

## TECHNIQUES TO MANAGE PROCRASTINATION

### 1. SET PRIORITIES

Not: I don't know where to begin so I can't begin at all.  
I have to do EVERYTHING!! Nothing less will do.

Instead: The most important step is to pick one project and just focus on that one.

### 2. BREAK THE TASK DOWN INTO LITTLE PIECES

Not: There's so much to do and it's so complicated. I'm overwhelmed by all the problems that have been assigned

Instead: I don't have to do all the problems at once. I will do the easy ones first and work up to the harder problems.

### 3. SET UP SMALL, SPECIFIC GOALS

Not: I have to write the lab report in two weeks.

Instead: If I write two pages a day, Monday through Friday, I can finish half the report in a week. I'll have the final report done at the end of two weeks.

### 4. TAKE ONE SMALL STEP AT A TIME

Not: It's too much. I'll never get it all done.

Instead: What is the next exam (report required on my list of dates (due dates)? I'll concentrate on that exam (report), for right now.

### 5. REWARD YOURSELF RIGHT AWAY WHEN YOU ACCOMPLISH A SMALL GOAL

Not: I can't take any time out until I've completely finished this report

Instead: I spent an hour working on the Chapter 15 problems (experimental section of the report, etc.). Now I'll call a friend.

### 6. USE A TIME SCHEDULE

Not: I must devote the whole week to this project.

Instead: I can use these times this week work on my project: Monday 7-8, Tuesday 7-9, Saturday 10-12.

### 7. LEARN HOW TO TELL TIME

Not: Sorting through my lab notebook and reorganizing my lecture notes will be a snap. It won't take more than an hour, so I can do it anytime.

Instead: Sorting lecture notes and getting information from my lab notebook always takes longer than I expect, so I'll get started tonight. I'll spend an hour sorting my lecture notes.

### 8. OPTIMIZE YOUR CHANCES FOR SUCCESS

Not: I'll do my studying this weekend at home.

Instead: I'll study during the week in a library or in my office. (Choose whatever conditions are optimal for you to get studying done.)

#### **9. DELEGATE, IF POSSIBLE**

Not: I'm the only one in the world who can do this report.

Instead: I ask the instructor for help on this report. If she/he allows, I'll set up a study group to write the report.

#### **10. JUST GET STARTED**

Not: I can't write this literature talk until inspiration hits.

Instead: I'll write down whatever ideas first come into my mind and then I can improve on the talk later.

#### **11. LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED**

Not: I have hardly made a dent in all there is to do.

Instead: I finished one lab report and am half-way through the extra credit assignment. This won't win me the outstanding junior award yet, but it's more than did yesterday.

#### **12. BE REALISTIC**

Not: I should be able to work full-time, take an evening class, be president of the Chem Club, keep up with current events, spend more time with my family, and exercise an hour a day with no trouble at all.

Instead: I have limits. I can take on fewer responsibilities and still like myself.

Adapted from a handout provided by the Counseling Center:

"1982, Procrastination Seminars" Jane B. Burka, Ph.D.; Lenora M. Yuen, Ph.D.; and Susan Chandler, M.S.