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Lane Gorman Trubitt, L.L.P.
Accountants & Advisors

Your Accounting for a New Economy

Slaying the Dragon of Procrastination

Procrastination is one of the most fearsome dragons we're asked to slay as we make our way down the long, twisting path of our professional careers. We've all heard the stories of gallant knights who have fallen victim to procrastination's fire-breathing jaws courtesy of shortened attention spans. Or the would-be heroes crushed beneath the pressures and stress of procrastination's perilous tail due to a refusal to take action.

Many a brave soul tries to escape the creature's career-hindering grasp, but the simple truth is we are all susceptible to procrastination's seductive allure. Everyone, from the most driven CEO of a Fortune 500 company to the school child with his or her first homework assignment, has been tempted to utter the phrase, "I'll do it tomorrow." However, the most successful of us remember another famous phrase credited to Thomas Jefferson, "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today."

In an effort to help in your task to vanquish the fierce beast, we've assembled five tips that will hone your skill and guide you on your worthy quest.

1. Divide and Conquer

One of the threats that can wake the procrastination dragon from its slumber is the perception that a task is either overwhelming or too difficult and complex for you to handle. Part of every hero's journey is to question one's self. The important thing to remember is that the illusion of a task's overwhelming nature is formed solely by your perception, not necessarily reality. Dividing a larger, complex task into smaller, manageable pieces makes what first appeared to be an insurmountable challenge into a simple, easy to conquer, 'To do' list.

2. **Prove Thy Worth**

The bravest knights have always proven themselves by accomplishing the most difficult and least desirable tasks first. By tackling these difficult objectives up front, they built up their confidence and made the remainder of their journey as easy as possible. Once the most difficult part of an assignment is out of the way, the less likely you are to put off what remains.

3. **Claim the Dragon's Treasure**

The best part about slaying the dragon named procrastination, is the treasure it was guarding. Be sure, to partake of the riches. Reward yourself for overcoming the beast and accomplishing your duties despite the creature's maniacal efforts. Allow yourself small rewards for the completion of difficult tasks, such as a walk, some candy or a nice cup of coffee. With a worthy prize as your goal you will find yourself striving to complete more tasks so that you may enjoy the next reward.

4. **Observe the Ten-Minute Rule**

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Often the most difficult part of completing an undesirable quest is simply getting started. Promising yourself that you will only work on a task for ten minutes rather than trying to complete it all at once, will motivate you to begin, and once you do, you may discover that you've accomplished more than you thought you would and find that you're motivated to work on it even longer than you had originally anticipated, once again defeating the dragon of procrastination.

5. **Finish One Journey by Planning the Next**

At the end of each day, make a list of the tasks you hope to accomplish tomorrow. By preparing yourself for battle and scheduling out the day that follows you will find that you are more prepared mentally and physically tackle the tasks at hand and ensure you've set aside the time to complete those tasks that you've been putting off. Setting a schedule and sticking to it, will help you slay the procrastination dragon and wrap up those duties you've been avoiding.

The evil dragon, procrastination, has claimed many a brave warrior on their path to career success, but by honing your skill and taking these simple tips to heart you will be able to slay the mighty beast, reap your well-deserved rewards prove yourself a gallant knight of the business realm.