

pro-cras-ti-na-tion | prəˌkrastəˈnāʃən, prō- |

noun

the action of ruining your own life for no apparent reason

Just do it.

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Write every day

Write daily (Boice)

Number 1 reason academic writers aren't successful is they simply don't show up to write.

“I am just too “busy” with other things!”

Number 2 is that they don't have a plan.

“Hmm, I don't know what to write, so I'll do x instead...”

Number 3 is that they don't follow through.

“I put 2 hours of writing time in my calendar today. Before I get started I'll just...”

I can't write daily because...

I need to be in the 'mood'

I can't just schedule in creativity/brilliance

I can't be a good teacher and a good writer

I'm too busy!

Cognitive strategies

- Recognize that writing often = thinking
 - It's ok to take time
- Talk about your research
- Write bits that eventually form a draft
- Write lots of drafts (begin with terrible ones)
- Get feedback (choose carefully)

Cognitive techniques

- **Break down the task into smaller pieces**
- Concept mapping for ideas
- Sketching
- Freewriting
- Delay editing until the next day

Emotional strategies

- Anxiety is a huge part of writing avoidance
- Awareness, self-reflection
- Watching self-criticism
- Avoid harsh criticism in early drafts
- Find support
- Recognise stages of the writing journey

Action strategies

- Notice what makes you avoid writing or what makes up get up when you are writing
- Notice your best working times/places
- How do deadlines work for you?
- Track how your time is spent in a day
- Use small chunks of time productively

Action techniques

- Set up your writing 'space'
 - Develop rituals
 - Play music
 - Boice's contingency – reward yourself
-
- 15 min a day
 - words/day



Pomodoro

- Work 25/break 10
– [10/2]
- e.ggtimer.com

Avoid external distractions

- Most common distractions?
- Cell phone and text messages
- Email
- Internet surfing
- Facebook
- Online shopping
- Family /kids

SMART goals

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time bound

Specific

- Break down into tinier and tinier tasks
 - Avoidance often a sign task is not tiny enough
- Not specific goal: Write the introduction.
- Specific goal: Write the section of the introduction that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.

Measurable

- How will you know when you have met goal?
 - # pages/words?
- Not measurable goal: Write a section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.
- Measurable goal: Write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.

Attainable

- How am I going to achieve this goal?
- Not attainable goal: Using my classroom observations, write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.
- Attainable goal: Gather studies on childhood obesity to prepare to write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.

Relevant

- Don't get sidetracked...
- Not relevant goal: Gather studies on childhood obesity and create an annotated bibliography of findings to prepare to write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks
- Relevant goal: Gather studies on childhood obesity and create a table of the links between obesity and sugar consumption to prepare to write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks

Time bound

- Deadlines
 - Requires long-term planning (work backwards)
- Not a time-bound goal: Write the section of the introduction that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.
- Time-bound goal: Schedule two hours a day for 10 days to gather studies on childhood obesity, create a table of the links between obesity and sugar consumption, and write a 10-page section that links childhood obesity to the consumption of sugary drinks.

Resources

AMAZING post on procrastination

<http://waitbutwhy.com/2013/10/why-procrastinators-procrastinate.html>

9 steps to becoming a productive academic writer

<http://www.academiccoachingandwriting.org/academic-writing/academic-writing-blog/i-nurture-a-daily-writing-habit/>

Badenhorst, C. (2010). *Productive writing: Becoming a prolific academic writer*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. [googleable]