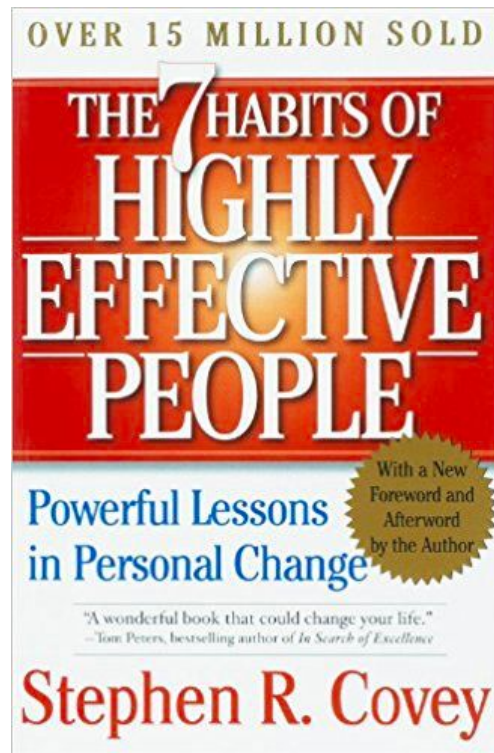


**Summary:** In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, author Stephen R. Covey presents a holistic, integrated, principle-centered approach for solving personal and professional problems. With penetrating insights and pointed anecdotes, Covey reveals a step-by-step pathway for living with fairness, integrity, service, and human dignity—principles that give us the security to adapt to change and the wisdom and power to take advantage of the opportunities that change creates.



**The 7 Habits are:**

*Independence*

1. Be proactive
2. Begin with the end in mind
3. Put first things first

*Interdependence*

4. Think win-win
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood
6. Synergize

*Continuous improvements*

7. Sharpen the saw

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## Section One

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### Overview

- Principles first. Personality and attitude second.
- **Is you life by design or by default?**

### Quotes

- “It is impossible to break the law. You only break yourself against it.”
- “Don't get caught in the activity trap. Don't get stuck in the *thick of thin things*.”
- “Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things.”
- “What lies behind us and what lies before us, are tiny matter compared to what lies within us.” -Oliver Wendell Holmes

### Notes

- Principles first. Personality and attitude second.
  - “for every thousand hacking at the leaves of evil, there is one striking at the root” -Thoreau
  - Minor change: tweak attitude, personality tactics
  - Quantum change: inspect your paradigms, assumptions, mental maps critically for errors
  - How has your mind been conditioned by experiences?
- Principles are self-evident and inalienable. They are like lighthouses.
- Think about your character, and what may cause you to bend it: social recognition, seeking approval, fulfilling a stereotype
- Covey also describes more shortcomings of the “personality ethic”: lack of sincerity, fake smiles, being at odds with yourself... the “character ethic” is much deeper, rooted in truth/trust/integrity, and is enduring
- What are your lighthouses? What causes you to compromise on your principles?
- Challenge - for a full day listen to the language that is being used
  - If only, I can't, I have to etc
- Circle of Influence: what is in your control, what is out of your control?
- You are attending your own funeral. What would you do any people to say? Example:
  - Successful: I accomplished big things professionally and financially
  - Creative: leaving a legacy of music, art, literature, drama
  - Caring: I gave back of my time and money to a cause near and dear to my heart; left a mark of love, and lives are better for it
  - Unique: anything but average, lived with style, laughter, spontaneity, passion, humor and class.
  - Family: devoted husband, dedicated father - do you really want these things? Sometimes it feels like you're just typing/saying them (good area for introspection)
  - Timeless: the output of my life will continue to persist and bring joy beyond my mortal life. A proud yet humble legacy.
  - Beauty & Perfection: I strived to improve my personal self; seeked out all the beauty this world has to offer; attempted to achieve ideals without taking myself too seriously.
- Use the above as your core principles within your Circle of Influence to “begin with the end in mind” and start with the picture, image or paradigm that captures the end goal of your life.
  - *Side note: what about honesty, being reliable, strength of character, committed, trustworthy, sacrifice, temperance? Are those not important at your funeral?*
- Don't get caught in the activity trap. Don't get stuck in “the thick of thin things”. Professional advancement can be a hollow wall you're leaning upon.
- **Everything is created twice.**

