



## HOW TO MANAGE YOUR TIME:

# 7 Reasons You Can't Stop Procrastinating

If you can honestly say that procrastination is not a problem for you, congratulations! You're one of the [12% of workers who don't procrastinate](#) at least one hour every day. If, however, you're in the same boat with the rest of us mere mortals then please read on.

### Procrastination Is Easy

There are countless ways to procrastinate when we need to get stuff done:

- Make an excuse to do...laundry, washing, or otherwise tedious tasks...
- Watch Netflix, Instagram, YouTube
- Make something to eat
- Check your email – aiming for that perfectly empty inbox
- And more “productive” ways of procrastination like planning, learning or researching (\*I need to prepare better for this before getting started!)\*

“Procrastination is like a credit card: it is a lot of fun until you get the bill.”

**Christopher Parker**

And although it all sounds fun, it's usually painful. Because procrastination almost always comes with an uncomfortable guilt that taints the otherwise joyful activities we procrastinate with.

Unfortunately, procrastination is not easy to fix. Quick fixes and productivity hacks usually turn out to be just that: a quick fix, but not a long-term solution. So WHY do we really procrastinate? We're going to look at the 7 reasons you can't stop procrastinating.

# 1. You Set Lofty Expectations.

Overwhelming ourselves by setting ridiculously high goals for what we want to achieve on any given day is like taking the high road to procrastination. You don't have a vision of how to achieve the goal, therefore you spend time trying to start but end up just wasting time

A solution is to break down the problem into smaller – bite sized goals. The build-up of multiple goals then achieve the greater goal. The issue with this is you need to understand the overall goal and have a vision that you can see yourself achieving.



## 2. You're A Perfectionist.

Depending upon your personality type, you could hold on to a project or activity for much longer than necessary. In the case of most projects, providing defined and tight deadlines to complete the work will give you the necessary push to complete efficiently. If you know that it takes an hour to complete a project, give yourself that time or something a little shorter. Knowing a deadline is looming has an amazing effect on your ability to focus and complete tasks in a seemingly inadequate timeframe.

You also need to ask yourself the question, is an 80% solution good enough? You could end up spending double the time to achieve a 95% solution and double that time again to achieve a near perfect solution...

## 3. You Lack Purpose.

It's a fundamental question, but do you know why you are doing what you are doing? Or put another way, are you interested or motivated about doing what is in front of you?

It could be that deep down you just don't see the point or the end reward. Completing the goal is not important or attractive to you.

The solution is to make sure you know the WHY and then believe in it. This becomes critically important when hiring Millennials and Generation Z, also becoming known as 'Zilennials'. If they don't know the WHY and believe it for the business, you'll soon lose them.

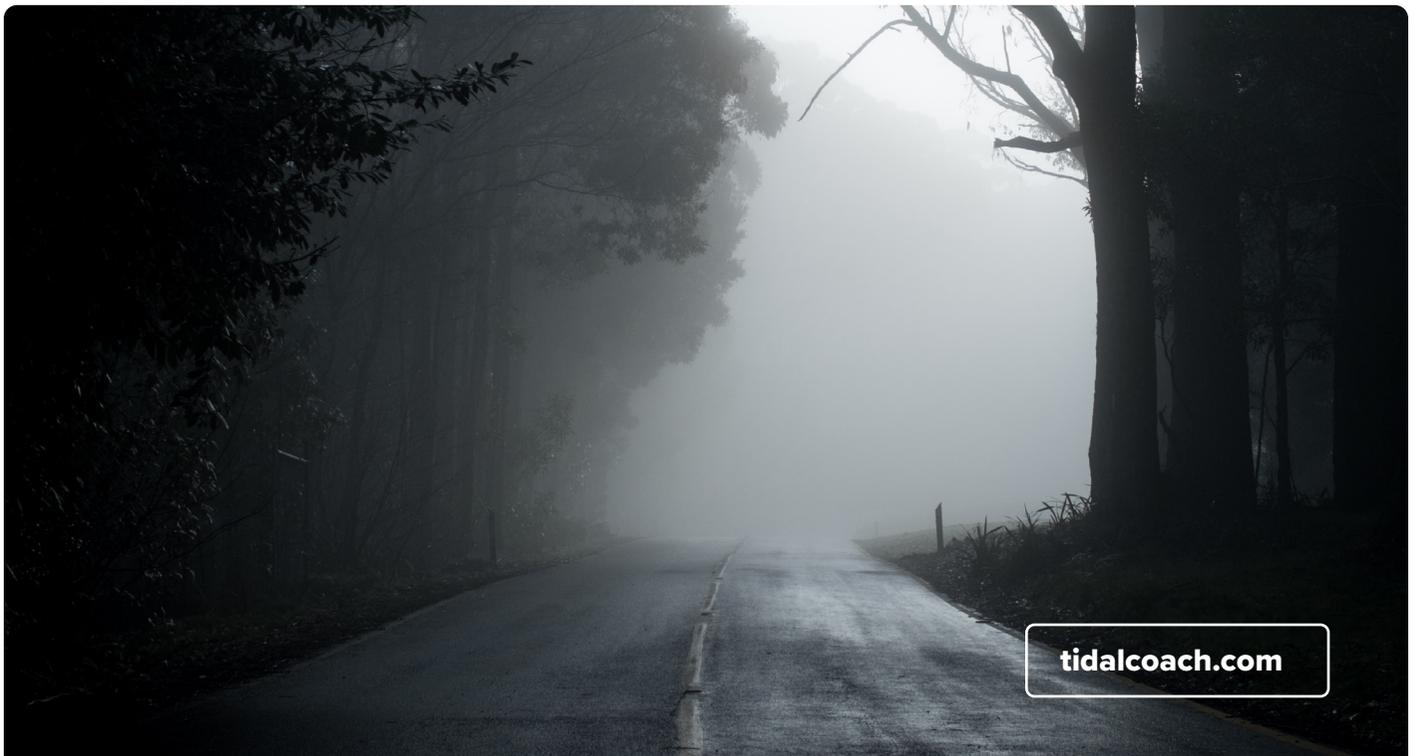
# 4. Fear Holds You Back.

