



4 D Diagnostic Tool

Often times we feel overwhelmed with the continuously accumulating inventory of things to do. Doing something just “to get it off the todo list” – doesn’t always benefit us the most.

One of the effective ways to stay ontop of your abundant inventory is to visualize your overall vision, mission and goals. Once you have a clear Big Picture of what you want accomplish and why, then compare everything that crosses your path against your Big Picture goals and values. If your current activity isn’t aligned with your overall purpose, you are depleting your energy and passion.

Once you have your clear goals, run the 4D Diagnostics on those items; and review the REASON for the task versus just attacking the task. Sometimes there are great advantages to delaying something, combining it with something else, delegating it to someone else, or diminishing (scoping just the piece that you need to be involved in).

4D Summary:

Delay - sometimes delaying the tasks allow you to combine with something else down the line. This allows you to cover the essence or "the why you are doing this" -- allows you to accomplish the same goal in a different way. Example: You need to setup an appointment with a client for some painting service. You also know that you will be meeting a business partner on Tuesday to discuss new equipment. You decide setup your client (painting an entire apartment complex) "bid" meeting until after your business partner discussion. This delay allowed you to present your client with up-to-date information on color matching and "paint time to completion" based on the new equipment that you negotiated with your business client. You were also able to setup the "proposed start date" to coincide with the arrival of the new equipment.

Delete - sometimes delaying makes the task obsolete or irrelevant. You realize that it didn't really need to be done at all. Or the circumstances have changed. After the business meeting with your business partner, you've realized that this new technique will eliminate having to do an elaborate primer process. You now can provide a more accurate and reduced estimate for your big client's bid. This reduction got you the bid on the apartment complex.

Delegate - you may already handle delegation well. The dissecting into mini-tasks allows you to do that more efficiently and more frequently.

Diminish - is just a combination of all of the above. Focus on only the steps that support your goal. Diminish your scope or focus. Do only the steps that are critical to your goal "now". Delay the others, Delete the others, Delegate the others....



Diagnostics to run on each task:

What are your current Big Picture goals or mission for this particular aspect of your life?

Does this activity propel you forward on that path or does it stall you?

How can you split the task in more manageable pieces?

Once divided, which can I delete, delegate or delay?