- “Measure twice, cut once.”
- Plan your blueprint
- Stand with the end in mind
- Wow this is awesome: **By design? Or by default?** What a great question to ask about your life situations and habitat.
  - This also connects with David Geffen’s “inventing” of a unique life
- Leadership and Management
  - “Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things.”
- The Have’s vs the Be’s. Don’t work on Have’s or Had’s... work on Be’s. Be the change, take ownership, and proactively change the situation through action
  - Response-able: don’t play the blame game. It gets you nowhere.
  - “The other end of the stick”: being accepting of Consequences & Mistakes.
    - *Immediately own and learn from your mistakes. Don’t bury your head in the sand.*
  - Making and keeping **commitments** yields strength of character and better goal setting, small and big alike, through inner integrity.
  - “What lies behind us and what lies before us, are tiny matter compared to what lies within us.”  
-Oliver Wendell Holmes
- Become your own first creator
  - What scripts in your mind need to be rewritten?
    - E.g. queen of Egypt’s hatred of Israel
    - Nassar / Farooq / Sadat - Camp David accord
  - Humans are unique in their potential for self-awareness...
  - Upon introspection we can “rescript” old paradigms to meaningfully change our lives for the better

## Section Two

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### Overview

- Independence is overrated. The world is critically INTER-dependent. To attempt solo success is to be alone with a single mind and singular resources.
- Organize and execute around priorities.

### Quotes

- “For successful people, their dislike of tasks is subordinated to the strength of their purpose and will.”
- “Learn to say “no” with a genuine smile given your other burning YES priorities.”
- “Be a compass-driven person, not a roadmap-driven person.”
- “Delegation is one of highest leverage activities in existence. It is also a public tactic which invites ownership, accountability and celebration.”

### Notes

- Independence is overrated. The world is critically INTER-dependent. To attempt solo success is to be alone with a single mind and singular resources.
- Your principles are what you build your character and persona upon. Are you career centered, family centered, friends centered, etc? Scenario of having tickets to a show the wife is excited about, and then the boss asks you to work late the same night. Life is full of these sorts of trade offs, so you really need to think through your principles and priorities and defend them.
- Creating a personal affirmation helps improve visualization and must be:
  - Personal

- Positive
- Present tense
- Visual
- Emotional
- The Character ethic is rooted in principles. The personality ethic is rooted in perception/manipulation.
- **The importance of a “Personal Mission Statement” which details your principles and commitments to self - WRITE ONE! This is a great personal development exercise.**
- If goals are the what and the when, a personal mission statement would guide the HOW of achieving success regarding your principles.
- Emphasizes the importance of affirmations and visualization in tackling life’s challenges.
- Re-emphasized importance of group-sponsored mission statement
  - Covey reviews his family mission statement with his family in Sept and June to iterate on it
  - Talked a lot about the culture of a hotel with excellent customer service
  - Record impressions from funeral visualization focusing on Family, Friends, Work, Community
    - Character
    - Contributions
    - Achievements
  - How do you see your roles?
  - Set up time to reflect and work on personal mission statement
  - What different “centers” exist and what is your center?
  - Consolidate inspirational material
  - Visualize / mental creation of tough upcoming scenari
- “Common Denominator of Success” by EM Grey - “putting first things first”. For successful people, their dislike of tasks is subordinated to the strength of their purpose and will. Failures give in. They sacrifice their principles and desires to the comfort of “now”
- “Manage from the left, lead from the right[brain]”
- “Organize and execute around priorities”
- “Integrity is fundamentally the value we place in our self”
- **Priorities, priorities, priorities**
- Good exercise: draw an URGENT vs IMPORTANT. Successful people focus the majority of their time on Important, but not urgent which helps them get ahead, e.g. “Working on the roots” vs being beholden to the “urgent” fire drill

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Crying baby Kitchen fire Some calls 1	Exercise Vocation Planning 2
Not Important	Interruptions Distractions Other calls 3	Trivia Busy work Time wasters 4

