3 Steps to Make Sure Your To Do Later Tasks Get Done

Do you always feel that you're forgetting something you need to do? Do too many things seem to slip through the cracks? Reduce the worry by making sure you plan time for the to do items you cannot get to today. It's empowering to have those items represented on your calendar so you know they won't be forgotten. That way you can focus on what needs to be done today.

To do later items include anything you don't need to do right away, or can't accomplish in the near term.

There are many tasks that don't require immediate attention. Keeping all of your to dos on one list is discouraging because it appears that your have more to do than you can handle. Capturing tasks you cannot do right away to a to do later schedule helps you remember to work on them in a timely manner. When you put items on the to do later list, it helps you to clear out future space and time so that you're not rushed to complete important tasks.

To do later items can be broken down into near-term and long-term tasks.

Near term items are those items to be done within a week. You can put them in a place where they become to do now items over the next several days. Long-term items can be scheduled by date. Put them on your calendar over time to make sure you meet your deadlines.

To do later items can include simple or complex tasks.

For complex tasks, you will need to plan adequate time for completion. For simple tasks, you might want to consider bunching them together to be more efficient. For example, you can schedule time to do less important emails at a later date.

Apply the Smead Organomics principles for "To Do Later" items.

You can put to do later items to work for you, if you follow these simple steps:

Separate

Decide which of your to do items belong on the later list. If you don't need to work on it today, it's a to do later item.

Schedule

Choose specific dates on which to do later items should become to do now items and put them onto your calendar - immediately. File the related materials where you can find them when it's time to do the work. Leaving these items on your desk because you don't want to forget is usually a formula for losing them all together.

Follow Up

Check your calendar often. Add any scheduled tasks to your to do now list. Set up reminders in your electronic calendar to remind you when the date arrives and action should be taken. Be sure to follow up on both your own tasks and those you have delegated to others.

Remember these principles as you plan your time. It's easier to relax when you know nothing's falling through the cracks.