

The On-Time, On-Target Manager™

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Introduction

This book may not apply to you at all. But chances are, it applies to someone you know. A coworker. A direct report. Your boss. Possibly even your spouse or one of your kids.

This book is about a diabolical career killer that is lurking out there every day. In fact, it's far worse than a career killer. It destroys organizations, marriages, families, relationships, fortunes ... even entire lives.

It's called "procrastination." In just five letters, it's known as "delay." It's when you put off doing something until later. But, as we said, this may not apply to you.

The rest of us, though, have battled with this insidious enemy at one time or another. When we were in high school or college, we waited until the last minute to write an important paper or study for a final exam. Then we stayed up all night to do our duty—and we barely functioned the next day.

On the job, we sometimes even miss important deadlines as the result of procrastination. Or we accomplish all of the meaningless tasks before we get to the important things.

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In our homes, we're often too busy or too tired to read stories to our children. "It won't hurt anything if I wait until a better time," we tell ourselves. Then, when they're in college, we wonder why the "better time" never materialized.

We rationalize, justify, and explain. As a result, our jobs, spouses, children, and health all suffer. All because we "put it off" or do the "leastest" first and the most important last—if at all.

Although this may not apply to you, you should be aware that procrastination is far more universal than you might imagine, it isn't a condition that pops up out of the blue, either. It has roots that run deep and must be understood.

People often procrastinate because they don't have a clear picture of what's important. And knowing what's important involves where they've been, where they are now, and where they are headed.

They procrastinate because they don't understand that delaying action can lead to poor decisions and poor performance—and separate them from good results.

They procrastinate because, while they are interested in getting certain things done, they lack a commitment to broader goals, higher ideals, more important tasks, and other people. There is an enormous difference between being interested in something and being committed to it.

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Consider the matter of exercise. Interested people will make all sorts of excuses as to why “today” isn’t the right day to work out. “I’m tired, it’s raining, I have too much going on in my life fight now, missing one day (or week or month) won’t hurt.” In contrast, the committed people don’t know about excuses: they only know about results. “This is something I’m going to do for myself. If it’s too hot or it’s raining, I’ll do a speed-walk in a shopping mall.”

It all comes down to three concise issues:

- Lateness,
- poor-quality work, and
- the stress that results from procrastination.

That’s the problem in a nutshell.

The solution is found in the pages of this book—in the story of “Bob the Manager,” who discovered the Three P Strategy and gained victory over procrastination to become on-time and on-target in every area of his life.

The first “P” helped Bob conquer lateness.

The second “P” gave him the keys to improved quality.

The third “P” helped him reduce stress for himself and his coworkers.

Right now, you might be thinking of a person—or several people—who could benefit from our message. But the question is, how do you give this book to people without offending them?

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Our answer is very straightforward. You explain that while they may not be procrastinators, *The On-Time, On-Target Manager* offers a strategy that will make them more effective in every area of pursuit. Tell them, “The Three P Strategy even worked for the two guys who wrote the book.” Yes, we are both natural born procrastinators, we have applied these simple techniques in our own daily lives, and they have made a difference.

This statement is obviously true. After all, we actually finished writing this book and even delivered the manuscript to our publisher on time!

Do yourself (if you're a procrastinator) and the special people in your life a favor—share the powerful message of *The On-Time, On-Target Manager*.

—Ken Blanchard and Steve Gottry