

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Summary – Stephen Covey

33 MINUTE READ

[The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) (1989)

Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

by [Stephen Covey](#)

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People is a perennial masterpiece on leading a happy, productive and purposeful existence and an unmissable stop for any pilgrim of personal improvement - by educator, author and speaker, Stephen Covey. ([372 pages](#))

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Note: This **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People summary** is part of an ongoing project to summarise the [Best Productivity Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

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The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Review

[*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*](#) has sold millions of copies since 1989 and is among the most influential personal development books of all time. And though it would be easy to mistake for just-another-collection of life-hacks – it's anything but.

The 7 Habits is a perennial masterpiece on leading a happy, productive and purposeful existence. It's a full-featured manual for life.

The good news? As full-featured manuals go, it's astoundingly easy to read. [Stephen Covey](#) was a preacher, professor, doctor of religious education, Harvard MBA, entrepreneur and leadership coach – collecting scores of clients across countless seminars and engagements. These diverse experiences are essential to his ability to teach with coherence and clarity.

That said, *The 7 Habits* is not an 'easy-read'. The book is densely seamed with concepts and frameworks. Its chapters brim with mind-opening, perspective-tilting principles. And there's no avoiding the chest-clenching, ground-shifting challenges Covey constantly issues to search within, reflect deeply and make basic changes to your life.

Fortunately, those challenges are [peppered with practical pointers](#). And Covey brings warmth and wit to his wisdom with rich profiles from his personal and professional pasts. As well as the roles above, Stephen and Anne Covey raised 9 children; one of whom penned the book's rhapsodic preface and thanks to whom he once earned a national award for fatherhood. The result is a handbook that never fails to connect or to charm as it carries its contents to term.

The short story is thus: Covey's *7 Habits* is among the most impactful and practical books I've yet read. If you haven't read it, [read it](#). If you have read it, consider reading it again. Whether you've figured it all out already

or you know you have changes to make, this book is an unmissable stop for any pilgrim of personal improvement.

Maturity and the Character Ethic

Covey developed his *7 Habits* in response to the progressively popular cult of 'Personality Ethic': a philosophy, he proclaims, that promises fool's-change from the outside in; a false-messiah of faking it, without making it; a siren's call to those who would *have* without *being* or *doing*.

The alternative? A philosophy of 'Character Ethic': a philosophy that champions change from the inside out; an approach that starts with identifying universal *principles*; a method of [choosing values](#) that align with those *principles*; and a way to put those *values* and a *definite purpose* at the heart of our *habits, actions* and *reactions*.

A central theme in Covey's philosophy is one of maturation. At any time, we are somewhere between dependence (relying on others), independence (relying on ourselves) and interdependence (collaborating with others to achieve more than we can alone). What's more, this maturity takes place in five areas: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and financial (a helpful extension of the physical).

The catch? There's no skipping from dependence to interdependence. Dependence means working with others because we *need* them. Interdependence means working with others because we *choose* to. We may be financially and physically independent, but if our emotional wellbeing still hangs on factors and people beyond our control we will always work with one eye on ourselves. That is what holds us back from the full power of creative collaboration. That is why independence comes first.

Covey's ultimate goal in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is to help us mature in each of these areas. Only then, he argues, can we replace

basic needs with self-actualisation. Only then can we replace self-actualisation with self-transcendence. Only then can we reach our potential as fully functional members of an interdependent society.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Summary

In line with this aim, the book's 7 habits are structured in 3 parts:

Reward: Self-confidence and self-knowledge.

1.

Personal Vision

2.

Personal Leadership

3.

Personal Management

Reward: Rebuild and improve relationships.

4.

Interpersonal Leadership

5.

Empathic Communication

6.

Creative Cooperation

Reward: Sustainable growth.

7.

Balanced Self Renewal

PART I: Private Victory (Independence)

The rewards of *Habits 1 – 3* are the tools of independence. From self-knowledge comes awareness and proactivity. From principles come wisdom and conscience. From faith in our values and our purpose, we draw clarity, confidence and power. Through effectiveness and efficiency, we lay the foundations to stand on our own.

HABIT 1: Be Proactive

“There is a gap between stimulus and response and the key to both our growth and happiness is how we use that space.”

If Habits 1 – 3 are about achieving independence and private victory, Habit 1 is about taking full ownership of that victory. It says **you** are the architect of **your** life.

At its core are the following principles:

1. After each *stimulus* (a sensation, emotion or thought) comes a *response* (more sensation, emotion or thought – including intentions to act).
2. By *default*, our *response* is determined by instinct, memory and [habit](#); but
3. *Before* each response comes [a gap](#) in which the conscious mind can intervene.

What we do with this gap determines the ownership that we take of our lives and the ownership we take of our lives ultimately dictates our growth and happiness.

Why? The answer lies in our choice to live in our *Circles of Influence* or our *Circles of Concern*.

CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE VS. CIRCLES OF CONCERN

“God grant us the serenity to accept things we cannot change, the

courage to change things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” – Alcoholics Anonymous

Our *Circle of Influence* contains everything in life we can change. Our *Circle of Concern* contains everything in life we cannot.

Things in our *Circle of Influence* include:

- Our *direct actions* and *reactions* to the world around us; and
- Our *indirect actions* through influencing others.

Things in our *Circle of Concern* include:

- The past;
- Immediate consequence; and
- The actions of most other people.

Our *Circle of Concern* is important to be aware of but miserable to live in. It's where time, energy and striving dash themselves on things we can't change. It uses language like *"I can't"*, *"I have to"* and *"if only"*.

Our *Circle of Influence* is a realm of proactive and productive will. It's smaller than our *Circle of Concern* but it's where we focus on what we can do, now and how – no matter how limited or trivial those things seem. It's a world that uses language like *"I can"*, *"I will"* and *"I prefer"*.

We spend time in and grow our *Circle of Influence* in two ways:

1. **Subjectively** – by always refocussing on the things we control; and
2. **Objectively** – by improving our ability to *directly* (Habits 1 – 3) and *indirectly* (Habits 4 – 6) control the world around us.

Covey's advice on our *Circle of Concern* is clear: if something results from an error you've made – acknowledge it, correct it, learn from it and move on. Otherwise develop the habit of eliminating, ignoring or accepting what

you cannot control. Refocus your attention on the things that you can.

THE FOUR BASIC HUMAN ENDOWMENTS

But how? If taking ownership and being proactive is so easy, why can moving forward feel so hard?

The bad news? Intervening in the gap between stimulus and response *is* hard. It calls heavily on our four basic human endowments:

- **Self-awareness** – the ability to see the gap; to perceive and evaluate our own behaviour.
- **Imagination** – the ability to fill the gap; to envision futures that differ from the one dictated by habit.
- **Conscience** – the ability to weigh the vision; to sense what is right from what is wrong.
- **Independent-will** – the ability to choose our response; to make principles work for us or against us.

The good news? Ownership is a habit that anyone can develop. And there's no better way to begin than to...

HABIT 2: Start With the End in Mind

"If your ladder is not leaning against the right wall, every step you take gets you to the wrong place faster."

