

Conquer Procrastination

www.craigkitch.com

I have a rather large deck on the back of my house. It measures over 1,000 square feet, is two stories high and presents quite a challenge when the time comes to clean, prep and waterproof it. In fact, it is such a daunting and unpleasant task that I managed to effectively put it off for months.

I knew in the spring that if I did not tend to it soon, I would be facing rather large repair bills in the not so distant future. Even so, I continued to keep the chore on *tomorrows* To-Do List. When the weather turned cold, my remorse and anxiety over the issue grew dramatically; realizing that the possibility of three days of warm weather (to allow the treatment to properly cure) in autumn was not likely. When the forecast turned warm again, with no rain in sight, I broke through my procrastination barrier and began the project.

Recognizing that I could only afford one day off work this week, I completed most of the prep and cleaning work over the weekend and set my sights on the waterproofing project for Monday. Getting an early start that morning would allow me to finish well before dark. I rented a professional-grade paint sprayer and was confident in my ability to move quickly. This was going to be a snap.

The first hitch came when I was reminded of an important meeting at my office Monday morning; it had totally slipped my mind. “Oh well, this won’t take long”, I told myself as I headed for the meeting. I ended up staying in the office about half an hour longer than I had intended and then decided to pick up some additional waterproofing (just in case) while I was in town.

Well, as you might expect, one thing led to another. The paint sprayer had not been properly cleaned by the last person using it, so I spent a couple of hours working on the equipment before I could begin the project at hand. Then, when I finally had to reach for the extra waterproofing I had purchased, I learned that in my haste I had purchased the wrong product.

Back to town to switch it out! Now I was facing sunset and feeling highly pressured. The good news is that I finished just as the sun was setting. The bad news is that I endured much more stress than was necessary in taking care of a relatively simple, task.

The sad truth is that so many managers run their business the way I worked on my deck. A deck is only a deck; but your business is your livelihood. Some of the easiest things to put off are literally the most important aspects of your job.

Training and following up with staff, working on team building and helping employees lay out a plan to grow their own careers are the top priorities of a great manager, but they are also the easiest things to put off until later. Unfortunately, later never comes.