

Email 1

Subject: Reasons why people procrastinate at work

Dear [Name],

Feelings of frustration and anxiety sweep over your body as you race against time to turn in your work assignments each week. You tell yourself you will do better come Monday morning, but alas, you find yourself in the same spot Friday afternoon, missing another deadline leading to yet another two hours of work.

The following are common reasons why you may be procrastinating at work and how you can help solve it:

Zero Passion for Your Work

If you find yourself continually procrastinating at work, then it might be a good idea to re-evaluate why you are there. Ask yourself If you genuinely enjoy the work, feel a deep connection, or could you simply do without? Often, zero passion is a culprit that can cause a ripple effect of problems at work.

Shoddy quality work leading to low-performance reviews, missed deadlines leading to more work for your team, and so forth. When you are not passionate about something, you won't see the importance in getting your work done in time or have the desire to put the hard work into it – thus, leading you to put off the work and procrastinate.

Fear of Poor Performance

The fear of getting the job done in front of co-workers or disappointing your boss is all too real. Someone judging you or the fear of letting someone judge you could be holding you back. If this is the case, reach out to your co-workers or boss and let them know your concerns. You cannot possibly know everything, and communicating your fears can be one easy way to eliminate them.

Your boss and co-workers will love that you have open and honest communication and will likely help somehow – as long as you approach the conversation appropriately by demonstrating you truly want to make sure you do the job correctly, not that you want to slack off.

The Task Is Overwhelming

There are two sides to every story, right? This is no exception. Sometimes, you do understand how to do the project and feel the best to do it on your team; however, it is still hard to and feels overwhelming. When this happens, analyze the tasks required to get your work done and separate them into different types of tasks.

Pick the tasks you enjoy doing for last and then take the tasks you don't like or listed negatively and break them down into even easier jobs. Then get to work, starting on the work you dislike the most. This way, you can get those tasks done quickly if you are low on time.

Hate the Work Required to Get It Finished

Unfortunately, even if you are passionate about your work, there are always going to be things you may not enjoy doing before finishing your job. Try developing a reward system to encourage you to work, or find ways to make it more fun and give yourself breaks after finishing each task.

Procrastinating at work is all too familiar. If you find yourself doing it often, you are not alone. Don't allow it to ruin your career or quality of work. Compare your struggles to these common reasons to see how you can end procrastinating at work.

If you're trying too hard to be a perfectionist, look out for our next email where we give some great tips on how to stop trying to be perfect when you don't need to be.

Email 2

Subject: How to stop being a perfectionist when you don't need to be

Dear [Name],

Perfectionism is a curse that only causes you to work more than you need to. These tips and tricks will help elevate the stress and pain caused by always striving to be nothing less than perfect.

Identify Why You Feel the Need to Be Perfect

First, ask yourself why you need to be perfect at everything you do. Are you simply scared of being wrong, messing up in front of your friends and family, or afraid of judgment?

Start to pay attention to the things you think about and focus on when you start to over-analyze and stress. These are the keys to why you want to be perfect. Maybe you want to impress your boss, or your family relies on you and one mess-up means a missed bill. Figure it out and then find ways to make these situations easier to combat stress and anxiety.

Ask Yourself, "Are You Being Realistic, Honestly?"

Search your mind and heart and ask yourself whether you are legitimately realistic. Is this something you would expect from others without a bonus or some kind of perk for finishing the work?

Outline the Expectations

Make a list of what is expected from you. Highlight if they are your expectations, expectations from others, or your assumptions. Then only focus on the expectation that is true and realistic, just like a syllabus on a school project.

If you follow the syllabus, you are likely to get a passing grade even if you don't get the answer entirely right. In other words, you don't need to do more than what is expected of you to get a passing grade, and the extra work you do doesn't mean you will get extra credit either.

Lower Your Expectation of Others and Yourself

Ultimately what leads to perfectionist tendencies is high expectations of yourself and others. You know what you expect from others and often lead as an example. However, perfectionists often have incredibly high expectations and think others can achieve just about anything. This is not the case. Anytime you approach a task like this, highlight the unreasonable expectations and then eliminate them.

In the end, perfectionism isn't real. It is only based on your perception of what perfectionism is. Someone else probably has even higher standards than you, yet again making it an impossible feat to expect someone to meet. Don't expect it from yourself either. The less you expect perfection, the happier you will be.

Next time, we'll give some tips on how to get on with tasks that you don't enjoy.

Email 3

Subject: How to get on with tasks you don't enjoy

Dear [Name],

In a dream world, you would only do the things you absolutely enjoy each and every day and let others take on the daunting and draining tasks of life. However, most won't get the chance to experience such fortune, so it is best to find ways to combat it now.

