades up in the fourth grading period.

Fourth year proved to be much more challenging than my first year in high school. My classes were moved from the afternoon to 6:00 A.M. I had to wake up at 4:30 A.M. just to get to school on time. In school, I experienced culture shock. We were being trained for college and our teachers piled work on us. Deadlines overlapped. I was really having a hard time in the first grading period.

It was during this time that Mr. Christian R. Bincalo, our physics teacher, introduced My Action Plan for Progress and Success (MyAPPS). It was a two-page form wherein we had to identify our own strategies for learning; indicate persons responsible, people involved, and resources needed; make a schedule; and monitor and evaluate progress and expected outcomes. We had to sign a personal commitment, too. Mr. Bincalo wanted us to commit to our individual MyAPPS so we could see what would happen and be motivated by the results.

It was a quarterly requirement we had to attach to our portfolios. Mr. Bincalo required us to compile our physics activities and test results in a portfolio that we could use as reviewers for exams.

I drafted my first MyAPPS and submitted it at the end of the first grading. Initially, I just wanted to comply and did not really pay much attention to it that time. When I received my grades for that grading period, I saw physics was my lowest grade at 81. I was embarrassed because some of my classmates were getting 95 in the subject. I want to go to Philippine Normal University (PNU) but they do not accept students with grades below 80. That scared me.

It was in the second grading that I took a closer look at MyAPPS and analysed it. I realised it was not just a chore but it might really help me be a better student. Mr. Bincalo could be right!

I paid close attention to the things I wrote in MyAPPS and monitored my progress. Looking at it every day made me more conscious of the things I needed to do. I became less forgetful and more organised—or maybe I was less forgetful *because* I was more organised. I used to be the student who would forget her assignment and cram in school right before class. It is only now I see that that was such a hassle! Now that I am more aware of the things I need to do, I prepare. I have become more responsible and confident because I am prepared.

It paid off right away, too. I saw my physics grade improve from 81 in the first quarter to 89 in the second quarter. It was very motivating! In the third grading period, my physics grade further went up to 92 and my GPA was 91.15—the highest I have ever had. The effects spilled over to my other subjects because I was applying what I learned. Mr. Bincalo said I was the most improved student in my class.

I never thought that self-monitoring and evaluation could have such a great impact. It is not just about the improvement of grades but, more importantly, the change in one's habits. It helps you break your old, bad habits and adopt new, good ones. It helped me see how what I do now can affect my future goals. That is hard to understand when you are young unless it is actually happening in your life. As a student, I was not really taught how to assess myself until MyAPPS. I did not know where to start and how to begin helping myself. I probably would not believe its effect either, if it did not happen to me.

Graduation is a couple of months away and I am optimistic about getting into PNU. I dream of becoming a high school teacher so I can serve my country and touch the lives of students. I hope that by then, Filipino students would already be very familiar with self-monitoring and evaluation.

Jan Nyrrisa A. Catando is a fourth year high school student at FBHS. She hopes to continue using her self-assessment skills in college and realise her full potential.