Procrastination also allows us to keep in a safe zone. If we don't go out on a limb, then we are not exposed to potential failure and therefore never take a chance and make a mistake.

Fear can be overcome using many different techniques, as follows:

1. understand what you are afraid of, and then understand what could be the worst outcome to failing to complete the task.
2. make a habit out of challenging yourself to get out of your comfort zone.
3. create a system to allow you to prevent over thinking/ worrying about the problem.
4. trust yourself to do the best you can and if it does not work out, realize that you have just developed a new skill or technique.

Thomas Edison said that he had not failed 10,000 times in developing the lightbulb, rather he learned 10,000 ways not to make a lightbulb!



# 5. You Are Bad At “Self-Management.”

Tell me if this sounds familiar. You sit down to start working and immediately find a need to:

1. Go to the bathroom – you now have an urge
2. Feed yourself - as you're hungry
3. Take a nap - you now feel a little sleepy
4. Need to develop inspiration - by watching a Netflix show
5. Go to Amazon and research - that new shiny object you've been craving
6. Or decide that its nearly time to finish work for the day - so you'll end the day now, etc...

By taking this approach, you end up reinforcing your bad habits frequently, before long your work day is filled with activities that do not add up to much at work.

An answer is to understand where you are investing your time. Log the time you start work and end it, for example you start your productive work at 8am, log the time on a sheet of paper. When you stop that work, log the time you stop. When you resume the task, log that time and when you deviate from that task log that time too. At the end of the day add up the time spent on planned productive activities vs time you spent thinking that you have been productive.... I have personally done this and it is astounding how much time you can waste when it is not being measured!

This is really about maximizing your time when you allocate it to work. It should be balanced with sleep, exercise, eating well, rest, relaxing time away from work, etc.

