

A New Kind of Deadline

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If you're like many business people, then you have assorted deadlines you have to adhere to. Unfortunately for you, certain types of deadlines can kill creativity. It's time to change the way you think about deadlines. It's not about getting it done faster and squeaking it in at the very last minute, it's about getting it done better, more creatively, and on time.

It might interest you to know that longer, drawn out deadlines devoid of milestones kill creativity much more readily than shorter deadlines. A combination of brainstorming, milestones, and creating "versions" of ideas is the key to making your projects better and getting them done on time.

I'll never say deadlines should be completely abolished. When you're pressed up against a deadline, you're forced to come up with creative solutions to get the work done. You think in ways you never would have if you'd had the opportunity to fritter your time away.

It's turning something in for the sake of having "something" to turn in by a deadline that's the problem. It's not good enough to turn something in; it should be the very best version of that something.

Creativity experts suggest setting very tight deadlines for brainstorming ideas that seem almost impossible to achieve. Before time is up, several ideas should have been generated to solve the problem at hand. Then, when it really matters and it's time to get the project done, you'll have gone through several iterations of the solution. The result will be the best and most creative one. It's about turning it into a multi-step process instead of a single-step process.

Open your mind by starting to think of your deadlines in this way. It might take some practice, but it's well worth it. Put some pressure on yourself—

enough to make you uncomfortable. Make yourself brainstorm a variety of solutions to the problem or task at hand. This pressure will force you to think in ways you wouldn't have otherwise.

Stop Trying to Do It “Right”

If you're feeling really blocked creatively, despite looming deadlines, the cause is probably the fatigue in your mind and the sameness in your routine. Stop doing whatever it is you're trying to do. If it's just not working, and if you are so overwhelmed that you can't move forward, *it's time to stop*.

Realize and acknowledge that you are feeling frustrated. Take some time completely away from your work. Do something that will help you gather new sensory data-- something totally different from what you're used to doing. Be present in the moment, and give yourself permission to take a break to allow the good ideas to come to you.

This will become easier to do once you gain more experience in exercising your creativity. I've provided several helpful exercises and ideas throughout this book, but the basic idea is something anyone can do.

Take a break and allow your mind to recharge and solve the problem on its own—your subconscious will help you more than you know. In fact, that's part of the reason it's there. Save yourself time and frustration-- open yourself up to more creative ideas than your stressed out and overwhelmed brain can handle.

Part of this is about being mindful of what you're doing. You need to pay attention to all of your senses--sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. When you are mindful and present, and put aside anything that is frustrating you, you'll be much more likely to find creative solutions to the problems you face.

This Will Make You Happier

When you do this, you'll be a lot happier in life and in business. By being present and open to everything life offers, you'll start to become one of those "naturally creative" people you envy so much. Know that everything you do in your life has a purpose.

It is possible to be happily present and engaged in everything you do. Part of this is about not letting life pass you by. It's also about knowing that you are on the right path. There's no room for doubt and discomfort if everything you do has meaning.

You'll be much more productive if you're more motivated and in tune with the world around you. Feeling frustrated because you don't have any solutions to the problems at hand dashes your creativity. Find happiness and comfort in opening your mind to creativity.



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