

# 10 Scientifically Proven Tips for Beating Procrastination



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Contributor

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Here are ten tips for overcoming that daunting task you've been avoiding, based on science:

### **1. Pick Your Poison.**

The key to beating procrastination is focus. We often give ourselves too many things to do and become overwhelmed. Start by choosing just ONE thing that you've been procrastinating and make a commitment to complete that task in the next week.

### **2. Start today.**

Once you've narrowed it down to one task, you must take immediate action. Today. If it feels daunting or you don't think you have enough time to complete the task, do the **Fifteen Minute Miracle** below.

### **3. Fifteen Minute Miracle.**

This is one of the best techniques for people who struggle with procrastination. The Fifteen Minute Miracle involves asking yourself; "Hmm, what action can I take in less than fifteen minutes TODAY that moves this forward even the tiniest bit?" Once you've identified a small action, set a

timer for fifteen minutes and spend fifteen minutes working on the task. Research shows that once you start something, you're much more likely to finish it. This is due to a psychological phenomenon called the [Zeigarnik effect](#), which says that unfinished tasks are more likely to get stuck in your memory. (This is also why our mind gets stuck in a loop thinking about all the things we haven't yet completed.) Remember: Small action is still action. Fifteen minutes can make all the difference.

#### **4. Do a Power Hour.**

A Power Hour consists of putting away all distractions and working in concentrated chunks of time (to begin with I suggest no more than twenty minute intervals) followed by short periods of rest, in order to harness the optimal performance of your brain and body.

Science has discovered that our brain naturally goes through cycles with peaks and valleys. To maximize your output, it is vital that you honor these peaks and valleys by balancing concentrated, focused time with relaxation and integration.

## **5. Kill It With Kindness.**

Research shows that the more you can forgive yourself for past procrastination, the more likely you are to overcome your current procrastination and take action. Practice **self-compassion** when thinking of your past experience procrastinating.

