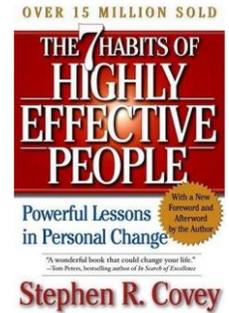


The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People



Book's Argument: Our nation was founded on a *Character* ethic, but over time our literature and thinking have shifted to that of a *Personality* ethic or mindset. Integrity, honesty, fairness, human dignity, humility, service and excellence are examples of the character traits that underlie the seven habits described throughout the books. Many of the personality techniques which are believed to lead to success are incompatible with these character traits. Values are not the same as principles, but should be tied to these immutable principles.

Key Takeaways: Principle-centered living should be the focus of someone looking for success in their lives. The habits start at the intersection of the knowledge, skills and desires of an individual. Covey describes these as the what to/why to, how to and want to inside ourselves. When principles and our values are aligned with our habits, we can be more successful than if we our habits are misaligned with our values, i.e. who we are as a person or organization.

The first three habits focus on independent actions, the next three focus on interdependent actions and the seventh habit advocates for continuous improvement in all areas.

First Habit	Be Proactive	Take initiative and use your freedom to choose.
Second Habit	Begin with the End in Mind	Define your desired end state and the actions needed to get there.
Third Habit	Put First Things First	Prioritize your actions based on your end state.
Fourth Habit	Think Win-Win	A win for all involved is better in the long-term.
Fifth Habit	Seek first to Understand, then to be Understood	Caring and empathy will solve problems better than assuming.
Sixth Habit	Synergize	Combine the strengths from the people on your team.
Seventh Habit	Sharpen the Saw	Find balance between the areas in your life and renew yourself.

The third habit can further be emphasized into quadrants of activities:

1. Urgent/Important: Crises, pressing problems, deadline driven projects
2. Not Urgent/Important: Preparation, Prevention, Planning, Relationship building
3. Urgent/Not Important: Some phone calls, some mail, many popular activities
4. Not Urgent/Not Important: Trivia, busywork, excessive TV

Where do you spend most of your time?

Best Quote: "Achieving unity-oneness-with ourselves, with our loved ones, with our friends and working associates, is the highest and best and most delicious fruit of the Seven Habits."

Why it's important: Covey's seven principles can be applied personally and professionally, in any setting. When you encounter a problem at home or at work, be patient, start with the first habit and make a plan.

Stephen R. Covey (2004)