The following are five tips on how to get on with tasks you don't enjoy:

Focus on Why

Focus on the bigger picture. Why do you need to get this task done? What would happen if you don't get it done? Instead of focusing on the task and what it is you don't like to do, focus on the reasons and motivation to finish the work. Unfortunately, as adults, there will always be things we have to finish even if we don't enjoy doing them.

Analyze Your Distaste

In other words, what exactly is it about the task that you do not enjoy? Take your time and honestly look within yourself to unlock the real reasons. Maybe you do enjoy the task but actually fear the judgment after you finish it. Take the time to truly self-reflect to ensure it doesn't affect you negatively in the long run.

Break It Down; Think Baby Steps

How can you break down the work into something you enjoy more? Break it down into small and manageable tasks that make it seem more comfortable or more enjoyable. Break the project down into very tiny steps if you need to. Make the steps so small that the tasks seem ridiculously easy. The point is to find ways to encourage you to get the work done. Making it easier and more fun is the best way to approach it.

Schedule Breaks

After you finish, allow yourself to take breaks. If the tasks are extra dull, then schedule more time off and don't feel guilty about it. Use your breaks as motivation to work fast and get it over with.

Create a Reward System

Gifts are fun and can be a great way to inspire you to get to work. Try to avoid food or limit the number of treats, or it can turn into quite an unhealthy situation. Reward

yourself with days off, a walk at the park, or a break to watch a movie or chat with a friend.

The trick to getting work done you don't enjoy is to turn it around and make it into something you enjoy, or find ways to reward yourself after it's finished.

What are the signs that you are procrastinating at work? We'll look at this in our next email.

Email 4

Subject: Signs That You Are Procrastinating at Work

Dear [Name],

Everyone puts things off occasionally; however, some take it a lot farther than others. Chronic procrastination in the workplace by you and others can lead to poor results, profits, and reputation for your company.

Here are some common signs that you are procrastinating at work.

You Finish Other Unimportant or Easy Tasks First

It's Friday morning, and your boss requests a report by the end of the day. You don't have a single bit of work done, but you instantly remember your kitchen is dirty, the workspace needs to be reorganized, or emails from a week ago need to be deleted first.

Always in a Rush to Show Up on Time

You stayed up all night to finish an assignment and missed your alarm clock. You know you only need ten minutes each morning to get ready and rush to work. Procrastinators rarely show up to work on time or early, as they can't stick to a regular sleep schedule.

You Constantly Watch the Clock

Instead of getting to work, anxiety symptoms start to sweep over your body as you realize you probably won't have enough time to finish the assignment. Each second and hour goes by as you catch yourself looking at the clock and seeing time ticking away.

You Repeatedly Tell Yourself, "I Have More Than Enough Time to Finish It"

You quickly look over the assignment and discover it's easy to do and have plenty of time to finish. You could finish it efficiently and get it out of the way, but why should you when you can quickly do it within ten minutes before its due?

You Start to Feel Frustrated, Irritable, and Anxious

When deliverables are due soon and you leave too many assignments to finish simultaneously, you are bound to feel stressed and frustrated. Any new work or simple task for the day can easily set you off.

Late or Missed Meetings and Assignments

Last but not least, certainly the most critical signs that you are procrastinating at work is showing up to meetings late, not at all, and rushing to submit assignments on time or continuously submitting them late.

If all this seems familiar, then you are likely procrastinating at work. Over time, it will tarnish your success as your co-workers and boss can't rely on you anymore.

What are the best and worst jobs for procrastinators? Read our next email to find out.

Email 5

Subject: The best and worst careers for procrastinators

Dear [Name],

If you are a chronic procrastinator, it probably feels completely unavoidable. It's draining, frustrating, and can wreak havoc on your personal life, relationship, and career. But the truth is that you can manage your life, and picking the right career is the best place to start.

Working the right career can make what once seemed impossible easier to manage. Work-related tasks, stress, and judgment are all too familiar reasons people procrastinate at work, which can easily be avoided by selecting the right job to start with.

Reactive jobs are the best type of jobs for procrastinators as it relies on you to take immediate action. If you don't have the ability or freedom to wait to finish, then you have less opportunity to procrastinate. Reactive jobs are jobs that require you to wait for work

and finish as soon as it presents itself. For example, a receptionist or call center phone operator.

While procrastinators can still work proactive jobs, it's essential to make sure they offer structure and more to ensure procrastination symptoms don't present themselves as often. Procrastinators need strict deadlines with clear communication and directions of what is required of them. Jobs that require completing daily and repetitive tasks with immediate action are the best options. In other words, any job that allows too much freedom will be challenging to deal with for procrastinators.