- **Pareto Principle: 80% of the results come from 20% of the effort**

- What it takes to say no: get comfortable with it. Everyone says no to stuff. You just have to be clear as to why given other states clear priorities.
- Be a “Quadrant 2” person. Work on important things. Don’t manage by crisis.
- **Failure comes down to one of 3 gaps:**
  - Inability to prioritize
  - Inability to organize and execute around priorities
  - Lack of discipline
- **Most people think it’s “lack of discipline” but Covey argues that fundamentally it’s that priorities haven’t been deeply embedded with desire**
- Learn to say “no” with a genuine smile given your other burning YES priorities.
- *Where can you inject priorities into you work and personal systems?*
- “1st gen time management” creates lists of tasks with NO PRIORITIES - it’s easy, course of least resistance
- “Daily planning” prioritized quadrant 1 and 3. Days are overscheduled. The focus is on efficiency rather than relationships.
- You can be fast with “things” not people. Relationships develop slowly.
- Principles are your compass. Be a compass-driven person, not a roadmap-driven person.
- Delegation is one of highest leverage activities in existence. It is also a public tactic which invites ownership, accountability and celebration.

## Section Three

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### Overview

- All 7 Habits are in quadrant 2.
- **Satisfied needs don’t motivate. UN-satisfied needs motivate.**

### Quotes

- “You can’t talk your way out of problems you behaved yourself into.”
- “You can’t have the fruit without the root.”
- “The quick fix is a mirage. Fixing relationships take time.”
- “Don’t pull up the flowers to see how the roots are coming.”
- “In relationships, the little things ARE the big things.”
- “Developing a win/win performance agreement is the central activity of management.”
- “Don’t mistake introspection for observation.”
- “Aside from physical survival, the greatest human need is psychological survival: to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, to be appreciated.”
- “The key to human influence is first to BE INFLUENCED.”
- “In crucial things, unity. In important things, diversity. In all things, generosity.” - George W. Bush
- “The lowest level of communication is low trust legalese.”

### Notes

- Stewardship delegation:
  - Desired results: cleared mutual understanding of what is to be accomplished by when. Have them describe it. Paint the picture. Connect emotions to it. “Clean and green”
  - Guidelines: identify parameters (few as possible) and failure paths (Tell them what not to do, but not how to do it)
  - Resources: technical, organizational

- Accountability: set the standard of performance of how and when performance will be evaluated
- Consequences; what will happen both good and bad; reward,
- Effective delegation is perhaps the best indicator of managerial strength. It is so basic to organizational effectiveness and personal growth
- **Quadrant 2 paradigm**
  - All 7 Habits are in quadrant 2!
  - What are you not doing that would significantly impact
  - Log time for 3 days to reveal what quadrant you spent time within
  - What can you delegate?
  - Organize next week this week. What roles will you assume? What goals accomplished?
- Public victory: paradigms
  - Samuel Jackson: no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity
  - “You can't talk your way out of problems you behaved yourself into”
- People can sense the duplicity of personality tactics if they aren't supported by principles foundations
- “You can't have the fruit without the root.”
- We often treat symptoms (not the deeper chronic problem) with personality “fixes”
- “The emotional bank account”
- *Good exercise: wrote out your principle-based mission statement this week. Reflect. This gives you the “how” that guides the “what” for your future accomplishments.*
- What can we learn from nasty divorces? The closest possible relationship between two humans can devolve into bitter ego battles.
- Relationships are built on character, and the decision to be proactive. You are missing this at work and defaulting to reactive management.
- “The quick fix is a mirage. Fixing relationships take time.”
- “Don't pull up the flowers to see how the roots are coming.”
- What is the most important method to increase the emotional bank account within a relationship?
  - Taking the time to ask and understand the other person. This is key to understand what they value and what constitutes an emotional “deposit”
    - “One person's mission is another person's minutia.”
- “In relationships, the little things ARE the big things.”
- The biggest way to damage a relationship and make a withdrawal is break a promise / not fulfill a commitment
- Ambiguity around roles and goals are the #1 cause of failure. This is the result of **unclear expectations**.
- When you come into a new situation it's vital to get all the expectations around roles & goals on the table as this informs perspectivism of the stakeholders.
- Personal integrity is the #1 “depositor” of trust. Integrity goes beyond honesty. It conforms reality to our words. It requires an integrated character, “oneness” and **being loyal to those who are not present**.
- People will forgive mistakes (often shortcomings of the mind), but they won't forgive shortcomings of the heart - the ego cover up, conditional love, big emotional withdrawals
- Emphasizes the importance of unconditional love
  - “It is more noble to give yourself completely to one individual, than to labor diligently for the salvation of the masses.”
    - UN Sec General - Dash Hammersol (sp?)
    - Takes nobility of character to resolve issues, i.e. Founder conflict, tone at the top
- As a parent, if you view your child's problem as a chance to build the relationship, it creates a strong bond and loyalty (vs viewing the child's problem as a burden)
- **“The Habits of interdependence”**
  - Public victories

