now
later
tomorrow
next week

Procrastination Station

- Determine what type of procrastinator you are
- Choose an implementation technique
- Challenge yourself
- Complete the important things you start

What exactly IS procrastination?

Unlike laziness, which is simply an unwillingness to act, procrastination is the habit of delaying an important task, usually to focus on more enjoyable or less urgent activities instead. It can restrict potential, disrupt the work flow of a team, and can even lead to anxiety and depression.

So what are the different procrastinator types?

Type 1: The Novelty Seeker

This is the person who is always seeking the newest, best thing out there, only to implement the beginning stages before moving on to the next shiny object. He gets bored with projects quickly and doesn't follow through.

She's a fast learner, and quick to make decisions and take action. She runs in too many different directions to ever see the results of any one project, often resulting in early burnout. Many entrepreneurs fit this category.

Type 2: The Self-Deprecator

This procrastinator thinks of himself as lazy. While the exact opposite is true, he tends to think that his inaction is due to laziness or stubbornness, when he's really just wearing himself out. Because he thinks of himself as lazy, he's extra hard on himself when he doesn't get things done, often leading him to never start.

Type 3: The Overscheduler

This woman is overwhelmed by her calendar, and "I'm too busy" is her go-to excuse - because it's true! A slave to her schedule, she's always overwhelmed. Often this busy-ness leads to an excuse not to begin a new project, despite its importance. Rather than admitting she doesn't want to do something, she typically has too many more important things to do. Reluctant to face challenges head on, she avoids facing the real problem.

Type 4: The Performer

He thinks he's better under pressure, so he ensures that he always is by putting things off until the last possible moment. This behavior is triggered by perfectionism, and simply cannot go on forever unchecked. The performer puts pressure on himself, often as a result of remembered last-minute saves of the past.

To overcome prograstination, for your type, you should:

The Novelty Seeker - As you're working and new ideas come to you, write them in a journal or on a sticky note, so you can return to them once the project is complete

The Self-Deprecator - Recharge often - take a walk to get away, if only for a few minutes - you'll return with a fresh perspective and renewed vigor

The Performer - Set a "start date" - unlike a completion date, which adds unneeded pressure, a start date gives you something to look forward to and move towards

The Overscheduler - Take a little time and ask yourself what it is you're really trying to avoid by staying so locked in busyness?

Can you identifty with any of the procrastination types above?

If so, you're not alone. The good news is that procrastination is a habit, and like any bad habit, it can be broken!

Step 1: accepting that procrastination is an issue for you

If you're putting something off for a legitimate reason, you're probably just fine. But, when you find yourself doing so to avoid a project or workload, then you're procrastinating.

You're also probably procrastinating if:

- You start a high-priority task then leave it for something minor
- Accept projects from others when your own work isn't done
- Try to find the "right time" to get to work
- Focus on busyness instead of business
- Have items on your to-do list that have been there for months
- Fail to make decisions as needed, slowing progress at work

Step 2: learn WHY you're procrastinating

- If you're avoiding a task because it's boring or dull, get it out of the way first,
- You may not be organized - proper organization ensures tasks get completed in the order of importance and according to their deadlines

- You may have doubts about your ability to complete the task
- You could fear success and being bombarded by others requesting help
- If you're a perfectionist, you may put off a task until you feel that you can complete it perfectly - a time that may never come
- Indecision also leads to procrastination - fear of making the wrong choice can make you put it off indefinitely

Step 3: Learn New Strategies for Avoiding Procrastination

Let's face it - habits are hard to break. They've become engrained ways of behaving, and many serve us well (think brushing your teeth or washing your hands).

Habits only stop being habits when you stop practicing them.

Try the techniques below and see what works best for you

The more you can put into practice, the better your changes for success!

One of the easiest ways to track your success is to find an accountability partner. This is someone who will call you on your procrastination and cheer your accomplishments. You find accountability partners in networking groups, social media sites, and face-to-face (family and friends can often be a great resource)!

- Forgive yourself! self-forgiveness reduces the possibility of future procrastination

- Divide large tasks into smaller, more manageable chunks that you won't mind tackling as much as the full project, wich can easily become overwhelming

- Treat yourself! When you complete a project, reward yourself with a small treat and remember how great that feeling of accomplishment really is!

- Do the task you like the least first. That way, you're working on the more fun stuff the rest of the day
- Tackle little problems as they arise, rather than saving them all up
- Minimize distractions so you can focus on the tasks at hand - turn off th TV and get away from the internet and your phone. You'll get twice as much accomplished!
- Change your self-talk from "have to" or "should" to "I choose to"

If a lack of organization is your issue, try these:

- Keep a to-do list. This will keep you from "forgetting" or further putting off those less pleasant activities
- If it's not urgent or important, move it to the bottom of the list, or get rid of it altogether
- Become a master scheduler or project planner to reduce your stress levels

- Take on your hardest or least favorite activities during your peak time - are you a morning or afternoon person? Do those things then
- If you find a project overwhelming, break it into smaller tasks, so you can tackle them one at a time
- Take advantage of a task- or time-management program.
- Give yourself deadlines. If you work better under pressure, you'll do better with time-bound goals to drive you

Now that you know what to do, all that's left is to implement it!!!

With the right action steps, the right attitude, and an accountability partner, the sky's the limit in your productivity!!!