

Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People®

Habit 1 - Be proactive® This is the ability to control one's environment, rather than have it control you, as is so often the case. Self determination, choice, and the power to decide response to stimulus, conditions and circumstances

Habit 2 - Begin with the end in mind®

Covey calls this the habit of personal leadership - leading oneself that is, towards what you consider your aims. By developing the habit of concentrating on relevant activities you will build a platform to avoid distractions and become more productive and successful.

Habit 3 - Put first things first®

Covey calls this the habit of personal management. This is about organising and implementing activities in line with the aims established in habit 2. Covey says that habit 2 is the first, or mental creation; habit 3 is the second, or physical creation. (See the section on [time management](#).)

Habit 4 - Think win-win®

Covey calls this the habit of interpersonal leadership, necessary because achievements are largely dependent on co-operative efforts with others. He says that win-win is based on the assumption that there is plenty for everyone, and that success follows a co-operative approach more naturally than the confrontation of win-or-lose.

Habit 5 - Seek first to understand and then to be understood®

One of the great maxims of the modern age. This is Covey's habit of communication, and it's extremely powerful. Covey helps to explain this in his simple analogy 'diagnose before you prescribe'. Simple and effective, and essential for developing and maintaining positive relationships in all aspects of life. (See the associated sections on [Empathy](#), [Transactional Analysis](#), and the [Johari Window](#).)

Habit 6 - Synergize®

Covey says this is the habit of creative co-operation - the principle that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, which implicitly lays down the challenge to see the good and potential in the other person's contribution.

Habit 7 - Sharpen the saw®

This is the habit of self renewal, says Covey, and it necessarily surrounds all the other habits, enabling and encouraging them to happen and grow. Covey interprets the self into four parts: the spiritual, mental, physical and the social/emotional, which all need feeding and developing.