Where Habit 1 tells us we are the architects of our lives, Habit 2 tells us **What** to build with that ownership and **Why**.

DOING THE RIGHT THING

At the heart of personal productivity are *efficiency* and *effectiveness*:

- **Efficiency** is [doing things right](#) (we'll come to it in Habit 3); meanwhile

- **Effectiveness** is doing the right thing (the focus of this habit, Habit 2).

Being effective is hard because it demands maturity from four different factors:

1. **Guidance** – clarity of direction and purpose; the ability to choose a definite desired outcome.
2. **Wisdom** – perspective, understanding and judgement; the ability to chart the best course toward that outcome.
3. **Power** – the capacity to act and energy to take the first step on the course we set.
4. **Security** – the stability and anchorage of self-worth to keep onward in the face of upheaval and change.

What use are guidance, wisdom and power if we lack the internal-security to act when a course undermines our self-worth?

What use are wisdom, strength and security if the ladder we are climbing (guidance) leans against the wrong wall entirely?

We'll cover *Power* in Habit 7 (self-renewal). For now, let's take a closer look at *Guidance*, *Wisdom* and *Strength*.

WHEN FOCUSED ≠ CENTRED

Take a look at the following list of common life-centres: **family, money, work, possessions, sex, status, pleasure, friends, enemies, community, self.**

Which absorb most of your energy and time? Which guide your priorities and actions? Where do you get most of your self-worth?

Focussing on *any* of these centres undermines our effectiveness in three ways:

- **Myopia** – neglect of some centres through fixation on others;
- **Misalignment** – trade-offs at odds with our principles and values; and
- **Instability** – security and self-worth based on factors outside our *Circle of Influence*.

The solution? The path to effectiveness starts with a focus on *principles*.

THE RULES OF LIFE

Principles, explains Covey, are like gravity; they are natural laws that ultimately govern the outcomes of actions. For example:

- **Unfairness, dishonesty** and **selfishness** always cause **disunity** and **distrust**;
- **Apathy** and **laziness** always cause **stagnation** and **decay**; and
- **Arrogance** always causes **dislike** and **error**

Sure, you may get away with unfairness, arrogance or apathy for a while. But *in the long run*, the outcomes above are inevitable. That is what makes these statements *principles*. That is why the bad guys always lose.

Rather than focus on *some* centres, argues Covey, we should [focus on the principles](#) that underlie *all* of them. Doing so dramatically increases our effectiveness. It puts us squarely in our *Circle of Influence* and sets up stable bases for *guidance, wisdom, power and security*.

It makes doing the right thing *easy*.

SEVEN STEPS TO A PRINCIPLE CENTRED LIFE

Covey's approach to principle centred living can be summed up in seven steps:

1. ;

2. **Define values;**
3. ;
4. **Set goals;**
5. **Craft a mission statement;**
6. **Rehearse and commit to your mission statement daily;** and
7. **Review and develop your mission statement often.**

Let's quickly look at each step.

1 – Collect principles.

Life's principles are everywhere. You'll find them in [The Ten Commandments](#) and [The Five Buddhist Precepts](#). You'll find them in [Aesop's Fables](#), [Seneca's Letters](#) and in [quotes from your favourite authors](#). You'll find them in [movies](#), [T.V. shows](#) and [games](#). You'll find them in your parents, heroes and mentors. You'll find them in the consequences of your actions.

Though we are good at internalising principles we are not perfect. Now that you have a label for them, what fundamental principles govern your own life? Write them down. Question everything. Take nothing for granted. Perhaps what you thought was a general principle is nothing of the sort. How would it change your perspective or your life if that were true?

A superb way to augment our store of principles is to [stockpile them](#). Write down the principles you identify in your life. Collect [thoughts](#), [anecdotes](#), [notes and quotes](#) that resonate with you in a '[Commonplace Book](#)'. Review your collection often. Challenge and improve upon them. Reflect on the implications of those principles on your actions today.

2 – Define values.

Unlike principles, our values are personal and subjective; they are the personal precepts we set on our behaviour.

We all have values, whether we define them or not. But values are most effective when we take ownership of them and align them with principles that foster positive outcomes. For example, you may agree that dishonesty always leads to disunity and distrust. So, if disunity and distrust are outcomes you would like to avoid, you may include 'honesty' as one of your values.

To get started, reflect on the principles you've discovered so far. Which resonate with you most strongly? If you were to die tomorrow, what sort of person would you like your friends, family, colleagues and community to say that you were? Write [a long-list](#). Now narrow it down to seven values that embody this vision. Reflect on the implications that living those values would have on your life today.

Though we may aspire to embody many values, it is much more effective to limit our focus to seven or less at one time. Any more and it becomes hard to evaluate and improve our behaviour. Consider that embodying even 2 or 3 values (e.g., love, industry and integrity) is still a lifetime of work. Coming close to just one might already change your life beyond recognition.

3 – Identify roles.

What roles would you like to play over the course of your life? What roles it is that life may ask of you? Will you be a parent, a partner, a family member, a community member, a manager, an entrepreneur, a friend, an athlete, an artist, a caregiver or a teacher? There are no right or wrong answers. Write a long-list that seems sensible to you (you can always change them later).

Now, condense your overall list to seven roles or less to avoid losing focus. If you died tomorrow, what major items on your list would you want to be remembered for doing well? Consider grouping similar roles (e.g., sibling, parent, child) into single buckets (e.g., family-member) if it helps.

4 – Set goals.

Take yourself back to your funeral. For each of the roles you've identified, what long-term *contributions* and *achievements* would you want to hear highlighted in your eulogy?

Write them down. Remember, this is really big picture stuff. Refine your response to a few concrete sentences for each.

5 – Craft a mission statement.

Blend all the components from steps 2 – 4 into a mission statement – a single statement of definite purpose and direction for your life. Don't worry about format or length. Don't worry about order or accuracy or eloquence. Write what feels right to you, right now. The goal here is to put a first peg in the ground.

Your mission statement is the focal point for your life. It's a definition of success that creates top-down flow. It subordinates your cravings, habits and actions to a higher purpose. What's more, the process above roots your purpose in principles. It grounds your foundation in natural laws that, in the long-run, will always deliver the outcomes to which they are tied.

6 – Rehearse and commit to your mission statement daily.

Read your mission statement twice per day, each day for the rest of your life – on waking, and just before bed.

When you can, read your mission statement somewhere quiet. If possible, read it aloud. As you read, visualise the outcomes of the statement as vividly as possible. *Feel* your statement: make it personal, positive, present and emotional. This isn't just an exercise in dictation. This is a daily commitment to the outcome of your existence.

When you anticipate important or troublesome situations, take out your

mission statement and reflect on it. How would the person described in it act? Close your eyes. Watch the events unfold in your mind. Rehearse your decisions as vividly as possible. Identify triggers that may divert your course. Visualise your ideal outcome. Do this until you are clear and resolute in your purpose.

7 – Review and develop your mission statement often.

Your mission statement is a living document. Make a habit of reviewing and adjusting it as often as possible. Make changes to account for new principles, roles or goals that emerge throughout life. Change the wording or structure so it resonates more strongly. Tinker with the contents until it elevates and inspires you.

