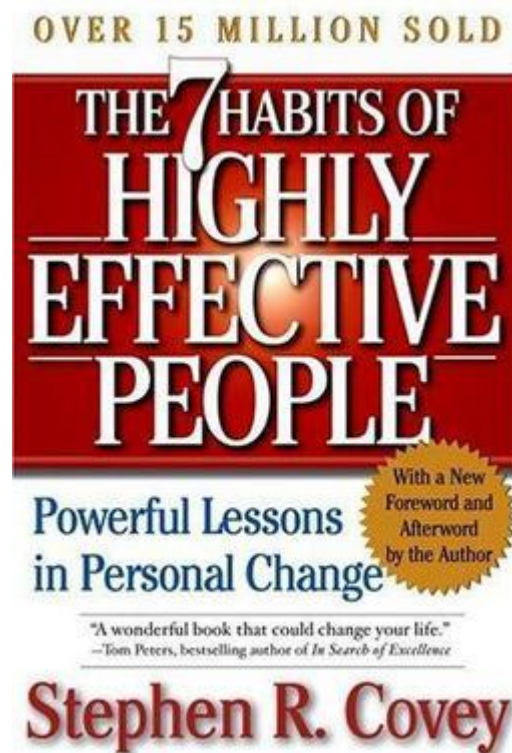


The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People



1. Be proactive
2. Begin with the end in mind
3. Put first things first
4. Think “win-win”
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood
6. synergize
7. Sharpen the saw if we want to keep sawing

1. Be proactive

In this chapter, Covey says that many people are reactive (they allow external circumstances to dictate their behaviour), instead of proactive (taking responsibility for their decisions and behaviour). Instead of blaming the world for our problems, or letting the actions of others, or even bad weather, dictate our

mood, we can be a more effective person by focusing on the things that we can actually do something about (our Circle of Influence) and not concern ourself with things we can't change or influence.

2. Begin with the end in mind

Covey says that when we take an action, we do it twice. The first time is when we imagine doing it, and then again when we actually do it in real life. He uses the example of building a house. First, we visualize the house and make the detailed plans of the layout and the materials needed, then we start building it. If we didn't *make the plans first*, it is likely that we would make lots of costly mistakes.

The message here is that if we *visualize an action* and its *desired consequences* first, instead of just ploughing on, possibly in the wrong direction, the more likely we are to have success.

This is the difference between being efficient and being effective. There's no point in getting lots of tasks done in a short amount of time, if the end outcome isn't what we really want.

3. Put first things first

This habit is all about *prioritization*. We need to figure out the things that are most important and always put them first. But how do we work out what's most important? Look at this diagram:

4. Think "win-win"

Life is a negotiation. When going into a situation with others, many people seek a "win-lose" outcome - every interaction they have whether at work or in their personal lives is seen as a competition. Effective people on the other hand see the benefit in giving everyone *a fair share* of the pie and fostering positive long-term relationships. Try to approach every situation willing to negotiate until both parties are satisfied - we see greater returns in the end.

5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply,” says Covey.

He explains that a lot of the time we don't really listen to people, but instead project our own situation onto them and assume that what they're thinking, and feeling are the same. We then prescribe solutions to them that don't really work. People rarely trust the advice of someone who they don't feel really understands them or the situation.

we need to ***emphatically listen to others*** and get inside their frame of reference to understand them intellectually and emotionally. Take note of what they're saying, but also their body language to get the full picture. Only then will people start to really trust our opinions and advice.

6. Synergize

Synergy basically means that if we ***put two things together***, the *outcome* is greater than the ***combined*** total of the two separate components. 1+1 can actually equal 3 or more if we work together. When people work together to tackle a challenge, using everyone's separate strengths, it's always better than fighting each other and trying to go it alone. For this we need to understand, **trust** and respect each other.

7. Sharpen the saw if we want to keep sawing

The seventh habit is all about ***self-improvement***. our tools may be adequate for the job, but if we never stop to sharpen them, they will become less and less effective.

Covey's key message here is that:

- We need to take care of ourselves,
- stay physically fit,
- maintain our emotional wellbeing and

- our mental wellbeing through expanding our knowledge, as well as our social well-being by having good relationships with others.
- Give ourselves time to recharge instead of working flat-out all of the time, and in the long run we'll be a far more effective person.

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- <https://cwa.ac.uk/about/alumni/alumni-news/book-summary-the-7-habits-of-highly-effective-people-by-stephen-r-covey>