

## PIERS STEEL'S TEMPORAL MOTIVATION THEORY

$$\text{Motivation} = \frac{\text{Expectancy} \times \text{Value}}{\text{Impulsiveness} \times \text{Delay}}$$

where **expectancy** is the confidence or probability for successful completion, **value** is the reward related to that task, **delay** is the amount of time available to complete the task and impulsiveness is the individual's sensitivity to delay. The reward for a task--its **value**--may be how enjoyable the task is, its contribution to a career goal, a greater cause and so on.

So if a task is overwhelmingly difficult (low expectancy) or boring (low value), you tend to procrastinate. Similarly, if the deadline is a month away (high delay) and you are not particularly good at self control (high impulsiveness), you will put the task off for a while and will return to it only when you have a pressing deadline, i.e. the delay grows smaller

Steel Ph.D., Piers; *The Procrastination Equation: How to Stop Putting Things Off and Start Getting Stuff Done*. HarperCollins, 2010.

## THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

In the late 1980s, Francesco Cirillo developed a specific technique designed to enhance personal productivity called the Pomodoro Technique. The concept is simple – you set a timer for 25 minutes and try to complete a specific task in that time period. That makes one *pomodoro* (Italian for 'tomato'), after which you take a short break for a few minutes and start on another task for the next 25 minutes. After four such pomodori, you take a longer break. There is an important rule - a pomodoro is indivisible. This means that you must dedicate the slot completely to the task you have assigned and cannot take a break to get coffee or answer a phone call in between. If anything interrupts you in that time slot, the pomodoro is considered void.