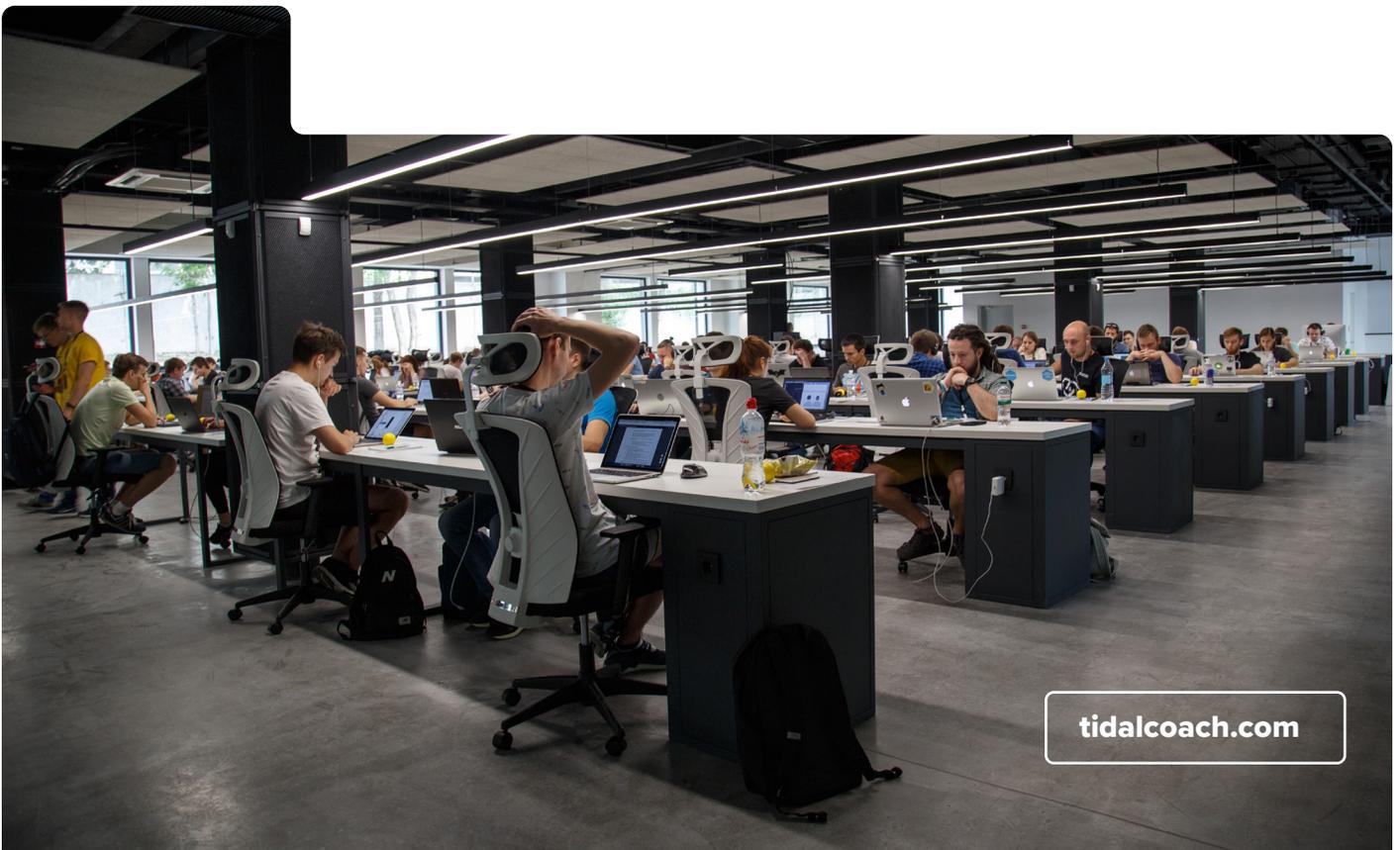


# 6. You Only Work Well Under External Pressure.

It appears the procrastinator's time is best spent at the end of the deadline, it focuses you to achieve the seemingly unachievable.

The time from the initiation of the goal, to its completion you will go through many stages when procrastinating. There'll be the "I've got plenty of time, so no rush," to "there's still time," to sitting down to work and achieving nothing – but assuming that you're progressing the work, to "the deadline is approaching and I've got to start" – but being paralyzed from working, either at all or at least not efficiently.

A way to make this work for you is to make a game of it. You get a reward if you achieve a small step, and a punishment if not. The punishment can be as onerous as donating to a cause that you do not support – a strong negative influence to incentivize you to complete a step. The reward can be anything from 'allowing' yourself to do something fun, to a small snack reward - say a small piece of chocolate.





## 7. You're a Victim of Circumstance.

Outside circumstances are often a great scapegoat for the procrastinator. As the famous stooge Curly used to say, "I'm just a victim of circumstance." Let's say your friend calls while you're working. You could let it go to voicemail, or let them know you don't have much time to talk. Instead, you take the call and talk for 45 minutes.

Or it's a great day to be outside and enjoy the weather, and your dog needs to go for a walk. So you tell yourself, "I need to clear my head anyway." 30 minutes later, you're no closer to starting, and now you're hungry again, and possibly in need of that nap!

You might decide to make dinner over spending time doing your work because, let's face it, we have to eat, right?

The world is full of distractions, Facebook, Google, Amazon, Instagram, TikTok, etc., are all literally designed to make you want to spend time on their websites soaking up their advertisements.

