

No. 1 International Bestseller

**THE 7 HABITS OF
HIGHLY
EFFECTIVE
PEOPLE®**

TAUGHT BY THE AUTHOR

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The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

BY STEPHEN R. COVEY

THE TWO SIDES OF SUCCESS

Aesop's fable "The Goose and the Golden Egg" is the story of a poor farmer who visits the nest of his goose one day and finds a glittering golden egg at her side. Though he suspects it to be a trick, he decides to take it home where he learns, to his delight, that the egg is actually pure gold. Every morning, thereafter, the farmer gathers one golden egg from the nest of the goose and soon becomes fabulously wealthy. As he grows rich, however, he also grows greedy and impatient with the output of the goose. Finally, in an attempt to get all the gold in the goose at once, he kills the goose and opens it, only to find nothing.

The moral of this tale has a modern ring to it. Like the foolish farmer, we often emphasize short-term results (golden eggs) at the expense of long-term prosperity (the goose). Indeed, it seems we are often more concerned with doing things right (efficiency) than with doing the right things (effectiveness). In his attempt to be efficient, the farmer became grossly



ineffective—he destroyed his capacity to produce desired results.

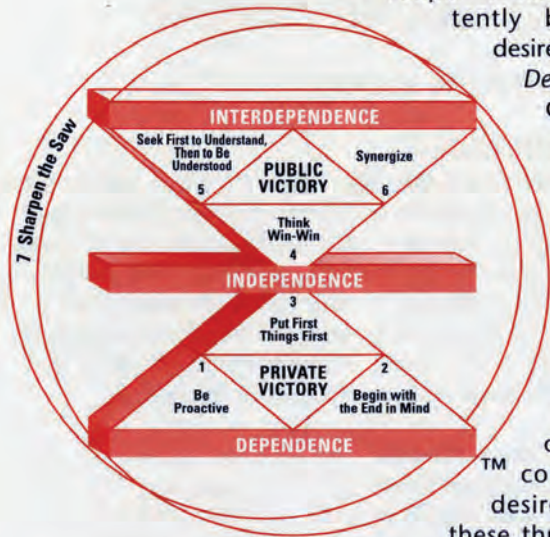
In this presentation, I introduce The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People—7 habits that are used consistently by people who achieve desired results. In *The Common Denominator of Success*, E. M.

Gray stated, “Successful people have the habit of doing the things failures don’t like to do. They don’t like doing them either, necessarily, but their disliking is subordinated to the strength of their purpose.”

Habits are patterns of behavior composed of three overlapping components: knowledge, desire, and skill. Because these three components are learned rather than inherited, our habits constitute

our second nature, not our first. We are not our current habits; hence, we should avoid defining ourselves in terms of our habits, characteristics, and reactive tendencies. Habits of effectiveness can be learned; habits of ineffectiveness unlearned.

Successful people build habits of effectiveness into their daily lives.



Often, they are internally motivated by a strong sense of mission. By subordinating their dislike for certain tasks to the strength of their purpose, they develop the following 7 Habits™ and discipline themselves to live in accordance with fundamental principles.

As illustrated in the Maturity Continuum®, these habits are interdependent and sequential. The first three are habits of character; they will help you achieve the Private Victory™ and lead you to independence. The next three habits are the outward expressions of character and lead to mutual benefit and Public Victories which lead to interdependence. Habit 7 renews “the goose” and sustains the growth process.

HABIT 1: BE PROACTIVE™

The habit of being proactive, of personal vision, means taking responsibility for your attitudes and actions. It’s helpful to break the word “responsibility” into two parts: response/ability. Proactive people recognize that they have the ability to choose their responses. Their behavior is a product of their own conscious choices, based on values, rather than a product of their conditions, based on feelings.

Behavioral scientists have built reactive, deterministic stimulus-response models of human behavior. The basic idea is that we are conditioned to respond in a particular way to a particular stimulus. In contrast, the proactive model states that between stimulus and response lies our freedom to choose our responses.

Proactive people focus their time and energy on things they can control





(their Circle of Influence™) instead of reacting to or worrying about conditions over which they have little or no control (their Circle of Concern™).

