

8 Ways Successful People Beat Procrastination

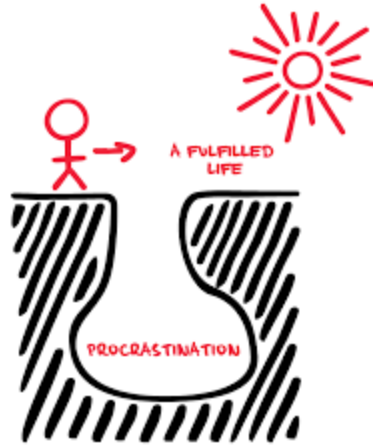
Don't Do it tomorrow.

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Everyone procrastinates. Even the most successful people struggle with it every day. But successful people do something that most of us don't, they bulldoze past it. They don't make excuses or allow it to affect their final output. They come up with smart, actionable strategies to break past mental barriers and stay productive.

Procrastination is often confused with laziness, but they are very different.

Procrastination is an active process; you choose to do something else instead of the task that you know you should be doing. In contrast, laziness suggests apathy, inactivity and an unwillingness to act.

Procrastination usually involves ignoring an unpleasant, but likely more important task, in favour of one that is more enjoyable or easier.

But giving in to this impulse can have serious consequences. For example, even minor episodes of procrastination can make us feel guilty or ashamed. It can lead to reduced productivity and cause us to miss out on achieving our goals.

If we procrastinate over a long period of time, we can become demotivated and disillusioned with our work, which can lead to depression and even big losses in business, in extreme cases.

So, the following are the smart, actionable strategies to break past mental barriers and stay productive.

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1. Show Commitment



Show yourself a commitment to getting things done. Making a commitment to yourself helps keep you accountable. You can do this by writing your goals down, keeping a to-do list with you, and creating reminders on your phone and your calendar.

Set dates and time for each and every activity, especially the big rocks, most important ones and make yourself accountable to complete them.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

2. They make themselves accountable to others.



If you can't stay accountable to yourself, you might have more success staying accountable to other people.

Tell everyone what you plan to do and talk about your goals. Tell friends, employees your intentions and you won't want to let them down. For example, if you want to go to the gym every day, ask a friend to text you every evening asking "did you go to the gym today?"

Another suggestion is to start documenting and sharing your journey. A blog or vlog where you share the projects you're working on and your progress will encourage you to get things done. Allowing yourself to be under public scrutiny can help light a fire under you.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

3. They Tie Themselves To a Mast



In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus has his ship's crew tie him to the mast so that he could hear the Sirens' song without being drawn in and tempted to jump into the sea. If you're a chronic procrastinator and simply can't resist the temptations of things like Facebook and Youtube, it might be time to tie yourself to the mast.

There are tools such as Rescue Time, SelfControl and Focus that will temporarily block access to distracting websites like Facebook so you can work on the things that matter. It's an extreme measure but also very effective.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

4. They Have Self-Awareness.



Self-awareness is a common trait many successful people have. Having self-awareness allows you to properly understand why you're even procrastinating in the first place.

Once you understand why you're procrastinating, it will be easier for you to form a plan to beat it. This will allow you to see the root cause of your procrastination, which you can then either solve the problem or formulate a strategy to overcome it.

Becoming aware of why you procrastinate means taking a step back and looking at some of the possible reasons such as boredom, lack of confidence in the project, lack of self-confidence, and feeling overwhelmed. Once you know the reason, it's a matter of finding things to remedy it and cut your procrastination off at the source.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

5. They Plan Ahead.



How often do you, at the start of your workday, sit at your desk and begin looking for things to work on, only to wind up on WhatsApp or checking email?

If you get to your work desk and have no idea where to start, it can lead you to work on low-impact tasks (such as checking email) or other worse forms of procrastination.

Those without a map, wander. Put together a plan or to-do list before starting work or any project.

The night before is a good time to do this. It allows you to reflect on what you've accomplished during the day and then come up with what needs to get done tomorrow. Now, when you start your workday, you know exactly what you need to work on and what's the highest priority.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

6. They Commit To At Least Showing Up.



After starting a task, you'll likely stick with it a lot longer than you initially committed to.

It's like working out. Half the battle is just showing up to the gym.

Commit to just showing up and you'll find yourself completing a lot more tasks. The next time you don't feel like tackling a task, commit to only working on it for one minute. Set a timer for 60 seconds, then sit down and get to work. More often than not, you'll find yourself wanting to go beyond the 60 seconds and continue.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

7. They Break Up Large Tasks Into Smaller Tasks.

Dividing Your Task Into Smaller Pieces
Makes Things Easier



The classic but seldom-followed productivity advice to conquering large or overwhelming tasks is to break them up into smaller chunks. Successful people understand that tasks need to be broken down into much more specific and measurable sub-tasks.

For example, an overwhelming to-do list item might be “write a book.” Does that item in my to-do list mean I need to write the entire book today, or does only writing one sentence count towards the completion of the task?

A better approach would be to set a goal of writing a specific number of words each day or spend a certain amount of time researching.

“Write 1000 words” or “spend 30 minutes researching for book” are much more specific tasks, and therefore easier to tackle. This often encourages people to get more done and feel accomplished and motivated by scratching to-do items off of their list.

8 WAYS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE BEAT PROCRASTINATION

8. They Let Go.



Just because you already poured hours into a project, doesn't mean you need to finish it. This is known as the "sunk cost fallacy." The "sunk cost fallacy" affects gamblers, investors, and even procrastinators. Sometimes, a project just isn't worth burning more hours over, and you ultimately need to figure out if it's time to quit.

Take a step back and figure out the reason you're procrastinating on the project or task. Is it because it's actually not that important, or doesn't move you closer to your big picture goal?

Subtraction, instead of addition, is efficient and productive. Maybe you need to focus on doing fewer things. Maybe this project you're procrastinating on is actually making you much less productive and needs to be dropped.

Your turn.

Procrastination can be beaten; it just takes some self-awareness and effort. Applying even just a few of any of the above strategies can put you on the path to being a much more productive individual.



Nimish Desai is a qualified Civil Engineer with over 30 years of experience in Real Estate Industry. He has successfully supervised and handed over projects amounting to more than 90,00,000 sft. He has established 2 companies which are proprietary firms, Mancon is engaged in Project Management Consultancy whereas Prescient Strategist is a Business Coaching & Consultancy Firm engaged in mentoring

young entrepreneurs, guiding them through the vagaries and pitfalls of the Industry to ensure that they have sustainable steady growth in their business. He is also a director of 3 companies involved in Real Estate World in various capacities.

Efficient & effective construction techniques and systems are critical in reducing the turnaround time of the project from design to delivery, enabling everyone to increase profitability, meeting schedules and improving safety. The structures that we put up in a brief moment must last a lifetime.

Do not think of employing new technologies, conducting training for employees and hiring skilled and knowledgeable technical staff as an expense but as a necessary and prudent investment. This will allow you to not only free yourself up from the daily grind of the menial work but also allow you to think about and put in action bigger goals which will allow you to scale your company even higher resulting in increased profitability and greater revenue generation.