



How To Be A Master Procrastinator in 2019

The New Year brings with it new opportunities, chances to excel, and the incentive to improve in a chosen area of performance. In fact, right now, many people will be taking the time to assess last year's performance and will be in the process of setting new goals for 2019.

Trying to identify new goals for the New Year can be challenging; some people might want to strive for something more dynamic whilst others may be searching for new perspectives or approaches. Whether you are a Managing Director in your own business or a Senior Manager in a major organisation, there is one skill that you can hone that will really make a difference: **procrastination**.

Procrastination is a universally understood concept. Everyone procrastinates to some extent, but how good are you personally? Could you comfortably call yourself an expert in this field? If not, read these top ten tips for becoming a master of 'maybe later' in 2019.



1 Set UNINSPIRING and DEMOTIVATING goals

This is fundamental. An expert procrastinator cannot afford to be motivated, so don't set any goals that would a) improve your life, b) improve your financial security, or c) inspire you to want to achieve them.

Keep all your goals simple, achievable and mundane. Or better still, don't bother setting them at all. If you can manage to follow this simple first tip then you will be well on your way to enhancing your procrastination skills.

Also remember to keep search terms vague and make searching aimless, endless fun. Don't try and be specific. This could lead to a faster decision, thereby robbing you of the opportunity for mindless browsing.



3 Spend lots of TIME in MEETINGS

Meetings can be an excellent way to waste time and can make you feel really important too, as your diary fills up and you become increasingly unavailable. Make sure that your planner is crammed with them.



2 Do ENDLESS INTERNET RESEARCH

Internet research is the secret weapon of the master. Done with the proper focus of a procrastination master, it is possible to spend most of a full working day looking online at products and services in which you ultimately do not need or which you need but do not buy.

To maximise this particular skill, remember never to Power search. A proper Power search may reduce your options from 400,000 hits to 15, slashing the amount of time you can reasonably spend exploring every possibly relevant link. How long is that going to take? Not long enough, so avoid Power searches at all costs.

The best type of meetings for truly dedicated procrastinators are committee meetings. You will often just go around in circles in search of consensus. Volunteer for as many of these as possible.

Maximise the lengths of meetings by:

- **Making sure they are always in big rooms with comfortable chairs.**
- **Ordering lots of tea, coffee and cakes.**
- **Not setting a timescale for the meeting.**
- **Not creating an agenda or having any objectives/outcomes.**
- **Not offering to chair the meeting.**

By following this list of suggestions, you should be able to maximise your procrastination potential at every meeting.





Avoid DECISION MAKING

At all costs, you must follow this golden rule. *“Decisions are the stepping stones of progress,”* says, Notion’s MD, Dominic Ashley-Timms, so avoid them if you truly want to achieve procrastination perfection.

Even bad decisions are good for progress. You still move forward by making mistakes and learning what doesn’t work. Bad decisions can help you to refine your strategy. So don’t fall into the trap of thinking that making bad decisions is good practice for mastering procrastination. It’s best to avoid decision-making altogether.



Take lots of unnecessary LONG BREAKS

Here, you can get creative. There are many ways to interpret the long break approach.

Smokers have an automatic upper hand here as they have to leave the building and can go for a long walk on a regular basis. Perhaps you could pretend you are a smoker and go out for 10 minutes every hour. That could have a great impact on disrupting your concentration. You will have to start at the beginning, again and again, each time you return to your desk.

Tea and coffee-making is another option. Regular trips to the drinks machine or the kitchen will improve both your procrastination skills and your popularity. Offer to get everybody in the office a drink. Walk from the office to the canteen and back again a few times, checking who has how many sugars. Those truly dedicated to the beverages approach may spend fifteen minutes compiling a list or a table, detailing everyone’s drink of choice and precisely how they take it. After all, it’s important to do a job properly.



Find out all the office GOSSIP

By pursuing this step with vigour, you may find yourself more and more sought after, making yourself incredibly popular as a knower of all that is scandalous. If people want to find out what is going on in any given colleague’s professional or personal life, they will come to you. This works wonders for the Ego, whilst wasting hours of your day. It might be that your fingers barely touch the keyboard with this approach. You can set this step in motion immediately, simply by eavesdropping.