Applications

1. Try the 30-day proactivity test: Work within your Circle of Influence. Keep all of the promises you make. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.
2. Imagine an experience or an encounter where, based on past performance, you might behave reactively. Decide in advance what your proactive response will be, then exercise that choice in the actual situation.
3. Listen to your language. Are you using reactive language—"If only," "I can't," or "I have to"—to transfer responsibility for your feelings and actions to somebody or something else? If so, start using more proactive, positive language, expressing your ability to choose your response and to create alternatives.
4. Identify what lies within your Circle of Influence. Concentrate your energy and efforts on these things, and monitor the difference it makes in your performance.

HABIT 2: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND™

This is the habit of personal leadership, meaning you begin each day or

task with a clear understanding of your desired direction and destination. By keeping that end in mind, you can make certain that whatever you do does not violate the criteria you have defined as supremely important.

Begin with the End in Mind is based on the principle that all things are created twice. There's a mental or first creation, and a physical or second creation. The second creation follows from the first, just as a building follows from a blueprint. In our personal lives, if we do not develop our own self-awareness and become responsible for first creations, we empower other people and circumstances to shape our lives by default.

The most effective way to begin with the end in mind is to develop a personal mission statement, philosophy, or creed that focuses on what you want to be (character) and do (contributions).

Applications

1. Consider the difference between leading and managing. Determine the direction you want to take and the destination you want to reach in your life.
2. Imagine you are attending your own funeral three years from now. Four people will be speaking at the services: a family member, a close friend, a work associate, and a spiritual or community leader. List things you would like each person to say about you at the funeral. Make these characteristics, virtues, and skills part of your mission statement.
3. Identify a project you will be working on in the near future, and apply the principle of mental creation. Write down the results you desire and what steps will lead to those results.

HABIT 3: PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST™

This is the habit of personal management, which involves organizing and managing your time according to the personal priorities you established in Habit 2.

Basically, we spend our time in one of four ways, as illustrated in the Time Management Matrix. This matrix defines activities as “urgent” or “not urgent,” and “important” or “not important.” With careful analysis, most people discover that they spend far too much time responding to the urgent crises of Quadrants I and III, escaping occasionally for survival to the not urgent, unimportant time wasters of Quadrant IV.



The ideal to work toward is eliminating time spent in Quadrants III and IV, and increasing time spent in Quadrant II. As you invest more time on the planning, prevention, and relationship-building activities of Quadrant II, you’ll find that you spend far less time picking up the broken pieces in Quadrant I or reacting to the urgent demands of other people in Quadrant III.

Applications

1. List one activity in your personal life and one in your professional life that, if performed regularly, would produce highly desirable results. Now, schedule and organize your time next week according to your priorities.
2. Draw a Time Management Matrix and estimate how much time you spend in each quadrant. Then log your time for three days in 15-minute intervals. How accurate was your estimate? Make needed changes by concentrating on Quadrant II.
3. Start organizing your life on a weekly basis. Write down your roles and goals, then incorporate your goals into a specific action plan.

HABIT 4: THINK WIN-WIN™

Think Win-Win is the habit of interpersonal leadership. In personal relationships and businesses, effectiveness is largely achieved through the cooperative efforts of two or more people. Marriages and other partnerships are interdependent realities, yet people often approach these relationships with an independent mentality, which is like trying to play golf with a tennis racket—the tool isn’t suited to the sport.

Most of us learn to base our self-worth on comparisons and competition. We think about succeeding in terms of someone else failing. There is only so much pie, and if you get a big piece, there is less for me. People with this type of Scarcity Mentality™ find it difficult to share recognition and power, and to be happy for the successes of other people, especially those closest to them.

Win-win, on the other hand, is based on an Abundance Mentality™—the paradigm that there is plenty for everyone, that one person’s success is not achieved at the expense or exclusion of the success of others. Win-win means

that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial and satisfying.

A Win-Win Agreement is an effective tool for establishing the win-win foundations necessary for long-term effectiveness. A Win-Win Agreement makes the following five elements explicit: desired results, guidelines, resources, accountability, and consequences.