One important and universal principle is that **mental creation *always* precedes physical creation.**

If every action begins with a thought then your mission statement is the thought that precedes your life.

CREATING JOINT MISSION STATEMENTS

Once you've tasted the power of a clear mission you may want to extend it to other parts of your life. One of the best ways to do so is to create joint mission statements within families, communities and organisations.

Follow the steps above exactly but with one important caveat: you must co-create and agree the mission statement with everyone involved: no involvement means no commitment with no exceptions. This may feel like a large upfront cost – especially at an organisational level – but the long-term impact of a fully aligned mission statement will more than return on investment.

Once created, put the mission statement prominently in view. Make reviewing it essential in all decision making. *“Out of sight is out of mind”*

doesn't just apply to the things that we'd *like* to forget.

Finally, review the mission statement jointly and together on a regular basis. This not only refreshes its relevance but also strengthens buy-in from all those involved.

HABIT 3: Put First Things First

*"There is no such thing as a lack of time, only a lack of priorities." –
Tim Ferriss*

Where Habit 2 deals with personal effectiveness (the **what** and **why**), Habit 3 deals with personal efficiency (the **how**).

To get things done you need a productivity system that is:

1. **Coherent** – aligned from top to bottom; from mission statement to next action;
2. **Balanced** – ensuring we don't let important parts of life stagnate and decay;
3. **Effective** – making time for important things and improving effectiveness over time;
4. **People Orientated** – built to improve relationships, not strain them;
5. **Flexible** – because *"no plan survives first contact with the enemy"*; and
6. **Portable** – if you can't keep it with you and keep it updated, you won't trust it and you won't use it.

If you've no idea where to start – don't worry. We'll tackle each ingredient below.

For now, let's start as we mean to go on and put first things first...

TWO PRINCIPLES OF PRODUCTIVITY

To maximise productivity, Covey argues, it is important to master two principles:

1. **The [P][PC] Paradigm** – Performance vs. Performance Capability; and
2. **The [Q2] Paradigm** – Urgency vs. Importance.

Let's explore each in turn.

1 – The [P][PC] Paradigm: Performance vs. Performance Capability

The [P][PC] Paradigm is simple:

- **Performance [P]** means delivering successful outcomes (laying golden eggs).
- **Performance Capability [PC]** means the ability to produce successful outcomes (developing the golden goose).

Like financial freedom, the surest route to productivity is pragmatism in [P] and regular investment in [PC].

And yet we so often get the balance of that equation wrong. We prioritise [P] over [PC]. We undermine our long-term ability to produce.

The solution? Like money, time is finite. We can't magically create more of it. The only way to maximise [PC] is to cut back on [P].

And the only way to cut back on [P] is to prioritise.

2 – The [Q2] Paradigm: Urgency vs. Importance.

The [Q2] Paradigm is the power tool of prioritisation and gets its name from the 2 by 2 matrix below:

		TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX	
		URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	I	ACTIVITIES: Crises Pressing problems Deadline-driven projects	II ACTIVITIES: Prevention, PC activities Relationship building Recognizing new opportunities Planning, recreation
	NOT IMPORTANT	III ACTIVITIES: Interruptions, some calls Some mail, some reports Some meetings Proximate, pressing matters Popular activities	IV ACTIVITIES: Trivia, busywork Some mail Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant activities

The Urgency vs. Importance Management Matrix

Quadrant 1 [Q1] is the home of fire-fighting Production [P]. It's also a world of stress, anxiety and burnout; too much [Q1] spells disaster for long-term productivity.

Quadrant 2 [Q2] is the home of thoughtful Production [P] and Production Capability [PC]. It's where we should (but don't often) focus most of our energy.

Quadrants 3 [Q3] and 4 [Q4] keep us busy but contribute little to our mission, our values or our high priority goals.

THE POWER OF NOW

Applying the [Q2] Paradigm means doing everything we can to spend more time in [Q2] – on important but not urgent activities. It applies to every action, goal and role in our lives.

For now, look at today's to-do list (if you don't have one, write one now with whatever you have to hand).

Next, beside each item on the list, note whether it is (a) urgent and (b) important where:

- **Urgent** means this item *must* be done *today*; and
- **Important** means completing this item (or not) will have *significant impact* (positive or negative) on your life.

Use the example activities in the matrix above to help. If you can't decide if something is important, refer to your mission statement and values. They will put things in perspective.

MAKE ROOM TO BREATHE

The next steps to becoming a productivity ninja may feel hard. Take your prioritised list, be brave and:

1. Ruthlessly cross off anything which is not important ([Q3] and [Q4] items).
2. Schedule time to work on [Q1] items (urgent and important), [putting the biggest and ugliest one's first](#).
3. Block out the rest of your day to work on [Q2] items (not urgent but important).

Whenever *anything* unplanned crops up in your day, develop the habit of:

1. Writing it down on your to-do list *before* you do it.
Creating a gap between stimulus and response.
2. Deciding which quadrant the new activity fits into.
3. Eliminating it immediately if it falls into [Q3] or [Q4].

Knowing what's important to you and saying "No" to everything else should cut down your "work" load significantly.

Do not fill that space with more items.

Instead, let's use some of the time you've just created to take a step back and look at the bigger picture...

SET YOUR WEEK UP FOR SUCCESS

One of the best investments you can make in [Q2] is in planning – specifically: weekly planning.

To make it easy, Covey suggests the following five-step process:

1. Reflect on your mission statement (your values, roles and long-term goals).
2. Identify up to six roles that you will need to play in the next 7 days (make your 7th role "Sharpen the Saw", see Habit 7).
3. Set 2 important ([Q1] or [Q2]) goals to complete in each role you've identified.
4. For each goal decide whether you need to do it or can delegate it.
5. Block time in your calendar to put your plans into action in the week ahead.

N.B., It's fine for your weekly roles to differ from your life roles (see Habit 2). For now, just focus on the week ahead. Perhaps you'll be parenting, managing a team, serving a community organisation, playing a sport or doing maintenance around your home. Make a split that feels right for you.

Though you can definitely use digital note-taking, productivity and calendar apps, [this weekly planner template](#) does everything above on just one piece of paper.

Why not combine it with an [erasable pen](#) or a [4-colour BIC](#)? There is a kind of magic that takes place between hand and page, as well as less chance of distraction.

Voila: a simple yet powerful productivity system that's coherent, balanced, effective, people-oriented, flexible and portable.

ADOPTING A [PC] MINDSET

As you work through your week it's essential to develop the habit of adopting a [PC] mindset.

First, learn to see every *Production* [P] problem as a *Production Capability* [PC] opportunity. Top performers are those that deliver results in good times *and* bad. *Make* time each day to reflect on what went well, what you learned and what you could have done better. Every crisis you survive *and learn from* makes you stronger, smarter and more resilient.

Next, make a habit of prioritising long-term efficiency. Do nothing [P] before deciding how to *invest extra effort now* to make your job easier, faster and better next time [PC]. Make time for proper planning. Learn and practice shortcuts. Design templates, systems and processes to automate tasks. Train new capabilities to make that possible or reduce future workload.

