

What Else Should You Be Doing Right Now?

Do I really want to be parked in front of my computer right now, typing out this blog? Truth be told, if I could be anywhere in the world right now, doing whatever I want, I'd probably be on a nice warm beach.

But all too often, our need to unwind presents a dilemma: In order to take vacations, we have to pay the bills. And to pay the bills, we often have to do the tedious activities that come as a part of any job. No wonder the temptation to procrastinate often rears its forceful head, and it can emerge for many reasons:

The project seems too huge and daunting to know where to begin.

The project is unappealing. Procrastinating is a way of avoiding it or pretending that it doesn't exist.

Socializing, video games, and Facebook are more fun and require less mental energy than working!

Ultimately, of course, it catches up with you. You wind up doing what you don't want to do, simply because time and The Onerous Task are officially unavoidable. But taking it on doesn't have to hurt: some simple steps can take you from procrastinator to proactive.

- 1) **Identify why you're procrastinating.** Recently there was a letter I was putting off writing. Then I realized that the letter was related to a situation that was very upsetting to me, and writing it would force me to think about that situation. When I calculated that I could write the letter in one hour and move on emotionally, I was able to get going.
- 2) **Note some of the common tasks that you tend to put off and see if you can set up a new plan that will make it hard to procrastinate.** If you tend to put off writing thank-you notes, don't cash any checks or use any gift cards until you have thanked the gift-giver.
- 3) **Break daunting tasks down.** Instead of deciding to clean up your room in one day, decide to clean one part at a time -- clean out your dresser one day, clean under the bed another day, and so on.
- 3) **Catch on to your diversionary tactics.** If you overeat when you're avoiding a task, try to ask yourself at the fridge if you're really hungry or if you're procrastinating.
- 4) **Make a schedule of both work and fun!** This not only offers you an opportunity to plan out your work into manageable parts and create a plan of attack, but it also offers you a "reality check".

Remember, once people stop procrastinating, that's when they tend to get momentum, and the feeling of *not* being under pressure is some serious relief! Keep it up, and you'll earn that beach time, fair and square.

(submitted by David Weiss, david@sonicscoop.com, 212-253-1894)