Review your EMAIL CONSTANTLY

Constantly arriving, emails are a Godsend for the master procrastinator. Every time you hear the “ping”, you can drop your current task and attend to your new email. If you’re truly dedicated, you might consider regularly checking your inbox or clicking the Send/Receive buttons: just in case.

Managing your inbox effectively can be disastrous for the progress of your procrastination skills, so under no circumstances should you:

- **Set specific times to attend to emails. Bad procrastinators sometimes only look at their emails twice a day. You will never achieve your goal with such a measured approach.**
- **Delete your junk mail before you’ve read it all. Your filters might have missed something crucial, like that lottery win in a country you’ve never visited.**
- **Delegate email tasks to colleagues. You should always spend time crafting the perfect message yourself. Feel free to delete and retype whole sentences several times.**



FOCUS on all the MINOR PROBLEMS

Honing in on the unimportant problems is a fantastic way to fill your day without the fear of being remotely productive. These problems are those that will not impact the bottom line and you should devote disproportionate amounts of time fretting over them.

Always ask yourself: “Is what I am currently doing fundamental to the success of this business?”. If the answer is no: keep doing it. You should immediately stop doing anything that might move you forward.

Become known in the office as the person to come to over the unimportant things. If you can become the office agony aunt or uncle or just a sympathetic listener, even better, as this will also help you perfect tip number 6.

If you can succeed in this, you can focus not only on your own insignificant problems but on everyone else’s minor crises too. A true sign of mastery.





RE-ORGANISE your DESK, OFFICE or FILING SYSTEMS

We all know that an untidy desk means an untidy mind, so this tip really has a double advantage. Get yourself into a vicious, unproductive cycle. Keep your desk enough of a mess so that there is almost a constant need for reorganisation and tidying. To keep things varied, you may try to find a better system to get on top of it every few days, or just spend an hour looking for that document rather than working on it. Feel free to check piles of paper that you have already checked unsuccessfully – just in case.

If you can remember to keep every piece of paper that finds its way onto your desk, you can also invest unnecessary time filing and recycling it. Perhaps you can find time in your schedule for regular face time with the shredder, which is slow, and often gets jammed because you stuff too much paper into it. Whoops.

Some of the most effective organisations have almost removed paper from their offices entirely. They insist that all memos or proposals are no more than one side of A4. They want their team to communicate information in simple snippets, not in a thesis-style tome. This approach will categorically not work for your purposes. Remember to keep all written pieces long-winded. Keep your desk snowed under with all that paperwork.

- **Installing updates.** This could be for your anti-virus software or drivers for the new mouse you procrastinated your way into yesterday.
- **Fixing the printer.** If you can become an office hero as the only person who can un-jam the printer or who knows where the toner cartridges are kept, you should do so. This way, you will always be the first person who is called, presenting frequent opportunities to leave your desk.
- **Tweaking your settings for improved performance.** Blaming a slow computer or wifi settings for your lack of productivity is fun, but trying to fix it yourself and failing can be even more effective for procrastination.

The list is endless, as is the time it can consume. With technologies and trends, such as social networking, come more opportunities to up your game as a time-waster. You should rise to each new challenge in order to become a master.

Amateur to Expert

These ten steps can get you on the road to true expertise in procrastination. As ever, nothing will improve if you don't make a conscious decision to focus and take action. You may already be able to identify to some extent with several of these steps. This is a good start, but if you wish to achieve procrastination mastery, you must take a long, hard look at the habits you have formed.

1. Choose three areas that you could improve
2. Score yourself out of 10, where you think you are TODAY against these three areas
3. Set an improved, target score that you want to achieve in a month's time
4. Make a list of how you could justify the improved score by next month
5. What actions can you take – or fail to take?
6. TAKE ACTION

...Or not.

Notion is a global expert in behaviour change. If you would like to learn how to achieve your goals in 2019, visit us by [clicking here](#) or give us a call on [+44\(0\) 1926 889 885](tel:+44(0)1926889885).



Focus on your COMPUTER and PHONE

The modern PC and smart phone are your friends. Customisable, slow, filled with gadgets and games. It provides some excellent opportunities for procrastination, including:

- **Personalisation.** Why not change your desktop background? You should spend at least half an hour finding the perfect image on Google. You may wish to do this on a weekly basis.
- **Helping colleagues with their IT problems.** Be sure to make as many unnecessary alterations to program settings as you possibly can, whilst insisting that you don't need to Google the problem using a Power search or call IT services.