This isn't working *hard*, it's working *smart*. The more you invest in [PC] the less you'll find yourself fighting fires in [Q1] (urgent and important). That means less stress and less burnout. That means more time to work on the things that really matter [Q2]. The result? A virtuous circle of efficiency and effectiveness that supercharges long-term output.

THE ART OF EFFECTIVE DELEGATION.

Effective delegation is integral to productivity.

And with people it's crucial to keep sight of three things:

1. *Efficiency* is for *tools*;
2. *Effectiveness* is for *people*; and
3. *People are not tools* to be dispensed with efficiently.

Whether at home or at work, effective delegation starts with making five

key things clear:

1. **Results** – focus on *what* and *when*, not *how*;
2. **Guidelines** – establish the principles and policies that limit the solution space;
3. **Resources** – identify and unlock the resources (human, financial, technical and organisational) needed to complete the task;
4. **Accountability** – agree measurable standards of performance and timings for reviews; and
5. **Consequences** – specify what will happen (good and bad) as a result of those reviews.

N.B., When it comes to consequences, there are four main ways to motivate people. These are:

- **Financial** – rewards and penalties;
- **Psychic** – recognition and approval (especially public);
- **Opportunity** – training, development and perks; and
- **Responsibility** – scope and authority.

It is far easier, Covey explains, to issue directive orders for *what* and *how*. But it is far more rewarding to invest in effective delegation.

Be patient. Visualise success. Have the other person visualise success and describe it in their own words. Minimise and keep guidelines to potential points of failure. Trust people. Train and develop them so they can rise to the challenges you set.

A small effort upfront strengthens long-term capabilities, ensures motivation, builds loyalty and unlocks creativity in the minds of those around us.

PART II: Public Victory (Interdependence)

Habits 1 – 3 (*Private Victory*) are the base on which Habits 4 – 6 (*Public Victory*) are built. From interpersonal leadership, we win the trust and cooperation of others. Through empathic listening, we find understanding and wisdom to help them. Through synergy, we learn to embrace differences not as obstacles but as opportunities.

HABIT 4: Think Win-Win

"I can see that we're approaching this situation differently. Why don't we agree to communicate until we can find a solution we both feel good about."

If Habits 4 – 6 are about achieving interdependence and public victory, Habit 4 is about interpersonal leadership; inducing others to serve us through our willingness to serve.

THE FOUR OUTCOMES OF NEGOTIATION

There are four possible outcomes to any agreement:

1. **Win-Win** – mutually beneficial and satisfying solutions.
2. **Win-Lose** – zero-sum (i.e., "only one winner") solutions.
3. **Lose-Win** – giving in and permissiveness.
4. **Lose-Lose** – mutually destructive vengeance.

Any non-Win-Win outcome is a loss. Sure, you may get or give up what you want, but at what cost? At best, your relationship is tarnished – even if capitulation seems willing. At worst, you face broken promises or 'malicious obedience' (following an agreement to the letter, but no more). In any case, no alternative is more productive than a mutually beneficial Win-Win.

But committing to Win-Win solutions is hard, and takes five main ingredients to get right:

1. **Character** – a balance of courage and consideration, underpinned by the strength to walk away;
2. **Relationships** – enough trust and goodwill to feel confident both parties are working together;
3. **Agreements** – carefully structured to make outcomes and expectations clear;
4. **Systems** – to support collaboration, not competition, between parties; and
5. **Processes** – to develop Win-Win solutions no matter the problem you face.

Let's review each ingredient below.

1 – CHARACTER: ABUNDANCE VS. SCARCITY MENTALITY

Every Win-Win agreement begins with *Abundance Mentality* – the belief that all parties have value to add and that there is outcome aplenty for everyone.

The opposite of *Abundance Mentality* is *Scarcity Mentality* – the belief that agreements must be zero-sum; that there can only be one true winner.

Sometimes, *Scarcity Mentality* is accurate – e.g., in sports, in closed market competition or in relative grading systems. But our powerful, early experiences with *Scarcity Mentality* (especially at school and in sport) can blind us to the fact that most success is not zero-sum. The first step toward Win-Win solutions is just recognising that the sum is often far greater than the parts.

Of course, there's more to it. Win-Win solutions are grounded in character, in **maturity** and **integrity**, and specifically in a blend of:

- **Wisdom** – the **courage** to express feelings and convictions balanced

with **consideration** for the thoughts and feelings of others.

- **Persistence** – the desire to find a Win-Win solution that benefits everyone; even when quicker or easier solutions exist.
- **Strength** – knowing the value we place on ourselves and what a win means to us; sticking by our feelings, our values and our commitments.

With right character and right-mindset, we unlock better outcomes with others than are possible alone. But having the persistence to keep courage and consideration in balance is hard. Knowing what counts as a win, disagreeing with someone agreeably and walking away without prejudice takes perspective and power. That is why Habits 1 – 3 are so important to the success of Habits 4 – 6.

2 – RELATIONSHIPS: THE EMOTIONAL BANK ACCOUNT

The next ingredient in Win-Wins is relationships. Specifically, trust and a shared vision of results – qualities that develop most easily when we run surpluses in each other's *Emotional Bank Accounts* (our balances of trust and goodwill).

Every interaction is positive or negative. When positive, we make a deposit in our *Emotional Bank Account*. When negative, we make a withdrawal. Sometimes those changes are conscious. But often our transactions are unconscious. They're the small courtesies and discourtesies or the affirmations and criticisms delivered (but not forgotten) in the subtlest of gestures and moments.

Take a moment now to reflect on the important relationships in your life. Assess the levels of trust and goodwill in each of those relationships. Are your *Emotional Bank Accounts* running surpluses? Are they overdrawn? Have trust and goodwill been compromised entirely?

Covey suggests six ways to build capital in our relationships with others:

1. **Understand the individual** – make what is important to the other person as important as the other person is to you (see Habit 5).
2. **Attend to the little things** – perform little courtesies and kindnesses; beware of small discourtesies and unkindnesses.
3. **Keep commitments** – never make promises you can't keep; make commitments sparingly and carefully.
4. **Clarify expectations** – make roles and goals explicit; be wary of the implicit ones (this takes time, energy and courage – but is well worth it).
5. **Show personal integrity** – keep promises and fulfil expectations; be loyal to those who are not present; treat everyone by the same principles, all of the time.
6. **Apologise sincerely** – admit fault quickly and emphatically; bow and bow low.

Take another look at the important relationships in your life. What deposits could you make now or start making from the list above? How? When? Commit to those actions sincerely and immediately. Don't wait until you're negotiating to make changes.

A surplus in our *Emotional Bank Accounts*, allows trust and goodwill to flourish. And when a good outcome for everyone is the shared outcome of all the chance of a Win-Win runs high.

3 – AGREEMENTS

Even the best intentions can be undermined by a poorly structured agreement. Clarifying outcomes and expectations upfront is crucial in avoiding frustration and confusion down the line.

Fortunately, effective agreements share the same principles as effective delegation. [Click here](#) to refresh your memory on results, guidelines, resources, accountability and consequences.

