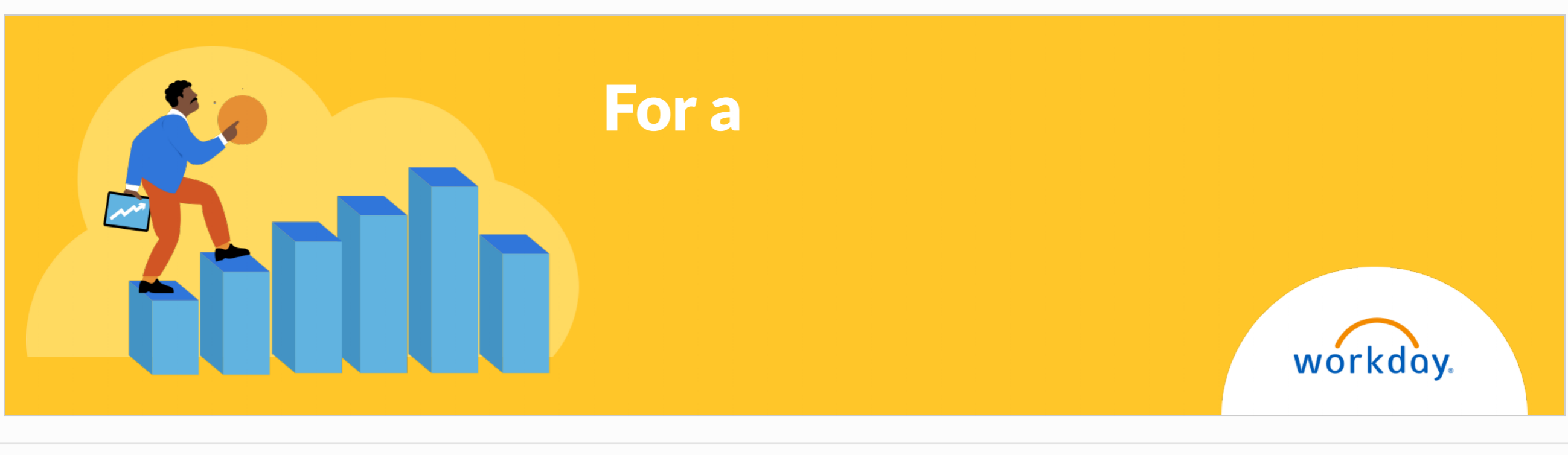


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# Identifying And Tackling The 'Should Do' Vs. 'Want To Do' Conundrum

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Forbes Coaches Council

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Have you ever wondered why you find it hard to get some tasks done while others can get them done with relative ease? We often attribute this to that giant nasty monster we call procrastination; however, could a more straightforward and less intimidating beast be responsible for this? There could be simpler answers, and one of those is a concept called the "Should Do vs. Want to Do" conundrum.

What we want to do and what we should do are often very different animals. What we want to do often emerges from an internal driver, one of fulfillment with inner satisfaction as a payoff; it might make us happy, give us closure, excite us or meet some emotional need. And the things we should do tend to arise from an external driver, things like making someone else happy or it might be compulsory—sometimes identifying the payoff might not even be possible. At times, we might still get that internal satisfaction as a payoff from something we should do, but it tends to be less direct than the payoff from something we want to do.

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Imagine it's dinner time and you find yourself saying, "I should eat," then compare that with, "I want to eat," instead. Most likely, you will observe a big difference between the two statements. The motivators tend to come from differing sources; one feels like a chore, something you just might as well do, while the other feels more inviting and easier to engage with. Often, the challenge comes from grouping the things we should do and what we want to do into the same bucket—a generic "need to do" bucket.

A recurring theme in coaching conversations about motivation and blockers and an inability to get things done goes like this. Coach: "I have loads of things I need to do, but many of them just never get done. What can I do to improve?"

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The coach may ask the coachee to list a few things they typically need to do and then examine those items together to get to the root of the situation. On closer examination, many coachees realize a particular pattern, and it is that the most non-challenging items are things the coachee wants to get done. The challenging items tend to be things the coachee feels they should get done. The divide is often a revelation, as it provides insight into the motivation around the blocker the coachee faces. The coachee realizes that not all "needs" are equal and that the basis for delivering the items they believe they need to get done are different.

So how can you deal with items you need to do but don't fall into the "want" category, and are items you should get done? Especially when you are struggling to move these items forward. Well, these small steps might help you move those stubborn tasks forward.

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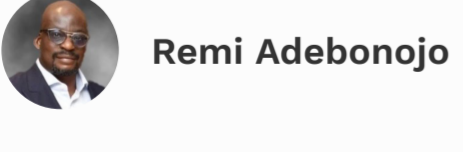
1. Ask yourself why you need to do this task. Is it because you want to do it or do you feel you should?
2. If it is a task in the should-do category, ask yourself why. What is in it for you? What is your reward for doing it? What is the ultimate benefit?
3. Weigh the benefit against the effort it will take to do it and establish its value. Does the benefit outweigh the effort or vice versa?
4. Decide if you still need to do the task.
5. If you still do, visualize achieving that benefit and examine how that makes you feel.
6. Approach the task with the end goal of achieving that benefit in mind, visualizing the reward; the chances are that it might make the task a lot easier and bearable for you and motivate you to get it done.

This simple concept can reach beyond tasks we need to do and apply to careers, our attitude to jobs, our leadership approach and our companies; the list is endless.

On a final note, please remember that we are far more complex than a few mind hacks; challenges like demotivation, procrastination and other themes require a lot more than a few tricks to get us on the path we want to be, but here's hoping this short article can provide a little nugget of insight as you explore that journey toward being the best version of yourself.

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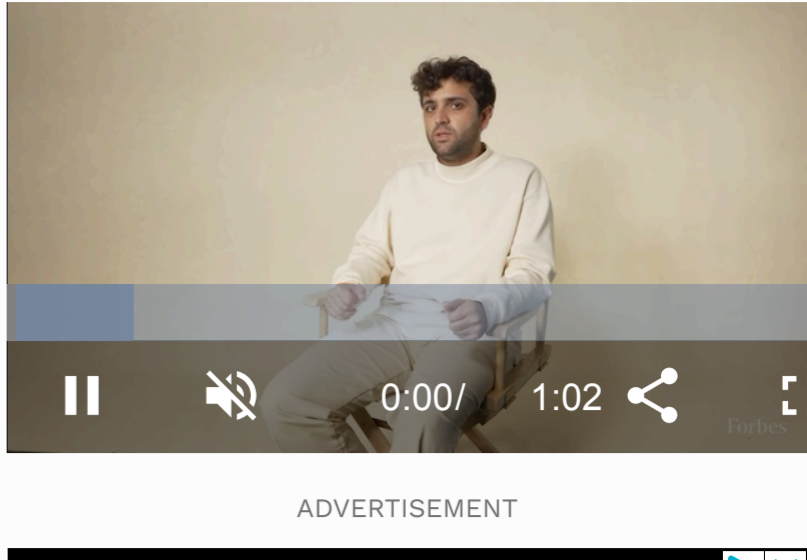
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