Applications

1. Think Win-Win means to seek mutually beneficial solutions. Identify an upcoming project you will be working on. Determine to explore mutually beneficial options with the other people involved.
2. Identify three key relationships in your life and indicate what you feel the balance (trust level) is in each of the Emotional Bank Accounts. Write down some specific ways you could make deposits into each account.
3. Identify a model of win-win thinking—someone who seeks mutually beneficial solutions even when other people are going for win-lose. Determine what you can learn and apply from this person's example.

HABIT 5: SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD™

Habit 5 is the habit of communication—the most important skill in life. You've spent years learning how to read and write, years learning how to speak. But what about listening? What training have you had that enables you to listen so that you really understand another human being from that individual's frame of reference?

We typically seek first to be understood. Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. They're either speaking or preparing to speak. They're filtering everything through their own paradigms, reading their autobiographies into other people's lives.

In contrast, Empathic Listening™ gets inside another person's frame of reference. You see the world the way he or she sees it, you understand how he or she feels. This does not mean that you agree necessarily, simply that you understand his or her point of view.

Applications

1. The next time you observe people talking with each other, cover your ears for a minute and just watch them. What emotions are being communicated that may not come across in words alone? In your next interaction with someone, be sensitive to those unexpressed feelings and exercise the attitude and skill of Empathic Listening.
2. Select a relationship where you sense the Emotional Bank Account™ is in the red. Try to understand the situation from the other person's point of view and write down your thoughts. In your next interaction with this person, listen to understand. Compare what you are hearing with what you wrote down. How valid were your assumptions? Did you really understand that individual's perspective?
3. When you catch yourself probing, evaluating, advising, or interpreting in a conversation with another person, acknowledge it, apologize, and begin listening with real empathy to capture and reflect both the content and feeling of what the other person is expressing.

HABIT 6: SYNERGIZE™

This is the habit of creative cooperation or teamwork. Two people, creatively cooperating, will be able to produce far better results than either one could alone. Synergy lets us discover jointly things that we are much less likely to discover by ourselves.

Valuing the differences—the mental, emotional, and physiological differences between people—is the essence of synergy. The key to valuing those differences is to realize that all people see the world not as it is, but as

they are. When we value differences and bring different perspectives together in the spirit of mutual respect, people feel free to seek the best possible alternative, often the

Third Alternative™—one that is substantially better than either of the original proposals. Finding a Third Alternative is not a compromise; it represents a win-win solution for both parties.

Applications

1. Think about a person who sees things differently than you do. Consider how those differences might lead to Third-Alternative solutions. Openly seek this person's view on a current project or problem. Show consideration and courageously express your own views.
2. The next time you have a disagreement or confrontation with someone, attempt to understand the concerns underlying that person's position. Address those concerns in a creative and mutually beneficial way.
3. Identify a situation that could benefit from greater teamwork and synergy. What conditions would need to exist to support synergy? What can you do to create those conditions?

HABIT 7: SHARPEN THE SAW™

³ This is the habit of self-renewal. As the farmer in Aesop's fable learned from sad experience, success has two sides: the goose, which represents production capability (PC), and the golden eggs, the production (P) of desired results.

It's wise to keep both sides in balance. Yet when people get busy producing or "sawing," they rarely take time to sharpen the saw because maintenance seldom pays dramatic, immediate dividends.

Sharpening the saw means having a balanced, systematic program for self-renewal in the four areas of our lives: physical, mental, social/emotional, and spiritual. Without this discipline, the body becomes weak, the mind mechanical, the emotions raw, the spirit insensitive, and the person selfish.

To sharpen the saw, we must be proactive. Self-renewal is a Quadrant II activity, and Quadrant II must be acted on.

This is the single most powerful investment we can ever make in life—investment in ourselves, in the only instrument we have with which to deal with life and to contribute. Renewal is

the principle and the process that empowers us to move in an upward spiral of growth and change, of continuous improvement.

Applications

1. Get out of bed at a set time each morning and exercise for 30 minutes.
2. Read uplifting and inspirational literature for a few minutes each day. Meditate upon its meaning to you and how you can apply it in your life.
3. Spend an hour or two each week keeping a personal journal and family records.



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