A way to sort through this is to ensure that you develop a working area, a play area, an eating area, and do specific actions in each area. So when you sit down at the working area, you are not faced with distractions, and you are able to work. When you sit down to relax, you are in a place that you can do that – and you are not faced with work looming over you. Environment is very important.

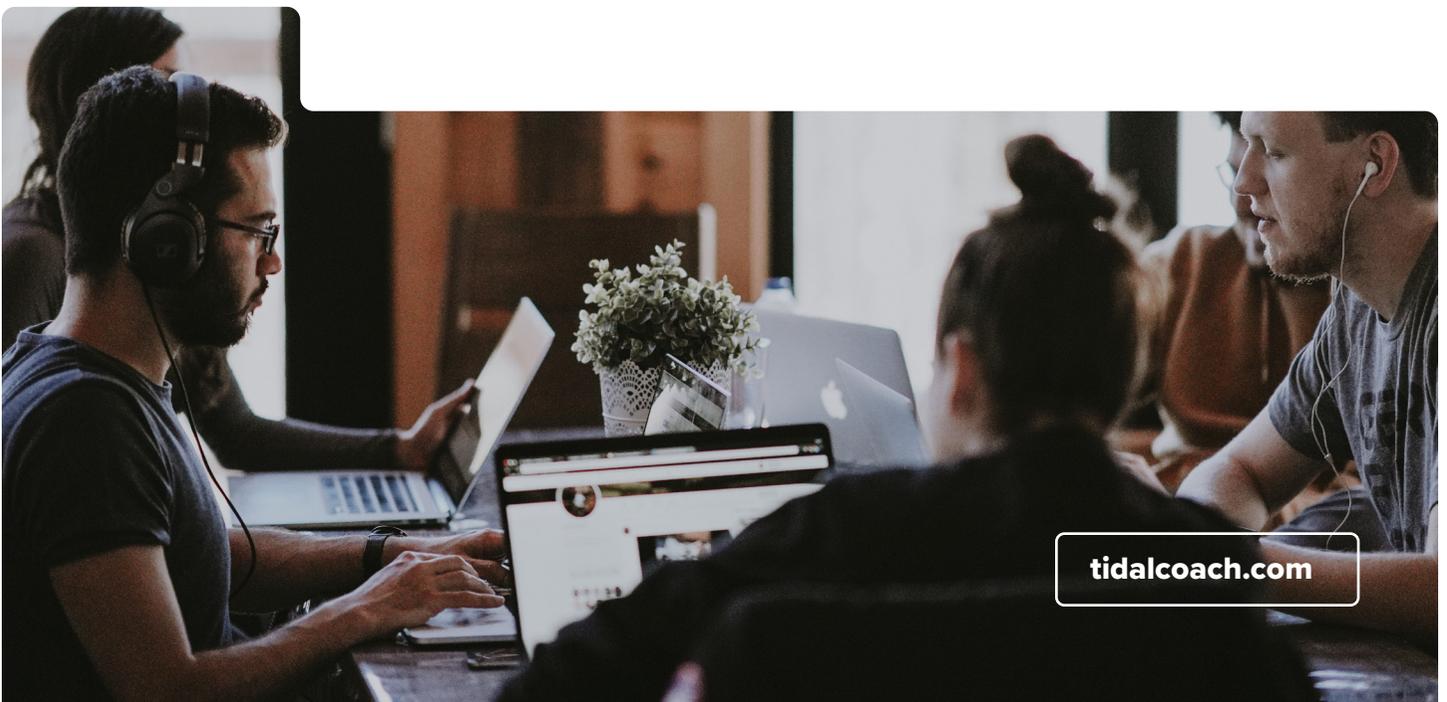
# Procrastination Is A Work In Progress.

If you are struggling with procrastination and you are trying to fix it — don't just ask "What can I do to change?" but ask "Why is this happening?". If you start with WHY, you will actually find a solution that fixes the underlying issue instead of just putting a band-aid on it, and once fixed you end up looping back to the same spot in a short time.

Procrastination is a problem for most people. You need to understand your purpose or "Why", to help incentivize you to achieve what you planned to – if you are not achieving, then there is a possibility that you do not have the right "Why" that prompts you to excel in your chosen field.

You can achieve the levels of productivity you desire, but only if you're willing to root out procrastination from your life and reclaim your time. You can do it! Want to know more on how to resolve this issue for you or your team?

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