



Darren J. Davis, CGCS
darrenjdavis@aol.com
Twitter: @DarrenJDavisGCS

The habit of setting priorities, overcoming procrastination and getting on with your most important tasks are mental and physical skills. These skills are learnable through practice and repetition.

(president's message)

Eating a frog and eliminating procrastination

"Eat a live frog first thing in the morning, and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day."

— Unknown origin

I'm confident I'm not the only one to feel this way, but I've often felt slightly overwhelmed by having too much to do and not enough time to do it. At times, it seems the harder I work to get caught up, the faster new tasks and responsibilities are added. With the added responsibilities placed upon me this year as GCSAA president, the angst of trying to keep up with my responsibilities has increased. I have always considered my struggle normal, largely because of the demanding and fast-paced nature of the golf course management industry, and I know I am not alone.

William James, one of the founders of modern psychology, said, "Procrastination is attitude's natural assassin. There's nothing so fatiguing as an uncompleted task." And in our fast-paced society, the ability to select the most important task at each moment and complete it quickly and precisely can have a significant positive impact on a person's success.

This brings me back to my opening sentence, a quote often attributed to Mark Twain. A decade ago, a good friend gave me a collectible ceramic frog. When I opened the gift, I am sure the bewildered look on my face overshadowed my appreciation. Fortunately, my friend understood and explained: "Like you, I sometimes procrastinate on intimidating tasks and struggle to get everything completed." As my mind raced to understand the correlation between my often-chaotic life and this frog, my friend continued, "I receive numerous motivational emails and recently opened one promoting a book, 'Eat That Frog! 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time.' Trust me, you should read it."

At the time, I wasn't willing to admit I needed help with time management. But after looking at that frog on my desk for many weeks and finding it difficult to explain to others the frog's deeper meaning, I purchased the book. I have since integrated many of the book's lessons into my own lifestyle, as well as sharing those with others.

Author Brian Tracy says your "frog" should be the most difficult item on your to-do list, the

one thing you're most likely to procrastinate on. The belief is, if you make that thing your "frog" and you eat it first thing in the morning, it will give you energy and momentum for the rest of the day. But, if you don't, and you let that frog sit there and stare at you while you do other less-important things, it will drain your energy without your realizing it.

The author believes success is determined by habits, and the habits of setting priorities, overcoming procrastination and tackling your most important tasks are mental and physical skills. These skills are learnable through practice and repetition. Once they become locked into the subconscious mind, they become permanent behaviors — automatic and easy.

After reading the book, I incorporated several habits into my daily routine. I keep a written to-do list and update it daily. I set deadlines and make plans for pressing items. I schedule time each day to return phone calls and emails. I also find it beneficial to schedule time to check social media, post to Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and update my blog. As I have discussed in previous messages, it's important to educate others on your work and to engage in a bit of self-promotion. I also believe it's important to make high-value use of your time and learn that sometimes it's OK to say no. (I am still working on that one!) I have learned that a stationary bike is a great place to stay fit and also to read the latest issue of *GCM* or listen to a podcast. Finally, I've learned to hire good people and practice good delegation skills.

Speaking of procrastination, I hope you're not going to put off signing up to attend the 2019 Golf Industry Show. Registration opens on Oct. 16, and we've made it easier than ever to help you "eat that frog" with a save-the-date button at www.golfindustryshow.com that will remind you about the opening of registration. This year's event is Feb. 2-7 in the beautiful city of San Diego, and we have worked hard to add some new and exciting events, terrific new education classes, and a new twist on the trade show floor that you will not want to miss. I hope to see you in February.

Darren Davis, CGCS, is the golf course superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, Fla., and a 29-year GCSAA member.