



Organizing Report...

Procrastinators Will Read This Report... Later

- By Lorena Prime -

Have you ever missed an opportunity because you procrastinated? Everyone postpones things to some extent, but if it's negatively affecting your life, then it's time to take action.

Believe it or not the word, "procrastination" was invented in 1548 - around the same time as Galileo. While he might have used mathematics or physics to solve this problem, we don't have to - instead try these three simple steps.

1. Recognize that you are procrastinating.

Recognition is the first step to recovery. If you fill your day with unimportant tasks, i.e., busy work, then you might be a procrastinator. If you distract yourself by getting cups of coffee, running to the restroom, or making phone calls instead of accomplishing that important task, then you might be a procrastinator. Leaving an item on your to-do list for a long time? Saying "yes" to unimportant things that other people ask you to do? Filling your time

with *these* actions instead of doing your important tasks is procrastination.

2. Understand why you are procrastinating.

So, for a moment, let's play Dr. Phil... why are you procrastinating, and how's that working for you? There are many reasons why we delay our projects and understanding them will help you move forward. Do any of these sound familiar?

- The task is unpleasant.
- You're overwhelmed and don't know where to begin.
- You're waiting for the "right" time or mood.
- You fear failure (or success).
- You're a perfectionist -- if you can't do it perfectly, why do it at all?
- You're disorganized.

Now you have an idea of why...what now?

3. Take action!

Think of the task in one of two groups - you either know how to do it or you don't. (Simple, I know.)

- You know how (but don't want to) -

Find a way to motivate yourself! Reward yourself; ask someone to check on you (creates accountability); identify the consequences of not completing the task - will you miss something good? Use a timer (see www.online-stopwatch.com).

- You don't know how - Break the project down. Ask yourself, what is the very next step? If it's writing a report you've been postponing, then the next step is to sit down in front of your computer! The next step after that is to open Microsoft Word and create an outline. You don't have to produce the entire report the moment you sit down -- the report is made up of a series of small steps. Breaking tasks down into minute actions will help you see that you *can* do many steps of the job! If you get to a portion that you truly don't know how to do, then recognize this and ask someone for help.

Tasks are rarely as bad as you think, so when you're done, remembering it

wasn't so bad will help you on the next one.

Keep in mind that if you put things off, you'll end up working *more* hours per day, and your procrastination will cause you, and those around you, unwarranted stress. Realize that you are stuck and do something.

It may help to remember some physics from Galileo after all. His Law of Inertia says that a body at rest, stays at rest while a body in motion stays in motion!

What are you waiting for? ❑

Lorena Prime, owner of Clearly Organized, helps people be more productive and get organized. She also developed the "Procrastination Busting" seminar which helps conquer procrastination. For information, visit www.ClearlyOrganizedLife.com or call 617-633-2199.



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