



Teamworks Talk

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*“Building a better
workplace”*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

I'll do it later...

The joy of procrastination

Rad Read: Book review on
The First 90 Days

Team Snippets: Vic and Craig

Our contacts

*“Only Robinson
Crusoe had
everything done by
Friday...”*

I'll do it later...

“I love deadlines – I like the whooshing sound they make as they fly by,” British writer Douglas Adams once said.

Adams, noted mainly for “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy” had spent 10 years working on his novel “The Salmon of Doubt” before he died in 2001, after not producing a complete first draft. Once, in desperation, Adams’s book editors had to trap him in a hotel suite for three weeks to get him to write a manuscript. When asked to write radio scripts, Adams recalled spending “six months taking baths and eating peanut butter sandwiches”.

Bruce Tuckman, renowned for his study of groups, and an educational psychologist at Ohio State University in Columbus, tracked 116 students over 216 activities and compared those who scored low on the procrastination scale to those with high scores. Tuckman discovered that those with low scores tended to do better academically than those who were higher on the procrastination scale.

Procrastination can be frustrating, particularly if you are on the receiving end. It also raises stress levels unnecessarily. However, is procrastination always a bad thing? Is someone who chooses the most urgent tasks or priorities for the day and leaves the inconsequential tasks for later a procrastinator? Maybe, but does it matter? As a student, homework was always there, no matter what we did. As a parent, the cleaning and ironing is always there, whether we play with our children or not. Finally, as an employee, our tedious tasks will always be there, whether we choose to concentrate on our team priorities or not.

Procrastinators often get secondary tasks done and accomplish many things, perhaps not in the order that others expect them, but they do get things done. And they enjoy the ride.

By Joanne Grey ©

See Teamworks associate Vic Hewson’s comments on Page 2 for a refreshing look at the joy of procrastination.

The Joy of Procrastination

“Procrastinators have a well-developed sense of delayed gratification”

It seems as if procrastination has been captured by the politically correct movement and has been positioned as being undesirable. Procrastinators are really just people who have a **well-developed** "delayed gratification" ability. The ability of children to exercise delayed gratification has been found to be a reliable predictor of success in later life. I expect to be incredibly successful in my later life as I am really good at procrastination, enjoy procrastination and know that there are real benefits in being a great procrastinator.

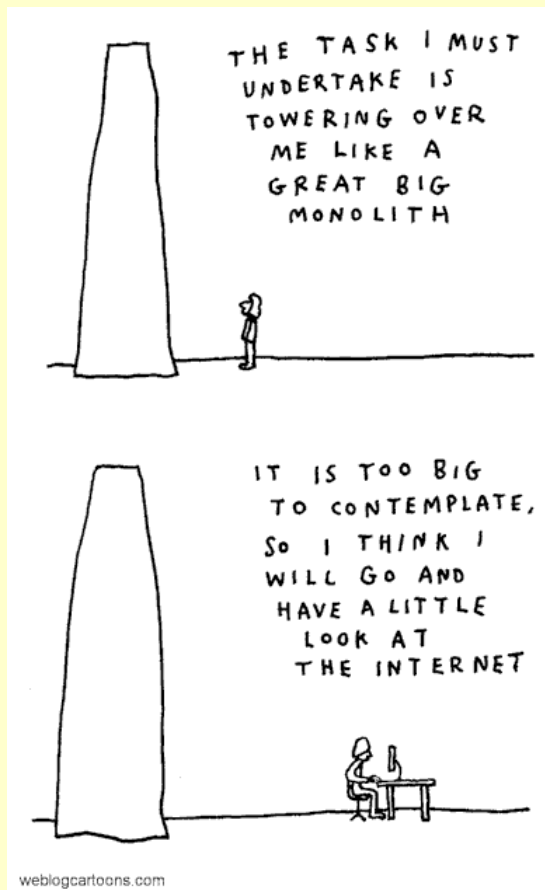
Here are just a few of the benefits:

- greater enjoyment of the journey;
- less guilt about "stuff" out there in the future;
- able to enjoy what I want RIGHT NOW;
- make love when you want to.

By Vic Hewson ©

Take our poll at www.teamworkspacific.com.au/poll/recession on procrastination.

*Procrastination is something best put off until tomorrow –
Gerald Vaughn*





Rad read: The First 90 Days by Michael Watkins

Harvard Business School Press, 2003

If you've ever moved into a new leadership role, you'll know that the learning curve is usually steep, and the process of climbing it sometimes daunting. Here's a book, aptly subtitled "Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders At All Levels", that offers excellent insights and ideas to accelerate success and avoid the pitfalls in the first 90 days.



Author Michael Watkins, an Associate Professor at Harvard Business School, initially lays out a well thought out framework to address the challenges facing anyone in a new leadership role. He then proceeds, writing with both warmth and authority, to guide the reader through each aspect of the framework, providing case studies, checklists and self-reflection questions along the way. The chapter titles give you an idea of the territory: "Secure Early Wins"; "Accelerate Your Learning"; and "Create Coalitions" are just some of the areas he covers.

I was particularly impressed with Watkins' emphasis on getting the balance right between *learning* and *doing*. In my experience, many leaders focus on doing "lots of stuff" in their first 90 days, usually under self-imposed pressure to prove their worth, without building in the time to observe their new environment, and to reflect on what they are learning. In such cases the intrepid leader inevitably experiences many false starts. This book underscores the importance of building a learning agenda and plan as part of the strategy.

While this book is designed for those embarking upon a new leadership role, it can also easily serve as a useful guide to *any* leader who wants to lead change in their organisation.

by Digby Scott©

"A useful guide to any leader"

Team Snippets



Craig Leith is running a new workshop aptly entitled "[Leading in a recession](#)". Recent research has shown that the development of an organisation's workforce is top priority when faced with a recession. This exciting, new workshop takes place in Brisbane on **19 November** and in Wellington on **27 November**. To book your place, or to find out more about "Leading in a recession" follow this link to our website:

http://www.teamworkspacific.com.au/what/leading_in_a_recession



Vic Hewson has recently returned from the UK after attending a conference called "Dealing with conflict, confrontation and disputes." Vic has some excellent new ideas that will be implemented in workshops, based on "The Conflict Template."

New workshop:
"[Leading in a recession](#)"
to run in
November

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