4 – SYSTEMS

Competition is *good* in environments where cooperation is not needed. In these cases, publicly comparing and rewarding relative performance are effective ways to challenge and motivate others.

To encourage *cooperation*, create systems that:

1. Direct competition externally or at the group's past performance; and
2. Create meaningful rewards based on shared standards and goals.

The same applies personally: if you measure yourself against others, their wins become your losses. Goals that need cooperation with others won't hold you back, they will make you happier, more collaborative and more effective.

Are the systems you work in cooperative or competitive? Are your goals individual or shared? Make time to identify, evaluate and adjust habits and systems that creep into your personal and professional life.

Remember: Competitive systems don't foster or support Win-Win solutions, they destroy them. And good people in bad systems create bad results.

5 – PROCESSES

In this final section on interpersonal leadership, Covey lays out a clear five-step process for generating Win-Win solutions:

1. Take the time to really see the problem **from the other party's point of view**.
2. Give expression to **the needs and concerns of others** better than they can themselves.
3. Identify **the key issues and concerns** (not positions) involved.
4. Determine **the results of a fully acceptable solution**.

5. Identify **new options** to achieve those results.

Not only is this solid life advice; it's also a comprehensive crash course in the skills fundamental to success in any sales related profession.

But what's most clear from this process is not the importance of the five Win-Win steps we've just covered. It's the one thing we're still missing.

It's the earnest and obsessive desire to run marathons in the footwear of others.

HABIT 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

"Let me listen to you first until I deeply and thoroughly understand your perspective. When I can explain your point of view as well as mine, then I can communicate mine to you."

A doctor cannot heal with good intentions alone. To prescribe they must first diagnose. And to diagnose they must first understand.

If our sincerest desire is to help others the same principle applies. To deliver both wins in Win-Win we need a deep understanding of the other side's needs.

WHY ACTIVE LISTENING ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH

Understanding begins with listening and there are five types of listening tendency:

1. **Ignoring** – clearly not listening;
2. **Pretending** – giving the impression of listening;
3. **Selective** – listening intermittently, alert for selective cues;
4. **Attentive** – listening actively, with the intent to reply; and
5. **Empathic** – listening actively, with the intent to understand.

Listening lies in our *Circle of Influence*. And you'd think we'd devote as

much energy and time to empathic listening as possible. But we don't. At best, we largely listen attentively – an exercise that's more focused on our needs than the needs of those around us.

To be clear, attentive listening *is* active listening; but it's tarnished by four autobiographical response tendencies:

- **Evaluating** – agreeing or disagreeing with what is being said;
- **Probing** – asking questions from own frame of reference;
- **Advising** – giving counsel based on our own experience; and
- **Interpreting** – analysing the motives and behaviours of others based on our own.

These tendencies make attentive listening shallow and self-centred. In every case, we subvert our ability to understand by prematurely judging, steering and prescribing.

HOW TO LISTEN EMPATHICALLY

Empathic listening is active listening *with the intent to understand*. It's not about method or sympathy. It's about a sincere desire to help others by immersing ourselves in their hearts and their minds. It's 10% words, 30% sounds and 60% body language.

To get started, try practising the following four steps in your next conversations:

1. **Listen** – listen with the intent to understand; sense, intuit *and* feel.
2. **Reflect** – show that you hear their emotions – “You're happy...”
“You're frustrated...”, “You're sad...”.
3. **Rephrase** – show that you understand content and cause –
“because...”
4. **Restrain** – get comfortable with silence; give the other person room to clarify, think and unfold.

Don't counsel until counsel is sought and even then only when responses are rational. If responses become emotional, resume empathic listening. Allow silence and resist probing; it's too invasive, controlling and logical to let others become vulnerable. If things get too painful let them drop. Sometimes all that's needed is space and time. Continue if and when the other person feels ready.

Sometimes, people do need an additional perspective and input. But more often, no outside counsel is required at all. People unravel their own problems. Solutions present themselves. The key is to genuinely seek the welfare of the other person, not to try and manipulate them. Let them work through the problem and seek help or find a solution in their own pace and time.

WHY WE DON'T LISTEN ENOUGH

If empathic listening is so effective and so valuable, why don't we do it more often? The answer, explains Covey, is that empathic listening is *hard* and it is *risky*:

- **It is *hard*** to focus our attention exclusively on somebody else;
- **It is *hard*** to be patient and resist the urge to prescribe without thinking; and
- **It is *risky*** because to influence others, we must first allow ourselves to be influenced.

To listen empathically we must be able to take our eyes off ourselves without fearing loss of our principles, values and perspectives. This is why Habits 1 – 3 are so foundational – a strong, stable inner-core is a prerequisite to managing our own vulnerability with patience, peace and strength of purpose.

HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF UNDERSTOOD

In over 2,000 years, few have improved on [Aristotle's Rhetoric](#) – “the most important single work on persuasion ever written”.

Covey agrees and briefly introduces Aristotle's first three criteria for effective persuasion (I've appended [Kairos](#), the fourth). These are:

- [Ethos](#) – personal credibility, integrity, competence, trust;
- [Pathos](#) – emotional alignment;
- [Logos](#) – evidence, logic and reasoning; and
- [Kairos](#) – timing and place.

The upshot is this:

- If you can bring efficiency and effectiveness to bear on a base of guidance, wisdom, power and security (Habits 1 – 3);
- If you can think Win-Win, build trusting relationships and create agreements and systems that support cooperation (Habit 4);
- If you can give expression to the needs and concerns of the others better than they can themselves (Habit 5);
- If you can present your ideas credibly, clearly, visually, at the right time and in the right place...

Then “yours is the world, and everything that's in it”. You have all you need to persuade on any topic you turn your mind to.

HABIT 6: Synergise

“Let's work together to produce alternative solutions to our differences that we both recognise are better than the ones either you or I proposed initially.”

Habit 6 is about synergy, which when properly understood is “the highest activity in all life – the true test and manifestation of all other habits put together”.

Synergy is the creative collaboration we unlock by focusing the four human endowments, a Win-Win mindset and empathic communication on life's toughest challenges. Synergy is a commitment to principle centred partnership that catalyses, unifies and unleashes the full potential of ourselves and of others.

But if synergy is the outcome of all other habits combined, then what is the missing ingredient? Why does synergy get a habit of its own?

THE PARADOX OF PARADIGMS

Ready for an experiment? Take a quick look at one (and only one) of the two picture links here: [Picture A](#) or [Picture B](#).

Done? Ok, now take a look at the picture link here: [Picture C](#).

What do you see? Look carefully.

If you've not done this before, there's a high chance in you saw only one of: (A) a hook-nosed old lady; or (B) a beautiful young woman. In fact, the illusion contains both. Try seeing the alternative for yourself. Use the other of [Picture A](#) or [Picture B](#) if you need help.

Even if you know this illusion or could see both versions easily, it's worth considering (i) that Covey's business school classes developed heated disagreements in response to this experiment and (ii) that the real world is just as misleading and even more complex.

The problem, Covey argues, is we assume different perspectives must compete. We don't see them for the equally valid and accurate alternatives they so often are.

