

TRANSFORMING COMBAT ZONES INTO COMFORT ZONES

Newsletter –September 2010

How much do you procrastinate? As you will note, I didn't ask if you procrastinated because just about everyone I know, myself included, procrastinates to some degree.

The bad news is that procrastination impacts our productivity, our ability to stay organized and our stress level. The good news is that this is a habit that can be changed.

The more frequently you find yourself intentionally finding ways to avoid focusing on certain tasks or issues the more important it is to address this behavior. While there is typically a "good" reason for putting them off for yet another day, there is usually a consequence for procrastinating....some are external like late charges or discontent voiced by family, friends or colleagues and some are internal like stress or frustration.

Reasons We Procrastinate

1. Vague Goals - Our goals are not focused and specific enough so we can't create an actionable task and just add it to our to-do list.
2. Poor Systems - Our systems for organizing information and managing time are not working effectively or efficiently.
3. Unrealistic Expectations - Our expectations/standards are extremely high so we envision all of the negative consequences that would be faced if the completed task is not perfect.
4. Dislike Tasks - We don't like certain tasks and have an endless list of reasons to put off doing them.
5. Fear of Letting Go - We delay making decisions regarding all of the extraneous stuff that has filled our homes or offices because of our inability to address our attachment to these items.

Overcoming Procrastination

1. Identify the type of tasks that you tend to put off and focus on doing only one of them at the required frequency over the next 21 days. At the end of 21 days, this task will have become part of your regular routine.

2. Address the dreaded task during your prime time (the time of day when you are most energized) and just get it done.

3. If the task is a large one, break it into smaller, actionable steps and do them one at a time.

4. Assign a deadline for completing the task and make an appointment with yourself to work on it. If need be, set a timer to keep you more focused.

5. If you are having a difficult time getting started, choose a routine task like making a phone call or sending an e-mail. As you segue from one task to another you will begin to build momentum and work your way up to the more challenging tasks on your to-do list.

And most important... Reward yourself. Provide yourself with an incentive to complete that especially difficult task that you keep putting off.

Not sure how you score on the Procrastination Scale? Take our short test. If you need some tips for overcoming procrastination so you'll be more productive or if you'd like to take the test, please don't hesitate to [e-mail](#) or call me at 917-375-0631.

Have a productive month!