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## Learning Strengths and Overcoming Procrastination Andrew Fuller

When you have momentum, you can fly through things. When it goes missing, everything feels like an uphill slog. It is at those times that we tend to put things off until later and sometimes try to forget about them entirely.

To stop procrastinating, we need to kickstart our momentum. Before doing that we need to understand what is happening to our brain.

### Meet Rex

The lower, primitive part of our brain contains 80% of our brain cells. Despite this, it is fairly basic and mainly focuses on keeping us safe and comfortable. It is pretty much the same brain that dinosaurs had. Given it's similarities let's call that part of our brain, Rex (after Tyrannosaurus Rex\*).



### Meet Albert, Albertina and Alberta

The smarter, more developed part of the brain we could call our pre-frontal cortex but it is kind of cooler to call it our inner Albert/ Albertina/ Alberta after Albert Einstein.

Rex works in one way while Albert/ Albertina/ Alberta work in an entirely different way.



Albert/ Albertina/ Alberta can make plans, stick to schedules and think things through. Rex doesn't like to think too much, preferring action.

If our Rex is 'out of sorts' nothing works well. That is why sleep, food, movement all calm Rex.

### Kickstarting Momentum

Kickstarting our momentum begins with calming Rex. Rex pays attention to what we do, not what we say. Once we start doing something, Rex often goes along with it. This is why the hardest part of a workout is just getting there to start it.

### Build from Your Learning Strengths

When we start doing something we find we can do easily, our momentum increases. We get 'on a roll' and can sidestep procrastination. By assessing your learning strengths at [www.mylearningstrengths.com](http://www.mylearningstrengths.com) you can know where to start. Obtaining the full Personalised Learning Success Plan moves you into action and beyond procrastination.

## **Spatial Reasoning**

If your top learning strength is spatial reasoning, you often find it easiest to start by thinking in pictures. You may like to begin by drawing your ideas. Creating a flow chart, concept map or just doodling your thoughts will get you into action.

## **Perceptual- Motor Skills**

If your top learning strength is perceptual-motor skills, you are likely to be an active person who likes doing things. Don't just sit there waiting for inspiration to inspire you (you could be waiting a long time). Get moving & get doing. Walk it out, pace it out, step through your main plans.

## **Concentration and Memory**

Your learning strengths in concentration can be a great advantage but they can also be an obstacle. You can get so focused on the things that you like doing (such as playing computer games or mucking around) that you forget to complete what you need to get done. One way to use your concentration & memory skills is to work out the main thing that you need to do & then work out the first thing you need to do. Remove all other distractions and just start by doing ten minutes.

## **Planning and Sequencing**

Time to put those great planning strengths into action. This is the time to 'imagine forward & plan backwards'. Define a goal or outcome you want & then outline in sequence the steps needed to create that result.

You may find that you plan more easily by using post-it notes for each of the steps.

## **Thinking and Logic**

Sometimes having great thinking skills can get in the way of doing things. It is likely that you have been weighing up the pro's & cons of getting into action.

Sometimes this can make us less certain & more worried than we need to be. Stop evaluating & predicting (great skills but you

don't need them now). Do the easiest thing you can to begin with.

## **People Smarts**

You are tuned into people. If you can, ask someone to work with you on a project. Combining socialising while getting things done makes it much easier to start.

As you are a sensitive person, you will probably worry that you are burdening the other person. You might be surprised to discover that you end up helping someone overcome procrastination while helping yourself.

## **Language and Word Smarts**

Tell yourself a story of what will happen if you can get started & make this happen. Imagine the task is already completed & you are telling someone else about the payoffs & benefits.

## **Number Smarts**

Create a to-do or a numbered checklist. Negotiate with yourself that you can only do something you like once you have ticked off and completed one of the items on your list.

*\*Oliver Emberton originally introduced me to Rex and Albert and I am eternally grateful.*

## **More information**

### **Andrew's website**

[www.mylearningstrengths.com](http://www.mylearningstrengths.com) has helped over 11,000 young people in the past year discover their learning strengths.

### **On face book:**

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Learning Strengths

### **Books for Parents**

*Unlocking Your Child's Genius*

*Tricky Behaviours*

### **Book for Teachers**

*Neurodevelopmental Differentiation- Optimising Brain Systems To Maximise Learning* (Hawker-Brownlow).