STRENGTH IN DIFFERENCES

Observing this paradox is mind-opening. It shows us that our paradigms

are subjective; born more out of [priming](#) than objective wisdom. It grants us humility and reverence to accept that we are limited and flawed. It helps us realise that "left to our own experiences, we constantly suffer from a shortage of data".

Differences, it turns out, aren't inconveniences at all. They're a *prerequisite* to full understanding and wise decision making.

This realisation is the spark at the heart of synergy. Whether within us or between us, we suddenly learn to respect different views on the same subjects. We seek out alternative perspectives. We build on strengths and compensate for weaknesses. We realise that sameness is not oneness. We see that uniformity is not unity.

WHEN 1 + 1 = 100

What does synergy feel like? It's an aura of high trust and cooperation ignited by acts of courage, love and authenticity. It's transcendent energy, excitement, synchrony, intuition, collective paradigm shifts and a sense of reforming and closure. Does that feeling sound familiar? In your home? From your work? Playing sports?

Most of us can find at least one memory of synergy, either as individuals or as groups. Sometimes those events create wonders. Sometimes they "hang on the edge of chaos and for some reason descend into it". In both cases, the importance of Independence is clear. Creative collaboration is raw and unpredictable. It demands security, openness and a spirit for adventure. It belongs to those who have the strength to try and try again, even if they sometimes get burned.

As we mature from independence to interdependence our role in synergy changes. We shift from contribution to creation. We realise that though we can't control other's paradigms, we can control our own in a way that encourages others to be open. In doing so we begin to fuel synergy in

people and situations where otherwise it might not exist.

When we can respect both sides of our natures (the analytical and creative); when we can genuinely affirm and not disagree with those who see the world differently; when we can let go of ourselves and know we'll always find our way home: that's when we find Habit 6. That's when we reach our full power and potential.

PART III: Renewal

HABIT 7: Sharpen the Saw

Where Habits 1 – 6 are tools of Performance [P], Habit 7 is the ultimate manifestation of Performance Capability [PC]. It says "If you're going to fell a mighty tree [P], it's important [Q2] to keep your saw sharp as possible [PC], even if that means taking a break from the cutting every once in a while."

Staying sharp, argues Covey, means attending to 4 different areas across 2 domains:

Daily Private Victory

Aim for one hour per day, every day, for the rest of your life.

- **Physical Sharpness** – exercise, nutrition, rest and relaxation
- **Mental Sharpness** – reading, visualising, planning, writing
- **Spiritual Sharpness** – value clarification and commitment, study and meditation

Daily Public Victory

Doesn't need explicit time, but does need practice.

- **Social/Emotional Sharpness** – service, empathy, synergy, intrinsic security

We all know that the benefit of investing in these areas outweighs its cost. For those who are too busy to find the time to exercise, read or make space for thinking and meditation, the kicker is this: *if you do not act on these [Q2] activities, they will eventually act on you.*

Why is "Sharpening the Saw" always the 7th role on our [weekly planner](#)? Because avoiding poor outcomes takes constant renewal. It is much harder to recover from chronic illness or re-skill in a world that's outrun us than it is to stay on top in the first place.

Don't become someone that people refer to as "once having had so much potential." *Do* be the person that makes changes in their *Circle of Influence* that they know they should or need to.

Covey's prescriptive suggestions in each area are minimal but solid. Building even the limited activities below into your life will leave you happier, more at peace and more effective. For more detail, you'll find thousands of resources on Amazon and Google.

PHYSICAL SHARPNESS

Exercise for 3 – 6 hours per week. Start slowly. The goal of every session is to make it through the next one.

- **Endurance** – aim for 60% of your max. heart rate [~ 220 beats per minute less your age] for at least 30 minutes. N.B., training effect is $\sim 72 - 87\%$ of maximal.
- **Flexibility** – stretching before exercise, to warm up, and after it, to release lactic acid.
- **Strength** – callisthenics (bodyweight exercises) are all you need e.g., pushups, pull-ups, sit-ups; weights are a good addition when available; N.B., almost all the benefit comes at the very end, just before failure.

MENTAL SHARPNESS

Commit to continuous learning:

- **Read** – aim for a book per month, then per fortnight, then per week.
- **Write** – keep a journal of thoughts, experiences, insights and learning.
- **Visualise/plan** – exercise the first 3 habits; especially weekly planning.

SPIRITUAL SHARPNESS

- **Guidance** – commit and recommit to your mission statement on a regular basis.
- **Peace** – make time often to immerse yourself in prayer, meditation, art or nature; find time to find the “still small voice of calm”.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SHARPNESS

Our social/emotional sharpness doesn't require explicit time every day, but it does require practice.

Emotional wellbeing is primarily manifested in our relationships with others, so make commitments continually and consciously to make deposits in your *Emotional Bank Accounts*.

Putting the 7 Habits Into Action

That's it! How are you feeling? Excited? Energised? Relieved to have made it through an almost book-sized book summary?

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People is among the most impactful and practical books I've yet read. If you're anything like me, at least one thing you read here today blew your mind.

But "To learn and not to do is really not to learn. To know and not to do is really not to know." Getting more from *The 7 Habits* than a fuzzy warm feeling means putting principles into practice.

How? Here are four concrete actions you can take right away:

1. **[Buy the book](#) and/or bookmark this book summary.**
Read and re-visit either one at least once a quarter until the principles inside are locked in.
2. **Block 30 minutes in your calendar to visit www.7HabitsPEQ.com**
This free 65-stop questionnaire tells you where you stand in each habit.
3. **[Download this PDF of application suggestions](#) from the book.**
Commit to at least one of the short exercises once per week for the next 12 months.
4. **Block 60 minutes in your calendar to work on Habit 2.**
Have a go at the 7 Steps to a Principle Centred Life.

DECIDE TODAY TO BEGIN YOUR UPWARD SPIRAL

Commit, do, learn.

Commit, do, learn.

Live life in crescendo and remember:

"The most important work you will ever do is always ahead of you. It is never behind you. You should always be expanding and deepening your commitment to that work. Retirement is a false concept. You may retire from a job, but you never retire from meaningful projects and contributions."

Best The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Quotes

These The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People quotes come from **The Art of Living**'s ever-growing central library of thoughts, anecdotes, notes, and [inspirational quotes](#).

