

SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

By Stephen Covey

*We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.*
-Aristotle

Our character, basically, is a composite of our habits. Habits are powerful factors in our lives. Because they are consistent, often unconscious patterns, they constantly express our character and produce our effectiveness...or ineffectiveness.

A habit can be defined as the intersection of **knowledge**, **skill**, and **desire**. Knowledge is the theoretical paradigm, the **what to do** and the **why**. Skill is the **how to do**. And desire is the motivation, the **want to do**. In order to make something a success in our lives, we have to have all three.

Habit 1: Be Proactive - The habit of being proactive, or the habit of personal vision, means taking responsibility of our attitudes and actions. Take the initiative and the responsibility to make things happen.

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind - This is the habit of personal leadership. Start with a clear destination to understand where you are now, where you're going, and what you value most.

Habit 3: Put First Things First - The habit of personal management, which involves organizing and the managing time, events, and yourself. Organize and execute around priorities.

Habit 4: Think Win-Win - Win-Win is the habit of interpersonal leadership. Win-Win is also the attitude of seeking mutual benefit.

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood - This is the habit of empathic communication and paraphrasing. Understanding builds the skills of empathic listening that inspire openness and trust.

Habit 6: Synergize - The habit of creative cooperation or teamwork. Synergy results from valuing differences by bringing different perspectives together in the spirit of mutual respect.

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw - This is the habit of self-renewal. Preserving and enhancing your greatest asset by renewing the physical, spiritual, mental, and social / emotional dimensions of your nature.

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