

The Waiting Game

The temptation to postpone tasks we are not eager to take on is easy enough to yield to because there is always something of equal or greater importance that can make a claim on our time and energy. The discipline required to make the time and muster the energy for the tasks that seem to us less certain or less rewarding is significant. Yet, in many cases we also place our own ideas and dreams on the backburner, unable to gather the emotional courage and wherewithal to take on the challenge.

Do you have a great business idea that you have been planning to implement but for some strange reason you just can't seem to get to it? Are you procrastinating in the forward-moving tasks you have identified and aren't sure why? Are you playing the waiting game and can't even explain it? Like most inexplicable behaviors, being able to explain it is the first step in overcoming the challenges. This article is all about why we procrastinate and what we can do about it.

Tudog believes the procrastinating is due to one (or a combination) of 5 issues. They are:

1. We Want Steak But Can Only Afford Hamburger

Sometimes when we lack sufficient resources to execute an idea the way we envision it (on a large scale) we feel overwhelmed and unable to establish a plan of action that meets our current resources. The "hamburger" is too much of a letdown after we got so excited over the "steak".

What can we do about it? We can realize that hamburger is grounded steak and better to have grounded steak than no steak at all. We need to learn to scale down our ambitions to match the options we currently have, using alternative tactics to get ourselves started, so that when the resources become available we are able and ready to execute in a more ambitious manner. The idea of waiting until the right set of resources become available needs to be unacceptable. Once it is, you'll be surprised how many creative ways you'll come up with to get your idea started with the resources you already have.

2. You Can't Stop Planning

Maybe it's because you're a perfectionist, or maybe it's because you just don't think you've got it quite right just yet. In any case, you can't seem to move from the planning stage to the implementation phase. Tudog believes in extensive research and planning before entering the market. This having been said, there comes a time when you are not learning anything new and are instead losing valuable in-market time by waiting to learn just a little bit more.

What can we do about it? We can recognize when we are ready to enter the market by identifying ahead of time the sets of information needed to establish an effective strategy and then, once that information is secured, move on to strategy formation, tactical deployment, and finally execution. We need to recognize when the information we are gathering is similar to information we already have, meaning that we are simply duplicating effort and postponing entering the market. There comes a time when we

need to stop planning and test the plan we created. The safety valve is the ability to measure performance and adjust the plan as we implement.

3. You Don't Know If You Really Believe

So you came up with this idea that you thought was really great. You shared it with a few of your friends, maybe some family members and the results were decidedly mixed. You started out with tremendous enthusiasm and great faith that you had a real winner. Now some people have thrown some water on your fire and you're not sure what to think. On one hand you still think you have a good idea, but now you're not sure how much you really believe.

So what can we do about it? First of all, you need to be more like the Marlins during the home stretch of their fairy tale season...you have to believe. How do you get the faith back? You need to review your concept, extract the constructive criticism from the feedback you got, and reconstruct your concept so that you have a new and improved model. There is no way you can go from hot to cold, you can only go from hot (certain) to lukewarm (intimidated by the statements of others) to either back to hot or to cold. It is during the "lukewarm" stage that you have the chance to regain your momentum. If you want it bad enough, that's exactly what you'll do.

4. You Don't Know What to Do Next

Sometimes we get to the point in a project where we have conceived of the product/service, we have completed our research, and perhaps we even have our business plan completed. Now we need to bring it from the theoretical to reality and we are not only a bit intimidated, but we also don't really know how. So in the light of not knowing the next step, we simply wait.

What can we do about it? We can take a number of practical steps that will move the project forward. First, we can seek to bring in a professional or a partner that will bring the knowledge and expertise we need to continue and progress. We can also seek the knowledge through an outsourced professional or classes and courses that will teach us what we need to know. What is certain is that it is not going to get done if left to you alone, not because you are not competent and smart – you are or you would not be at the stage you are – but because you do not have the specific skill sets the project now requires. It is essential that you stop waiting and go get the assistance you need.

5. You Can't Get Organized

The more advanced your project is the more there will be to do. Sometimes we get overwhelmed by the sheer volume of tasks we have before us, and unable to get organized, we simply stop performing.

What can you do? You can get organized. Even though it sounds a bit sarcastic, this is the answer. You need to take a day or so (or week or so) and get organized. Create the folders you need, set up the systems you require, and establish the work processes that will maintain the order you are creating. Then adopt work habits that support good organization like "to do" lists and filing systems.

The idea of waiting to get something done is a damaging fall back position we often slip into because we can't bring ourselves to overcome certain challenges that prevent us from moving forward. Meanwhile, while we wait, the world goes on and some other, less overwhelmed entrepreneur is busy implementing the idea that will make ours obsolete. The trick is to discover the cause behind our inclination to procrastinate and overcome it, move forward, and succeed.