

Beware of Parkinson's Law. Read these 5 tips, or sacrifice your time, reduce your productivity, and stress about deadlines for no reason at all:

Here's what I've noticed. Many people feel overwhelmed because of "Parkinson's law" - "Work will expand to fill the time allotted for its completion."

When's the last time you actually MISSED a deadline? Right? Never! Or rarely. The "full calendar" is so often just in your head - if the deadline was earlier, you'd be done earlier. You'd force yourself to focus. Now, the good news is once you realize this, you can start defeating Parkinson's law and freeing time for yourself. Here's how:

- 1. Think of how long the work takes instead of how long you have.**
 - a. It's so simple. But almost nobody does it.
 - b. Over time, you'll learn to judge better how long it actually will take.
 - c. And that's when all of your planning becomes so much easier!
- 2. Set self-imposed deadlines.**
 - a. Easy. But the tricky part is to learn to stick to them.
 - b. It's tempting to wait until the actual deadline is close.
 - c. But learning to respect your own deadlines is critical in learning to manage your time and work.
- 3. If you work in a large organization, establish no meeting days.**
 - a. Or even mornings.
 - b. It is essential to have time when your environment is in your control.
 - c. Learn to maximize your focus during these periods.
 - d. Experiment.
 - e. See what works for you.
- 4. Communicate with frequent status updates.**
 - a. Let's face it. It feels great to tell people you've made progress.
 - b. This is a good "drug" to get hooked on - getting things done!
 - c. Just make sure you don't get overloaded with new work right away just because "you're done."
- 5. Reward yourself generously when you finish well ahead of the deadline.**
 - a. Your brains will start to crave these rewards.
 - b. Anything can work, but make sure you really enjoy it!

Summary:

Parkinson's law makes you work on a task all the way until the deadline!

Fight back like a boss:

- Think of how long it takes, not how long you have
- Set yourself deadlines
- Establish focus time
- Communicate your progress
- Reward yourself when you finish early