The Best and Worst Careers for Procrastinators

Best:

- ER Nurse, EMT, or paramedic
- Firefighter
- Military
- Dentist or dental hygienist
- Teacher or tutor
- Receptionist or administrative support
- On-call electrician or plumber
- Delivery driver
- Programmer or software developer

Worst:

- Independent contractor or entrepreneur
- Manager or project coordinator
- Book or novel writer
- Artist
- Remote worker

Keep in mind that procrastinators can still perform well at these “worst” jobs. The idea behind what is best for them is that the jobs offer enough structure and repetitiveness not to encourage procrastination tendencies. Setting yourself up from the start to prevent yourself from putting off work is a great way to stay ahead and successful.

What should you do when your colleagues are procrastinators? We'll give some tips in the next email.

Email 6

Subject: Dealing with procrastinating colleagues

Dear [Name],

Whatever the reasons may be, procrastinating colleagues can be frustrating to deal with. Just one person lacking an effort can throw the whole organization off.

Here are five tips for dealing with procrastinating colleagues:

Communicate with Your Boss or Manager

An essential step is to let your boss or manager know what's happening. Explain how procrastination is negatively affecting your work and listen to the suggestions they can provide to make it better.

Send Simple Email Reminders

Send friendly email reminders to your team. Include updates on what projects have been finished, who helped, and so forth. Constant reminders can be used as motivation to get colleagues working.

Ask for Help Right Away

If you know you will need help on an assignment from a co-worker who constantly procrastinates, you need to ask right away. Write it down or send the request through email. Be sure it's concise and straight to the point.

Request specific times to meet or send back the required information. Even let them know that you will send a follow-up reminder at a specific time or place. Don't let them take control of the situation, or you won't get what you need.

Finish Your Assignments Early

Get your own work done early as much as possible, so you have time to help or get extra work done if needed. Make your team and boss aware of the extra work you are doing to ensure it's worth the extra energy.

Offer to Help

Let your procrastinating colleague know you are there for help no matter how big or small the issue may be. Many people procrastinate simply because the assignment is too hard and they don't want to get it wrong. If they know you are there to help and not judge, they will likely want to get more done for you.

It's important to remember that just because you have colleagues that procrastinate doesn't mean they are lazy or don't care. There are so many unique and personal reasons why procrastination happens. Take the time to get to know them and always be open to communication to better deal with procrastination at work or business.

Another issue relating to this is when you are a manager and you have procrastinating employees. We'll give some tips on how to deal with this problem in our next email.

Email 7

Subject: How To Deal with Procrastinating Employees

Dear [Name],

At some point, even your best employee is going to procrastinate. There are so many varying factors that can contribute to this. However, doing what you can to prevent it as much as possible is best, to ensure your department runs successfully.

Here are some tips for coping with procrastinating employees.

Outline Short and Long Milestones

Make it evident to your employee what you expect from them by clearly outlining short-term and long-term goals. Ensure they understand how important each goal is, no matter how long it may take to reach there. Make sure each goal has clear and hard deadlines to meet and what consequences they may face if they don't meet them.

Create a Deadline for Each Task

No matter how small, each and every task you assign should come with a clear due date. Procrastinators need a strict and bold structure to stay organized, motivated, and focused.

Set Up Weekly or Daily Meetings

Use weekly or daily meetings as a way to remind your employees what you expect from them. Be encouraging and make sure your employees know you are only trying to help and encourage them to be better. Keep in mind that meetings full of judgment and harsh discipline will have the opposite effect.

Private meetings help you to get to know your employees to unlock other possibilities of why they are procrastinating that you may not know about. It could be a co-worker, other office politics, or even personal responsibilities at home that are affecting them, and a simple talk with you may help alleviate their pain or worries.

Be Mindful of When and How Much Work You Assign

Avoid making your employees multitask wherever possible. Procrastinators won't put in the attention to detail required to get it done. Also, be mindful of when and where you assign the work. Keep it consistent. Only assign work through email or during a meeting, for example.

Be Direct and Concise on All Communication

Make sure all communication is clear and to the point. If you assign work, make sure each employee knows exactly what is required of them, the time it's due, and other information you want them to know. Many employees procrastinate because they weren't given enough information in the first place to start it.

In the end, remember that procrastinating at some point is expected. Be patient and don't expect perfection.

Procrastination at work can lead to many problems. In our next email, we'll look more closely at this topic.

Email 8

Subject: Examples of problems caused by procrastination at work

Dear [Name],

Week after week, you just barely get your assignments in on time, with an assignment only late by an hour or two, which doesn't affect much – or so you think. Your boss and co-workers notice it more than you think, though, and it can eventually lead to more problems.

The following are a few problems caused by your procrastination at work:

Poor Quality Work

Procrastination can lead to a lack of attention to detail. The possibilities of rushing to finish your work or having anxiety due to work being submitted past its deadline can easily leave room for mistakes.

