

# Exert Your Power Over Procrastination

It is part of being human to procrastinate at times and our reasons for procrastination can vary. Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by what we have to achieve, like the goal is too big to handle. Or we can feel bored by the task at hand. We may not have bought into the priority or importance of our mission. Or we could simply be afraid of failure, afraid of success, or unable to make a decision. The reasons for procrastination are endless. The outcome, however, is the same.

Procrastination is avoidance behaviour. The road to overcoming procrastination will be dependent on understanding why you procrastinate in the first place. Your solution will be unique for your situation. As you read through some of the techniques below, make a plan to utilise those that are most relevant to you. At different times, you may find different methods appropriate.

Successful Minds top tips to overcoming procrastination:

## 1. Move towards / move away from.

Consider your motivation for completing the task at hand. Is it a “move towards” or a “move away from” drive? A “move towards” frame of mind will create a more solid focus on your goal. To apply this approach, ask yourself what you aim to achieve. Is it stated positively? If not, find ways to do so. For instance, if you want to improve your diet, a move away from goal could be to eat fewer lollies. A move towards goal could be to eat more fruit. If you focus on eating fewer lollies, you will be thinking about lollies. If you focus on eating more fruit, you will be thinking about fruit.

## 2. Finding meaning.

Ask yourself – how does this task relate to what’s important in my work or life? For instance, if you value excellence, does completing your business plan relate to excellence for you? What will you gain by completing the task? Linking the outcome to its meaning will give you more motivation to complete your mission.

## 3. First things first.

When you look at your “to do” list, it can seem overwhelming. The fact is, you can’t focus on a dozen jobs at once and

complete them all well. Prioritise your objectives and focus on each individually. If you tackle one thing at a time, you can achieve your outcome in a planned and coordinated manner.

## 4. Make a start.

It sounds obvious, doesn’t it? To complete a task, you must first start the process. Break it down to sizable chunks to make it less overwhelming. Generally, once a task is started, it doesn’t feel out of reach.

## 5. Box your time.

Set periods of time to work on the task at hand. This is known as Time Boxing. For instance, you could allocate two hours, between 2pm and 4pm to work on your business plan. In that time period, do as much as you can. Set a reward for yourself at the end of the time period as an extra motivator. Your reward could be reading the article you have not had time for or it could be going for a walk.

## 6. “Do” rather than “try”.

Think about all the things you are “trying” to do. Most of them don’t get done. When we use the word “try”, we are already providing ourselves with the escape clause. In our subconscious, we are happy to allow other things to stand in the way. When we use the language “do”, it’s far more powerful. We make a commitment to ourselves and others.

## 7. Aim for completion rather than perfection.

Aiming for excellence is a great thing, provided it does not impede us from ever finishing what we start. If striving for absolute perfection holds you back from achieving your goals, your “to do” list could benefit from a different approach. There will be times when you need to

aim for completion to a high standard, rather than perfection. Remember that everything can always be improved. Nothing is ever perfect to everyone. Learn to recognise a job well done, rather than striving for unrealistic perfection.

## 8. Confident decision making.

Anxiety surrounding decision making can be related to fear of making the wrong decision, fear of change, or simply confusion. If decision making is holding you back, examine why. There are many decision making methods and tools available these days. Up skilling yourself in this area could help you overcome your procrastination.

Sir Edmund Hillary did not plan to conquer Mount Everest all at once, and for good reason. Formulate a plan that is right for you. Connect with what you want to achieve. Find meaning in the outcome, box your time, have a can do approach, and make a start. Remember, there is no perfect way. You need to find your way, and in doing so, be confident in the decisions you make. Embrace your opportunity to promote further success in your life. What are you going to do today to actively move you towards that success? 💡

© Successful Minds – June 2009



e: [info@successfulminds.com.au](mailto:info@successfulminds.com.au)  
w: [www.successfulminds.com.au](http://www.successfulminds.com.au)