



Making It Easier to Achieve Goals or Meet Deadlines

"I never put off till tomorrow what I can do the day after." – OSCAR WILDE

by [Andrew Cooke](#), [Blue Sky GPS \(Growth & Profit Solutions\)](#)

How often have you found yourself in a state of anxiety rapidly approaching a deadline or goal that needs to be achieved? Most people have been in this state, some seem to live in this state on a perpetual basis.

There are two ways you can deal with a goal or deadline. You can start early and small, or late and big. 'Early and small' means you start at the earliest possible time with the minimum possible investment of time; 'large and big' occurs when you start at the last minute and invest a disproportionately large amount of efforts and resources – think of when you were at college and pulled an all-nighter to get an assignment in on time.

In research carried out by Dan Ariely, a leading behavioural economist, students who were starting a class, were told they would have to submit three papers over the twelve-week semester. The deadlines for when these papers were due were to be determined by the individual students themselves, however they had to be in before the end of the semester. However, the students had to commit to their deadline for each paper and these could not be changed. Any deadline that was missed would be penalized at the rate of one percent off the grade for each day it was late.

Now a perfectly rational student would set all the deadlines for the last day of class. But what if the students procrastinated? What if they knew that they were likely to fail? If the students were not rational and knew it, then they might set early deadlines and by doing so force themselves to start working on the projects earlier in the semester.

The majority of students committed to earlier deadlines, and the research found that this ability to commit resulted in higher grades. More generally, it seems that simply providing students a tool by which they could pre-commit publically to deadlines helped them achieve their goals.



So what does it mean for you if you are looking to achieve a goal or meet a deadline?

There are two things you can do:

1. *Make a public commitment* as to when you will achieve the goal or meet the deadline before it is due.
2. *Make a start now* – take your goal or deadline and ask yourself “*What is the minimal amount I could do right now to prepare?*” Whatever your goal or deadline start now, just spend five minutes and put down your ideas. This will help you to get ahead and to meet your goals and deadlines.

Try this for yourself and share it with your colleagues and team. Just doing something small can help you realize goals and meet deadlines without having to resort to being rushed.

About Andrew Cooke

Andrew Cooke is known for his work with executives, managers and teams in helping them to grow, develop and achieve results. Using a blend of consulting, facilitation and coaching he is noted for his ability in “bringing people potential to life”. Andrew takes the time to understand and assist successful business executives in creating a customized plan that allows them grow and develop their leadership effectiveness. In doing this he guides executives to manage, direct and make change work for them and their stakeholders and teams in an increasing volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous business environment. From this he helps others to become more successful in both what they do and how they do it.

Andrew demonstrates a proactive attitude and empathy that blends enthusiasm, energy and a pragmatic approach in engaging leaders and their stakeholders. He has over thirty years of international business experience and insights on which to draw, and has worked with blue-chip clients and other leading businesses across a range of industries. Andrew is passionate about helping others to be more successful personally and professionally

Qualifications & Accreditations

Andrew is an experienced international expert in executive coaching, leadership development and business consulting. He has qualifications, certifications and accreditations from recognized leading global organizations, including:



Blue Sky GPS
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"Bringing people potential to life"

- International executive coach with certifications for Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder Centered Coaching and Global Leader of the Future 360⁰ Assessment
- Masters of Business Administration (MBA), London Business School, UK
- Bachelor of Business BA (Hons), University of Plymouth (UK)
- Diploma from the Institute of Marketing (UK)
- Accredited DISC Facilitator & Coach