

OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION



Overcoming Procrastination



Everybody procrastinates at one time or another in their lives.



We put off unpleasant tasks



We avoid sensitive phone calls



We avoid giving bias or unpopular news



We avoid potentially risky situations



We avoid starting large projects or tasks



How to Overcome Procrastination



Unpleasant tasks

This is probably the most common reason that people procrastinate.

If a task is unpleasant, the following guidelines may help you avoid procrastinating :

- Plan to do it first thing in the day – then you will feel empowered once it is over. Look up the book Eat That Frog, its all about doing the worst task first thing in the day.
- Delegate it – somebody else may relish the challenge of a task you find unpleasant.
- List the consequences of not doing it.



How to Overcome Procrastination



Overwhelming tasks

Many people put off tasks simply because they seem too vast. Here's how to overcome it:

- Use the "Eat the Elephant" technique. How do you eat an elephant – one bit at a time!
- Arrange for no interruptions
- Once you get going, keep going as long as possible, ticking off each step of the way. Look up the Pomodoro Technique – this may help.



How to Overcome Procrastination



Where do I start?

Disorganised plans are often the reason for procrastination. If you are stuck as to where to start, use the following guidelines:

- Brain-storm everything you think needs to be done as a part of the task
- Put the list into order (i.e. what needs to be done in order)
- Draw out a project plan including deadlines and dates
- Use the urgent and important matrix to schedule tasks



How to Overcome Procrastination



Unclear goals

Not knowing exactly what is expected of you puts many people off from even starting a project.

Check that you have SMART goals, and don't be afraid to ask others for clarification.

- S** Specific
- M** Measurable
- A** Achievable
- R** Results orientated/relevant
- T** Time bound



How to Overcome Procrastination



Fear of failure

Even the most confident of people fear failure at one time or another, this fear can be a powerful incentive to act.

Ask yourself what it is about failing which scares you and try to use it as a motivator to do a good job.



Over committed - can't say NO

If you become over-burdened you will achieve less than if you said "No", or re-scheduled tasks in the first place.



How to Overcome Procrastination



Addicted to cramming

For some people the intense pressure felt by doing something at the last minute provides a stimulus that drives them on. There are many problems with this approach to life: -

- Last minute work increases the odds of making a mistake
- Long term addiction to cramming causes many stress-related problems reducing your ability to be effective
- You may have a crisis that needs your attention forcing you to miss your deadline
- Cramming allows little time to review and come up with improvements

If you enjoy the thrill of the deadline, set deadlines for all the stages of your project and schedule them into your weekly or monthly goals.



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