"If you want to achieve your highest aspirations and overcome your greatest challenges, identify and apply the principle or natural law that governs the results you seek."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Before you begin scrambling up the ladder of success, make sure that it is leaning against the right building."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"How many on their deathbeds wished they'd spent more time at the office – or watching TV? The answer is, No one. They think about their loved ones, their families, and those they have served."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Each of us has many, many maps in our head, which can be divided into two main categories: maps of the way things are, or realities, and maps of the way things should be, or values."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"We see the world, not as it is, but as we are—or, as we are conditioned to see it... The more aware we are of our basic paradigms, maps, or assumptions, and the extent to which we have been influenced by our experience, the more we can take responsibility for those paradigms, examine them, test them against reality, listen to others and be open to their perceptions, thereby getting a larger picture and a far more objective view."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"If you want to have a happy marriage, be the kind of person who generates positive energy and sidesteps negative energy rather than empowering it. If you want to have a more pleasant, cooperative teenager, be a more understanding, empathic, consistent, loving parent. If you want to have more freedom, more latitude in your job, be a more responsible, a more helpful, a more contributing employee. If you want to be trusted, be trustworthy. If you want the secondary greatness of recognized talent, focus first on primary greatness of character."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Dependent people need others to get what they want. Independent people can get what they want through their own effort. Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Interdependence is a choice only independent people can make. Dependent people cannot choose to become interdependent. They don't have the character to do it; they don't own enough of themselves."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Between stimulus and response, man has the freedom to choose."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"The ability to subordinate an impulse to a value is the essence of the proactive person. Reactive people are driven by feelings, by circumstances, by conditions, by their environment. Proactive people are driven by values—carefully thought about, selected and internalized values."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"It's not what happens to us, but our response to what happens to us that hurts us."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Love is a verb. Reactive people make it a feeling."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"A good affirmation has five basic ingredients: it's personal, it's positive, it's present tense, it's visual, visual, and it's emotional. So I might write something like this: "It is deeply satisfying (emotional) that I (personal) respond (present tense) with wisdom, love, firmness, and self-control (positive) when my children misbehave."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Without involvement, there is no commitment."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Integrity is the value we place on ourselves. It's our ability to make and keep commitments to ourselves, to 'walk our talk.'"

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"If you want to get something done, give it to a busy man."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"You simply can't think efficiency with people. You think effectiveness with people and efficiency with things."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"One person's mission is another person's minutiae."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"You can't change the fruit without changing the root."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Maturity is the balance between courage and consideration."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Abundance Mentality... flows out of a deep inner sense of personal worth and security. It is the paradigm that there is plenty out there and enough to spare for everybody."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"If you put good people in bad systems, you get bad results. You have to water the flowers you want to grow."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Empathy is not sympathy. Sympathy is a form of agreement, a form

of judgment. And it is sometimes the more appropriate emotion and response. But people often feed on sympathy. It makes them dependent. The essence of empathic listening is not that you agree with someone; it's that you fully, deeply, understand that person, emotionally as well as intellectually."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"The essence of synergy is to value differences—to respect them, to build on strengths, to compensate for weaknesses."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"The more authentic you become, the more genuine in your expression, particularly regarding personal experiences and even self-doubts, the more people can relate to your expression and the safer it makes them feel to express themselves."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Sameness is not oneness; uniformity is not unity."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"When we're left to our own experiences, we constantly suffer from a shortage of data."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"If two people have the same opinion, one is unnecessary."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Peace of mind comes when your life is in harmony with true principles and values and in no other way."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Principles are independent of us. They operate regardless of our awareness of them, acceptance of them, liking of them, belief in them, or obeying of them."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"Living the 7 Habits is a constant struggle for everyone. Everyone falters from time to time on each of the seven and sometimes all seven simultaneously. They really are simple to understand but difficult to consistently practice. They are common sense but what is common sense is not always common practice."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"The most important habit is the one you are having the most difficult time living."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

"The most important work you will ever do is always ahead of you. It is never behind you. You should always be expanding and deepening your commitment to that work. Retirement is a false concept. You may retire from a job, but never retire from meaningful projects and contributions."

- [Stephen Covey](#), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

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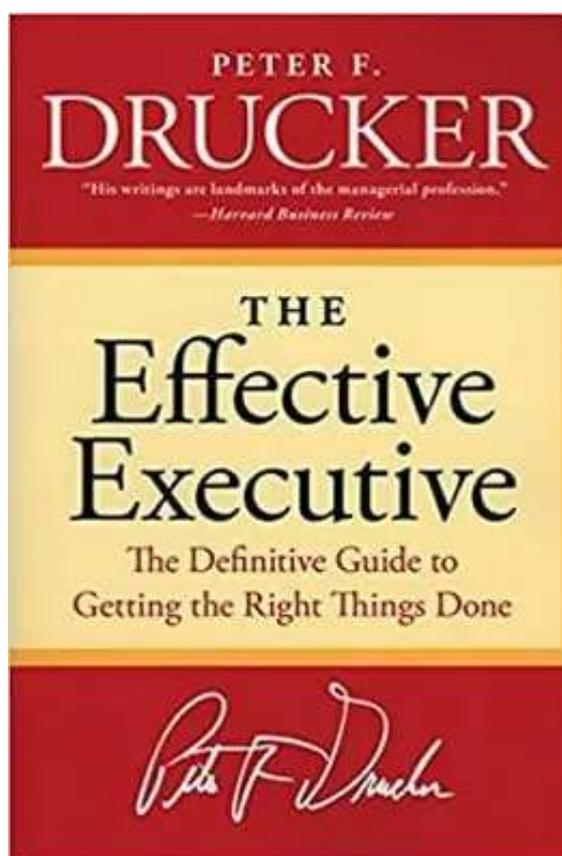
Here are 5 top books like The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People...



1. [First Things First](#) - [Stephen R. Covey](#)

First Things First is an action-oriented time-management manual, filled with frameworks and exercises to help you do more of what matters and less of what doesn't - by the author of the #1 book on this list, Stephen Covey.

Published 1993 // 384 pages // Rated 4.1 over 40,200 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

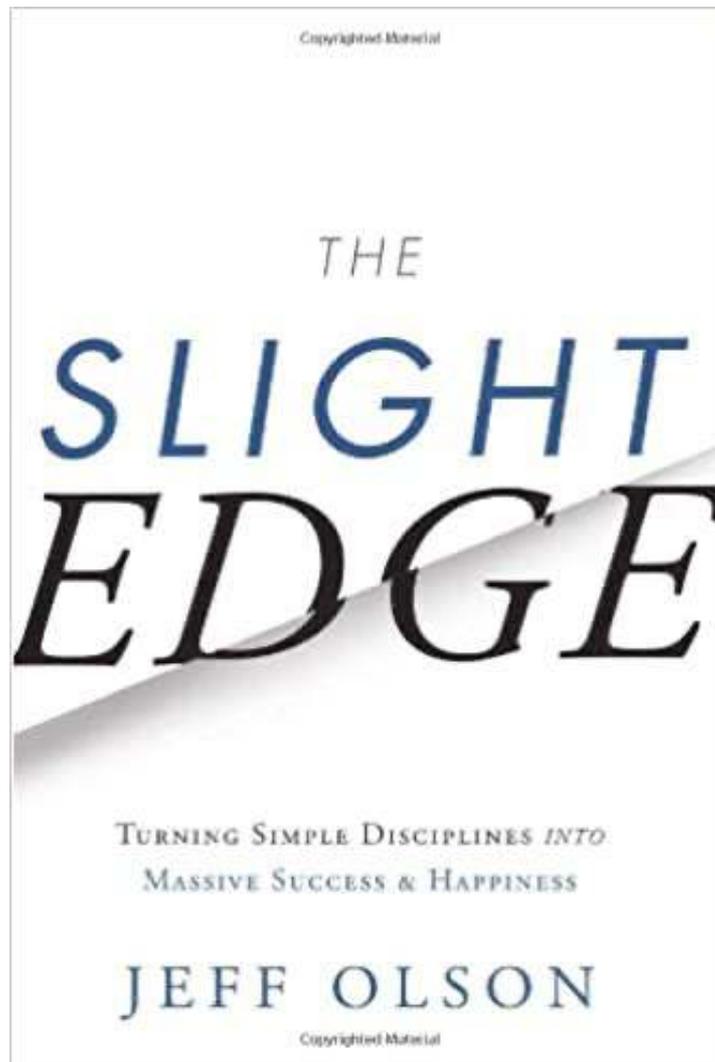


2. [The Effective Executive](#) - [Peter F. Drucker](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done

The Effective Executive is THE timeless classic on leadership and management; on getting the right things done - by the dean of business and management philosophy, Peter F. Drucker.