- Habit 4: Think Win Win
- Interdependent leadership: is your problem the people or the paradigm?
- Low trust culture due to overdrawn emotional bank accounts
- Leadership = any interdependent role, and thinking cooperatively vs competitively. Life is not a dichotomy of “strong vs weak” but rooted in the belief that there's enough for everybody so let's not focus on my way or your way, but a BETTER way.
- Many parts of our society reinforce a win/lose mentality: sibling rivalry, schooling, sports, law
- “Lose, lose” is all around terrible and field by spite and adversarial conflict
  - Story of ex husband who sold assets at <1% the true value to screw the X
  - “Who's winning in your marriage?” Is a ridiculous question, yet it often applies to marital conduct and communication
- **“Courage and Consideration”**
  - Be nice and tough. Firm, but empathetic.
  - Courage seeks the best outcome, but not without consideration for all stakeholders affected.
  - “Abundance mentality” - there's plenty out there for everybody. Most people are deeply scripted by the scarcity mentality. These people have a very hard time sharing recognition, power and profit.
  - Win/win character = maturity, integrity and the abundance mentality
- Importance of expectation setting, clear criteria, and putting the ownership on the IC: Challenging them
- When Covey said we “simplified, reduced and consolidated the list into 39 behavioral objectives with criteria attached” it made my skin crawl... why? Is this an example of managerial immaturity on my part? What if you just really cared for your people, inspired them, got them excited about the goals, and then used systems to manage the criteria / rules / etc. the employee also writes a letter to the manager to summarize the discussion and schedules the next
- **“Developing a win/win performance agreement is the central activity of management” - be a pace car: get them going, and then, get out of the way to remove oil spills**
- Rewards and penalties:
  - financial: income, stock options
  - psychological: recognition, approval, respect, credibility (more motivating than financial)
  - Opportunity: training, development, perks
  - Responsibility: scope of authority
- “Built-in accountability”
- Win-win performance agreements: focus is on RESULTS, not methods. Avoid “gopher delegation”. With win-win evaluation, people monitor themselves using the criteria you set upfront. But it takes the heavier upfront investment.
- Don't “teach cooperation and practice competition”
  - The 4th dimension of win-win: SYSTEMS
  - Example of 800 award winners out of 1,000 sales folks is ridiculous. Sounds like an expensive circle jerk.
    - But in its defense: the per rep productivity was as high across the board as the previous year's top 50
- Training, planning, budget, comp, recruiting, information systems - all have to support win-win
  - Example: managers only make money when the reps get paid. Overlap of comp incentives corrected the issue overnight.
- **P/PC balance - Production vs Productions Capability.**
- **Action items to apply win win (habit 4)**
  - Identify upcoming situation.
  - Commit: courage and consideration
  - List of obstacles