Missed Deadlines and Meetings

When you leave for work at the last minute, it means all other priorities are likely pushed to the side, leading to a missed meeting or turning in assignments late.

Poor Reputation

Showing up to meetings late, submitting deadlines in barely on time or not at all, and generally always working up until the last minute is noticeable to your boss and the office. It shows a lack of teamwork, dedication, and care for those you work with and on your team.

Over time, your co-workers will complain and not want to work with you or value your input altogether. If your boss and co-workers have a poor opinion of you, it's likely others outside of the company will notice too, which can negatively affect the company as a whole.

Poor Teamwork or Contribution to Responsibilities

In order to work on a team effectively, you must be reliable and open to communication at all times. Those who procrastinate do not have an open or reliable schedule to work with. You can't trust that they will have time to get the work in when they say they will. You certainly can't rely on procrastinators to help with last-minute assignments or emergencies.

All these reasons won't lead to a promotion at work or a lifelong career. If you find yourself always rushing last minute to turn your work in on time or continuously turn in an assignment late, you need to solve the problem before it is too late. It can negatively affect your career and prevent growth, while also harming your personal relationships and health.

So, how can you get support if you are a procrastinator? In our next email, we'll give some tips on effective ways to ask for help.

Email 9

Subject: Effective ways to ask for help with procrastination problems

Dear [Name],

Learning how to ask and reach out for help is a difficult task for many, especially in a world full of sharing funny memes about how they hate people and just want to stay home and procrastinate more. However, the reality isn't so bleak. People thrive on human interaction and actually enjoy helping more than you may think.

Here are three practical ways to ask for help with procrastination problems.

Reach Out to Friends and Family for Support

Your friends, family, and partner have likely felt or dealt with the consequences resulting from you procrastinating. Express to friends and family often that you care about them and apologize for any wrongdoings first. Ensure they know you never meant to cause pain or harm.

Ask Your Boss or Team for Assistance

Be honest, transparent, and open with your team if you realize procrastination is causing problems. Everyone needs time to work on themselves and improve. Let them know that you are working on it the best you can but would like some input on how you can help even more on the team.

Scheduling a one-on-one meeting with your boss or manager is another must if you want to save your career. Your actions let them know just how much you want to be different and truly care about the work.

Ask for hard deadlines and more responsibilities to challenge yourself and prove that you want to do better. More assignments and more deadlines can be motivating to get you back on the right track.

After you apologize, let them know that you want to improve and would like support and advice. Allow a moment for them to make suggestions and pinpoint problem areas without judgment or getting offended. Merely opening up and being honest about your problems can go a long way in improving them.

Schedule an Appointment with a Therapist

If your relationships, career, and health are severely affected, it's always a good idea to ask for help from a therapist. They are trained to work with just about any type of person, including those who suffer from procrastination. They will help break down procrastination and the possible problems causing it, and teach you more ways to analyze and cope with each situation better.

In the end, it's important to remember never to be ashamed of who you are. It's okay to be who you are but find ways to improve. Never be afraid to ask for help.

Is procrastination ever a positive thing? We'll discuss this in our next email.

Email 10

Subject: Can procrastination at work be a positive thing?

Dear [Name],

You hear it all the time: procrastination is harmful, and you must stop before you ruin your relationships and destroy your career. However, procrastinating isn't that straightforward. There are many reasons why it happens, and one of these could be a blessing in disguise.

Procrastination at work can be a positive thing, and here is how:

Identifies Your True Passions

When procrastination strikes, it becomes pretty apparent when you don't enjoy doing something. You reach out and hold on to just about anything else that keeps you happy. This can help you identify your true passions and even find a job and career to which you are better suited.

Boost Your Creativity and Decision-Making Skills

Having to do last-minute work challenges your brain to develop better ways to get jobs done. If you had started the assignment earlier, you may have never discovered the hack to finish it faster. Instead of working harder, you end up working smarter due to less available time and resources.

Identify Common Issues at Work

Oftentimes, procrastination is a direct result of something else, especially in the office. It can be due to poor teamwork, lack of skills or education, or missing materials and directions. Poor relationships with upper management or fear of looking stupid or inadequate could be the culprit too. You want to work in an office that boosts creativity, morality, and teamwork – not one that degrades and make you feel less than.

Eliminates Unnecessary Tasks

When you procrastinate, something else has to give. If you can easily avoid doing a task because something else is more important, it's likely not worth doing in the first place.

Boosts Productivity

This may sound a little counter-intuitive; however, most procrastinators are not as lazy as society would like you to think. In fact, they are hard workers, care about their work, and are always working. Avoiding more significant tasks means getting others done with and out of the way first. And once they tackle these, they get the most important tasks done as fast as possible.

As you can see, procrastinating at work isn't always a bad thing. There is always a silver lining as long as you are paying attention to the details.