

Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

DON'T PROCRASTINATE YOUR LIFE AWAY

Do you postpone things you don't like to do or do you get right to work, even if it a task you do not enjoy? When you have a deadline do you wait until the last minute before starting to work or are you the sort of person who is always on time for appointments? Do you delay making tough decisions or do you make a plan of action and then ensure you follow it through to completion? When you get tired of doing an unpleasant task do you just drop it and hopes it goes away or do you always finish important jobs with time to spare and to check your work? Do you believe that things you do not like doing should not exist and your boss infringes on your human rights by delegating such tasks to you or do you believe that there is no such thing as a task you can't do?

If you were agreeing with the second statements in these questions that shows a positive, proactive approach, and it is that attitude that gets people employed and sees them succeed. Indeed, if you are such a person, then initiative, confidence and determination may well be your fortes.

However, if you were inclined to agree with the first statement in each of the above questions, you have something to seriously worry about. You are suffering from a critical dose of procrastination that could gravely affect your chances or career progression or personal development. Procrastination is a time killer and even though you might have the best intentions of doing things tomorrow, you might well run out of tomorrows.

The good news is that, with effort from your part, procrastination can be 'cured'. The first step would be to identify what type of procrastinator you are. Do you procrastinate because you actually do not believe in your ability to perform or complete tasks? This type of procrastinator has a form of permanent 'writers block' that prevents them from ever trying to do anything as they are convinced they will 'fail' from the outset. In this case you should examine your self-confidence and what factors in your past have made you accept such a negative self-image.

The second type of procrastinator is someone who is convinced they do 'not have time' to achieve their dreams, be it study part time for another degree or seek another more fulfilling job. In this case, you may well be denying yourself a chance at progress and promotion, just because you cannot face sacrificing a few evenings a week or saving extra for a new course.

The third type of procrastinator blames their 'predicament' on others. 'It is the bosses' fault for delegating such awful tasks to me'. This person will never progress as they always have plenty of people to blame, both personally and professionally, and they believe the world owes them a living. Your causes of procrastination could be one or a combination of all three types.

So how can you cure procrastination? Start by breaking down your goals into smaller, do-able tasks. If you want to start a degree but keep putting it off, start with a smaller component course. If you have a huge report to write but can't seem to start, focus on getting a page at a time out of the way. This way you will not be overwhelmed and any changes will not involve major sacrifice. Tell your self the choices are to start to strive to succeed or to stagnate. Don't wait for others to do things for you and you must realize that it is not 'management's responsibility' to fulfill your potential- it is your responsibility to help yourself. Don't blame others if you feel unhappy in your career, look to yourself and start today by jotting down what you will achieve by end of March 2005.

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