- Specific relationship to develop a win-win relationship
  - What would constitute a win?
- Four: list 3 key relationships and what the current bank account is and how to improve
- Introspective on your own scripting and why
- Dedicate yourself to win-win to
- **Habit 5: seek first to understand, then to be understood - principles of empathic communication.**
  - The heart has its reasons which reason knows not if.
- Literally the #1 lesson for interpersonal relations: “**Seek first to understand, then to be understood.**”
- New heading: character and communication
  - Communication = most important skill in life.
  - We spend countless hours on speaking and writing, but very little time on listening. LISTENING is key but has been distorted by “techniques” advertised via the personality ethic.
- This whole book is the perfect antidote to the popular adage “it’s not what you are, it’s what people think you are”. Forget Joe Kennedy’s philosophy of *it’s not what you are, it’s what people think you are*.
  - It’s what you are. Period. Leave the manipulation to the manipulators.
- “Don’t mistake introspection for observation.” - key pitfall for this lesson.
- **Satisfied needs don’t motivate. UN-satisfied needs motivate.**
- **Aside from physical survival, the greatest human need is psychological survival: to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, to be appreciated.**
- “Diagnose before you prescribe.” - essence of all professionalism. Basic stuff. But very important.
- Best advice so far on how to be a good dad (and listener)
  - Mimicking / mirroring
  - Rephrasing
  - **\*Reflecting, pausing\***
  - You feel... [your interpretation of their emotion]
  - Only then will they eventually open up and seek your counsel
  - **Resist the temptation to autobiographically pontificate, advised, probe, reason. STOP IT.**
- Sometimes words just get in the way
- Techniques are faulty and often misused
- 3 important greek words in thinking about your life:
  - Ethos - personal credibility; trust you inspire via emotional bank account
  - Pathos - empathic, feeling in alignment with emotional thrust on other person’s communication
  - Logos - reasoning; the logic of the presentation
- **Most people go straight into the logos. They miss the importance of ethos and pathos. They don’t empathize with head and heart.**
- Saw a guy at the market who had just bought a can of coke (44g sugar) and large lays bag of chips (500 calories; high fat). Couldn’t help but think about what unhealthy habits I’m doing without weighing the consequences.
- “The key to human influence is first to BE INFLUENCED.” This is hard.
  - *Are you Influenceable? Truly?*
- Sense the hurt, the feeling. Don’t push. Be patient. Be respectful. Be sensitive. Put your autobiography aside.
- Idea of “human resource” accounting
  - Make the human element as important as the financial element - this will inspire loyalty
  - *How to apply: select relationship where bank account is in the red. Write down what you think is going on. We’re you right? Share the idea of empathy with someone else + follow up. Next time you slip into autobiographical mode, apologize and acknowledge to the other person.*
- **Habit 6: Synergize - Principles of Creative Cooperation**



- *GW Bush inauguration: in crucial things, unity. In important things, diversity. In all things, generosity.*
- Synergy: the sum is greater than the parts. It can also be terrifying due to the unknown.  $1+1=3$
- Synergy exists in nature: plants, strength of wood, procreation
  - Synergy is rooted in an appreciation of differences.
- Lilienthal - atomic committee head
  - High pressure, big agenda... but he invested for 3 weeks in the collective bank accounts to align before they jumped in
  - Learning: when coming together as a new working group, take the time to build the relationships, deposit in emotional bank accounts, and then set the tone for collaboration, mind set and ground rules
- “The lowest level of communication is low trust legalese”
- In Buddhism, the “Middle Way” refers to the higher ground, i.e. Synergy and creative collaboration
- “Uniformity is not unity”
- The essence of synergy: appreciating the differences of people. **Valuing the differences.**
- Principle centered = whole. The left-brain personality ethic is inadequate in solving creative problems.
- Psychic synergy can also happen within our own brains.
- “Manage from the left, lead from the right.”
- Covey goes to brunch with CEO and wife and they are basically two ½ brained people trying to make it work. Husband wants facts / specific examples: very left brain.
  - **You do this!**
- Talks about the dichotomy of “driving” forces vs “restraining” forces
- As long as the restraining forces exist, the driving forces are limited. This seems like the premise of Covey’s speed of trust book
- Synergy and win/win are the only strategies that reduce restraining forces
- Synergy in nature = ecosystem
- **Use differences to catalyze creativity**
- Embrace this mindset the next time you are faced with a collaborative conflict.

## Section Four

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### Overview

- **The 7th Habit: Sharpen the saw**
  - Physical: exercise, nutrition, stress management
  - Spiritual: value clarification & commitment, study, meditation
  - Mental: reading, visualizing, planning, writing
  - Social / Emotional: service, empathy, synergy, intrinsic security

### Quotes

- “We are the instruments of our own performance.”

### Notes

- Herb Shepherd: balanced life
  - Perspective
  - Autonomy
  - Connectedness
  - Tone
- George Sheehan

- Good animal
- Good Craftsmen
- Good Friend
- Saint
- “I don't have time to sharpen the saw... I'm too busy sawing.”
  - Make sharpening the saw a “healthy addiction”
- **Repeated personal development is the most powerful investment we can make in life**