The Way It Is:  
Procrastination has lost its fun

Everyone procrastinates, whether it is putting off that paper until the night before it’s due or thinking that you are going to be able to cram four or five chapters worth of material two hours before a test. As a result, procrastination is not a major problem for many, but for others, it is a chronic state that can and often does have serious consequences.

Rather than confronting things head-on, procrastinators find ways to waste time and continually create excuses to justify why nothing is getting done.

Gender or intelligence has nothing to do with procrastination, but age may. Recent studies have proven that procrastination peaks in the mid-twenties, decreases for the next 40 years and then increases again in the sixties.

Generally, those who often feel overwhelmed and unable to calm themselves are believed to be the largest group of procrastinators. This makes a lot of sense considering that as college students, all of us are constantly inundated with assignments and pressured deadlines. Procrastinators often experience feelings of anxiety, guilt and avoidance, which leads to wasted time, poor performance and missed opportunities.

The more things are put off the bigger and more difficult they will become. Procrastinators will literally create obstacles on which to blame their lack of productivity. They will always be “busy” talking on the phone, cleaning their rooms, watching TV or talking to friends when work should be getting done.

Then, in order to justify themselves, they will blame everyone and everything else for their failures, uttering sayings like, “If only she hadn’t started talking to me,” or “What was I supposed to do? Friends was on.”

If you are a constant procrastinator, here are four ways to overcome your symptoms.

1. Stop using the words “must,” “ought,” and “have to.” Instead of saying “I must study for this exam tonight” you should say “I want to study for this exam.” When people feel obligated to others, they may become resentful and not accomplish something out of spite whereas if they feel as though they’re doing something for themselves, the chances of tackling something quicker will rise.

2. Make a to-do list. Sit down and take stock of things that need to get done. As something is taken care of, cross it off. That way there won’t be any other obstacles preventing the accomplishment of that major goal.

3. Set priorities. It’s very difficult to accomplish 10 things at once, but if tasks are done one at a time, they will be a lot more manageable. Perhaps setting up a schedule where each chore is allotted an hour here or there for completion would be a good strategy. That way you are not trying to do everything at once; rather, you’re attacking the problem in chunks.

4. Reward yourself. Once a major goal is taken care of, cross it off. If that doesn’t work, try giving yourself a small reward. A delicious snack or a little exercise in business ethics. As long as it helps you to achieve your goal.

Environmental Mind:  
Corruption and global warming

Global warming still exists, even if it does not make front-page news. The main cause of global warming is carbon dioxide, which comes from the burning of fossil fuel, particularly oil, coal and gas. Global warming not only increases the temperature of the earth, but also leads to the increase of floods, droughts and wild- fires, intensified hurricanes, heat waves, the spread of infectious diseases and animal extinction.

The most recognized and credible scientific authority on global warming, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), came out with the latest report on climate science in 2001. They found “new and stronger evidence that most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is attributed to human activities.”

There is a minority of scientists known as “skeptic” they challenge climate science and say that global warming is not occurring. Many of these skeptics are funded by fossil fuel companies such as Exxon Mobil. Does that seem like a conflict of interest?

Exxon Mobil, one of the largest corporations on the planet, has spent hundreds of millions of dollars over more than a decade in order to sabotage any efforts made to solve the problem of global warming. They mounted a multi-million dollar advertising campaign against the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, which is an international treaty among industrialized nations to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Exxon Mobil’s efforts finally paid off when President Bush announced that the U.S. would withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol.

Was President Bush’s decision to withdraw from the treaty purely in the best interest of the nation, or did the fact that Exxon Mobil contributed to the Republican party in the 2000 election totaled more than $1 million, which was more than any other oil company’s contribution? In 1999, Exxon CEO Lee Raymond told the Senate: “Our lobbying budget was the fifth highest in the U.S. with $11.7 million, and was only outspent by pharmaceutical companies and tobacco giants. As a result of these efforts, Exxon Mobil has taken a leading role in the shaping of White House energy policies.

And The Beat Goes On:  
Deceit in the dining hall

I don’t mean to state the obvious, but the multi-million dollar renovations to the new Bronc Diner and dining hall have had little to no effect on the quality of the food here. It still tastes like Daly’s food, just warmer.

What the superficial changes have done is to cost our Aramark provider, Aramark, tons of money that it can’t make back. As a result, the diner has enlisted a rather duplicitous policy of business management. It is one that would most definitely help their hounding efforts to make some extra cash is actually a ploy by the management of Aramark to turn the otherwise full time jobs of working at the diner and dining hall into part-time student worker positions that start at the $5.40 student worker rate, instead of hiring local Trenton workers who start at a rate of $8.50.

From a business standpoint, it’s a brilliant move on the part of Aramark to exploit college students who need money, but as a student who used to work at the diner, let me assure you, not even $10 to start would be enough to make up for the amount of excess drama and stress it causes. You don’t have to take it from me, ask yourself one question: how stressed do the current workers look everyday? Most of them don’t have to deal with the added pressures of exams, the always bothersome financial aid and 8 a.m. classes.

You may ask how I know all this. Well, I was hired as a student manager at the Bronc Diner and was given the privilege of being the guinea pig for this little exercise in business ethics. All I really have to say about the whole idea is, when the management at Aramark sees this column, first they are going to have a cow in the middle of the cafeteria, then they are going to deny it. However, all I can add to prove my point is, I was hired as a student manager and given no specific job description, although I have never worked in a busy diner in my life. My only task according to Aramark was to recruit a new staff of workers and to report every move the current diner workers made.

Jessica L. Martin
Rider Learning Center. They employ learning specialists who can help you learn to prioritize and deal with stress. When you walk out you’ll be armed with strategies and a tailor-made program that will make you a better learner.

Rider News 2 Centennial House; 2083 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648;  Phone: (609) 896-5256; Fax: (609) 895-5696  E-Mail: ridernews@rider.edu