

The Six Effort Traps

Why 'being thorough' can stall an estate for months — the six busy-but-useless patterns to skip.

An effort trap is when time and energy go into activities that feel productive but don't move the estate forward. Set your hourly rate first — \$40/hour is a reasonable benchmark — and watch for these:

- 1 The Research Trap — most search results show asking prices, not what things actually sold for. Research categories, not individual items.
- 2 The Individual Listing Trap — does the return from this item justify the hours it takes to sell it alone?
- 3 The Storage Trap — storage is a monthly bill for a decision you haven't made. \$150/month for a year is \$1,800.
- 4 The Sentimental Value Trap — emotional value belongs to the family; market value belongs to the market. They're different numbers.
- 5 The Assumed Value Trap — age doesn't automatically create value; rarity doesn't automatically create demand.
- 6 The Do-It-Yourself Trap — for an entire estate, going it alone frequently leads to exhaustion before completion.