## **6. Have a Procrastination Power Song.**

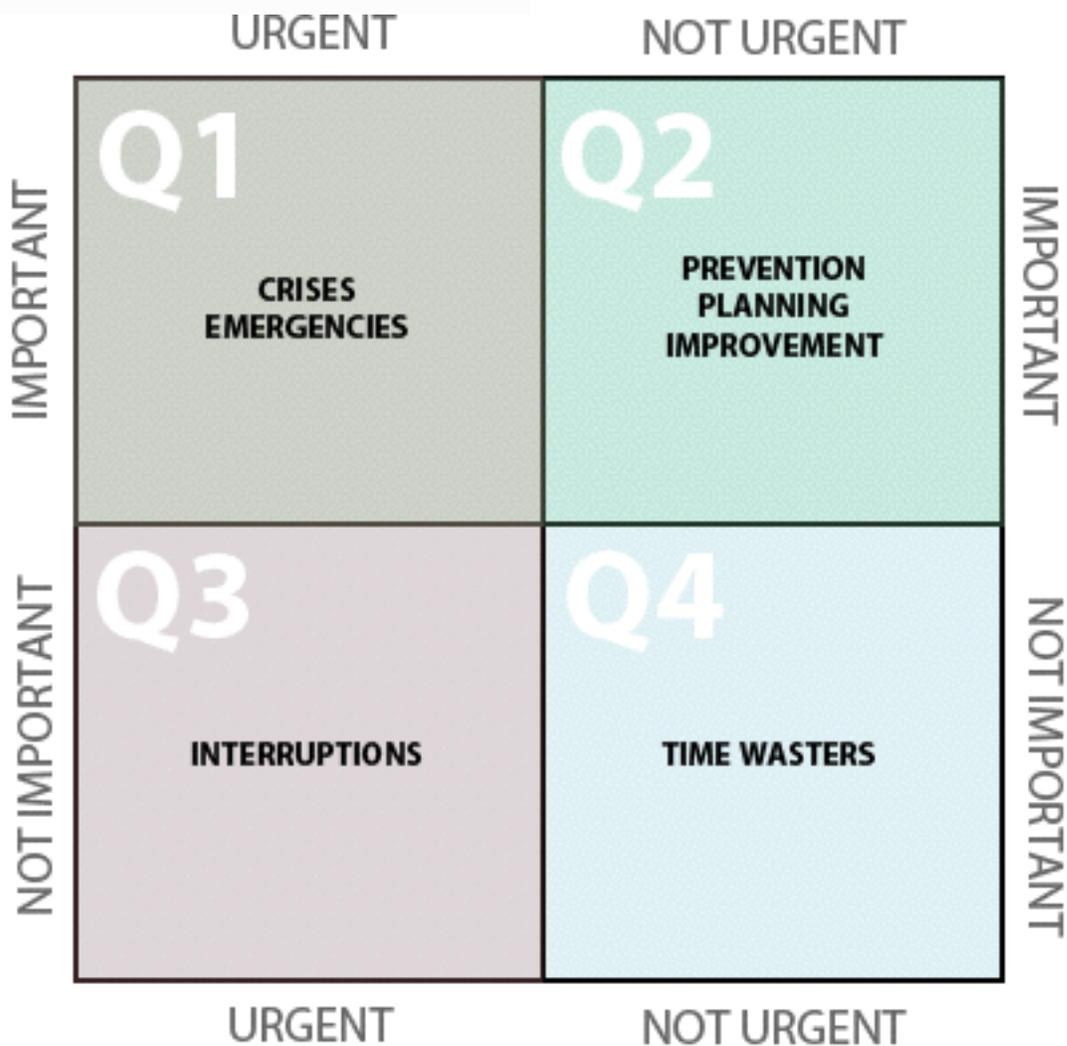
Pick a song that really gets you energized, and play it whenever you want to tackle something you've been procrastinating. The brain likes to have a trigger to create a new habit, plus you're more likely to follow through when you're feeling good in your body.

## **7. Get under the hood.**

Sometimes, it can be helpful to understand exactly *why* you've been procrastinating a specific task. Are you afraid of something? Maybe you feel overwhelmed and don't know where to start. Fill in the sentence; "I'm avoiding this task because..." or "I'm avoiding this task

because I'm afraid that..." And see what shows up. Identifying your fears can help you realize the monsters in the closet aren't as bad as you think.

## 8. Put First Things First



Many people believe that the activities presented in the first quadrant, the ones that are urgent and important should have our primary focus during the day.

But it's the second quadrant, the activities that are important, but not critical, that you need to take care of.

These are usually preventive activities, small steps that you need to take day by day to achieve your personal development goals or to prevent something terrible from happening. If you want to be healthy, you need to eat right and exercise regularly.

Otherwise, illness or obesity will appear as emergencies in quadrant 1. **Put First Things First.**

## **9. Make a bet.**

It can be very helpful to have an accountability buddy. One fun way to take this a step further is to have a bet with your buddy. Choose a day and time within the next week that you will complete this task and then tell your friend or colleague; "I'll give you \$10 / take you out to lunch / buy you coffee / watch that awful movie you've been wanting to see / etc. if I haven't completed this task by next Wednesday at 10:00am." Give your accountability buddy a

date and time within the next week and tell them in order to redeem the agreed upon prize, they must check in with you at that appointed day and time. If you haven't completed your task by then...you owe them whatever you bet!

### **10. Make it fun.**

Another way to motivate yourself to complete a task is to create a reward that you will give yourself once it's been completed. What can you treat yourself to once you've finished this task? [Research shows](#) the human brain responds to reward stimulus and this can be a good way to create habits.

*I am an entrepreneur, author, empowerment and motivational speaker, founder of Janice Albokai Driven To Success - Unlock Your Brain Transform Your Mind a company that supports people in creating fulfilling lives aligned with their passions, spiritual gifts and values.*

*More*

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