TO PROCRASTINATE OR NOT?

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Procrastinating is as ancient as our predecessors. In fact human beings have been procrastinating for centuries. The problem is so perpetual, that ancient Greek philosophers like Socrates and Aristotle developed a word to describe this type of behavior: Akrasia.

Akrasia is defined as the state of acting against your better judgment. It is when you intentionally avoid doing something that needs to be done or you are doing one thing even though you know that you need to do something else. Plainly translated, we could say that akrasia is procrastination or a lack of self-control. Historically, “procrastination” is derived from the Latin verb procrastinare — combining the prefix pro- “forward” with crastinus “of tomorrow” — hence, to put off something until tomorrow. But it’s more than just voluntarily delaying, it is avoiding the task at hand.

Procrastination is everywhere, you can see it almost anywhere you go. But I will focus on procrastination in the workplace. Every workplace has a unique dynamics, mainly because it is a place where different types of people meet and interact every working day. In a workplace you can see and encounter different types of personalities, different values, different ethical standards and that is completely normal. Researchers say that one in five people has chronic procrastination. With that being said, no workplace will be considered a non-procrastinating zone.

Everyone is affected by procrastination in some form or another because it sets out negative energy. But why does it happen? The truth is, procrastination is a complex behavior with many possible causes, which include but are not limited to laziness,
external stress, lack of motivation or discipline, boredom, insecurity, frustration, self-doubt, low self-esteem, poor time management techniques, lack of skill, and even perfectionism. Procrastination is the avoidance of an important task that requires immediate attention. Delaying, postponing or putting it off is often the cause of many problems in an organization. The effects of procrastination is difficult to measure but surely makes a negative impact. Procrastination often becomes chronic and paralyzing and has a huge impact on people’s productivity levels.

So how can we stop procrastination? Honestly there is no fool-proof strategy, because procrastination is not only an unhealthy habit it is a complex behavior that requires psychological therapy to bring the employee around to a path of managing their time, and their lives, therefore bringing this behavior under control. If we can at least lessen procrastination it will result in more productive employees and more quality of work done. So let me end this by the saying “Don’t put off until tomorrow what can and should be done today.

References:

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