

Seven Ways to Eliminate Procrastination

It has been said that procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday. By avoiding procrastination, you are giving yourself a chance to spend your most valuable resource, your time, the way you want.

The following are 7 strategies you can use to eliminate procrastination.

1. **Monday: Make it meaningful**

If you have been putting off studying or doing a written assignment, take a minute to list all the benefits of completing the task today. We operate by familiar patterns and tend to waste time habitually. When you notice you waste your time, make a conscious effort to change your bad habits. It would be helpful to set a goal for yourself.

2. **Tuesday: Take it apart**

Break big assignments into small, manageable parts. Be determined to complete one task at a time. Make each task one you can accomplish in 15 minutes or less. Make the results measurable so you can see your progress. If a long reading assignment intimidates you, break it into two-or three-page sections; list the sections, then cross off each section as you complete it. Give yourself a visual experience of getting your work done.

3. **Wednesday: Write an intention statement**

Use an intention statement in conjunction with the small task you created. Write your statement on a 3 x 5 card; post it in your study area where you can see it. For example, if you have a term paper to write and cannot seem to get started, write your intention statement that says, "I intend to write a list of at least five possible topics for my term paper by 9 P.M."

4. **Thursday: Tell everyone**

Announce your intention publicly. Tell a friend. Tell your spouse, roommate, parents, or children. Telling those close to you of your intention is an excellent technique to ensure its completion. Make others your support group.

5. **Friday: Find a reward**

Find an effective reward, something you would genuinely withhold from yourself if you did not earn it. When you legitimately reap your reward, notice how it feels. You may find that going to the movies or buying clothing is more enjoyable when you feel like you've earned it.

6. **Saturday: Settle it now**

Do it now. The minute you notice yourself procrastinating, plunge into the task. Then, be sure to fully appreciate the feeling of having the task behind you.

7. **Sunday: Say no**

Just say, "**NO!**" when you notice yourself continually pushing a task into the low-priority category. Re-examine the purpose for doing it at all. If you realize that you really don't intend to do something, quit telling yourself that you will. That's procrastinating. Tell the truth and drop it. Then, you're not procrastinating and you don't have to carry around the baggage of an undone task.

Remember, time is an equal opportunity resource. All people, no matter how important they are, no matter how rich or poor regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, have exactly the same number of hours in a week, no more, no less. So, use them wisely. Good Luck!

*Ellis, David B (1985). **Becoming a Master Student** (p. 51)*