Published 1966 // 208 pages // Rated 4.1 over 32,400 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

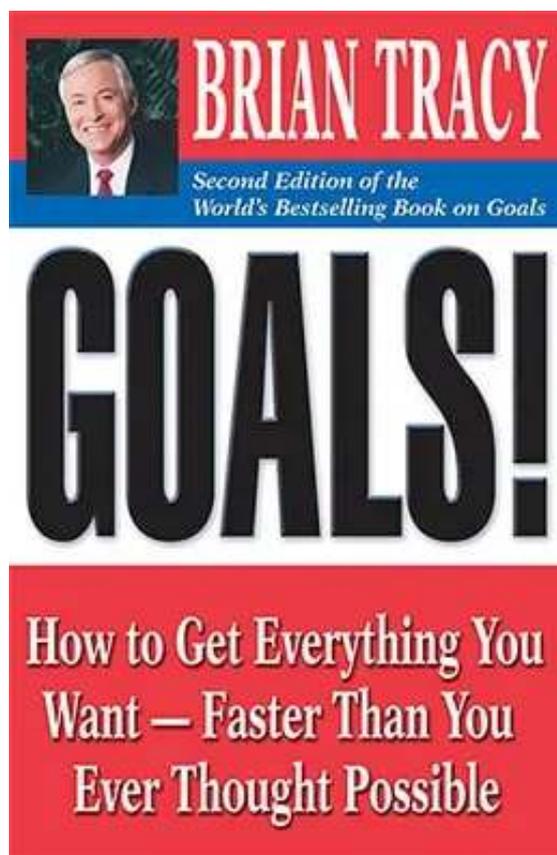


3. [The Slight Edge](#) - [Jeff Olson](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

Turning Simple Disciplines Into Massive Success & Happiness

The Slight Edge is a short, punchy, practical guide to the why, what and how of using simple daily disciplines to achieve breakthrough success - by serial entrepreneur, speaker and author, Jeff Olson.

Published 2005 // 168 pages // Rated 4.3 over 21,600 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

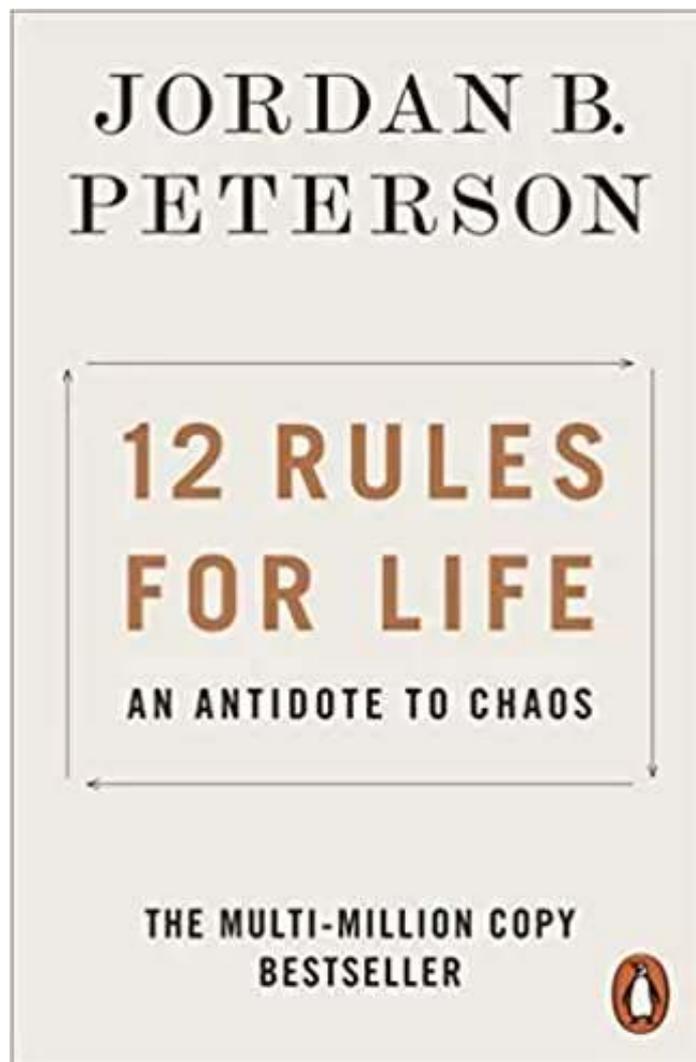


4. [Goals!](#) - [Brian Tracy](#)

How to Get Everything You Want Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible

Goals! was the first book I ever read on productivity and probably the most readable and complete guide to goal-setting ever written - by sales legend and time-management master, Brian Tracy.

Published 1989 // 291 pages // Rated 4.2 over 14,100 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



5. [12 Rules for Life](#) - [Jordan B. Peterson](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

An Antidote to Chaos

12 Rules for Life is a #1 international bestseller that distills some of life's toughest questions into accessible, practical advice - by the New York Times's "most influential public intellectual in the Western world right now," Jordan B. Peterson.

Published 2018 // 409 pages // Rated 4.0 over 41,900 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

Wish There Was a Faster/Easier Way?

Whenever you're ready, here are four ways I can help you be more

productive, find more balance and live life more on purpose...

1. **Curious? Discover how productive you really are...** Take this free, 2-minute assessment to unlock your PQ and discover the top 25 habits you need to get big things done. [Take the 2-minute quiz →](#)
2. **Overwhelmed? Get a free chapter of my book...** Let me show you how to beat procrastination, permanently, with this free sneak peek inside **TAoL**'s ultimate productivity primer. [Download your free chapter →](#)
3. **Stuck? Grab a 90-Day TRACKTION Planner...** Get the tool thousands trust to help them take control of their time, master their habits and hit goals in every part of their lives. [Order your 90-day planner →](#)
4. **Burned out? Join the TRACKTION Community...** Take the 6-week masterclass, get weekly group coaching, find accountability partners and connect with like-minded self-starters. [Get started FREE →](#)

[Arthur Worsley](#)

I founded **TAoL** to discover and share the best wisdom on how to live long and prosper. Before that I studied Psychology, Philosophy & Physiology at Oxford and consulted at McKinsey. **Still curious?** [Learn more](#) or [take my FREE productivity quiz](#).