

# The 7 habits of highly effective people – assignment

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Stephen R. Covey discusses powerful lessons in personal change in his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. This final paper will illustrate and explain the seven habits of highly effective people, discuss and rate how each of the seven habits are useful to me as a salesperson and in general life, evaluate past and current mission statements, assess the material of the book, and show a developed plan for change and renewal of the seven habits.

The stated objectives will be outlined in this paper through separate headings and subheadings to demonstrate a business style outline as well as clearly and succinctly address each issue separately. Seven Habits. Covey defines a habit as the intersection of knowledge, skill, and desire. Knowledge is what he calls the 'what to do', skill is the 'how to do', and desire is the 'want to do'. In order to make a habit in our lives, we have to have all three. Habit 1: Be Proactive. The first step in becoming a successful and effective person is to be proactive in life.

As human beings we are responsible for our own lives. Our behavior is a function of our decisions, not our conditions, and we have the responsibility to make things happen. It is important to take initiative to successfully deal with people and circumstances that are brought along the way. Each person, and only that person, has the power to stimulate a response. Being proactive is very important when dealing with problems. According to Covey, problems fall into three categories; direct control, indirect control, and no control.

When dealing with any of the three problems it is important to take the proactive approach to handling the mistake. First, acknowledge the mistake.

Next, correct the mistake. Last, learn from it. Being proactive is about taking the first step towards being an effective person. It is important to remember to be proactive in all of life's challenges and to handle them in a proactive manner by learning from them. Discussion and Rating. This is one of the most important habits for me because taking the first step is always the most difficult. I have learned through past experiences in classes and internships that to become a successful salesperson I need to get out in the business world and be proactive. Taking the first step in sales may include cold calling or prospecting. This is the foundation for making sales, but it is also the hardest part too. Being proactive helps me get through the basic tasks of sales and keeps me ahead of the curve. This is also true in life as well. I feel that if you want to lead a successful and productive life, you must have the get-up-and-go mentality. This proclamation is true for both work and leisure time.

Rating: 7. As stated above, I find it very important to be proactive. However, I believe that this is one of the more difficult tasks to accomplish and therefore I'm a little harder on myself in my rating. I need to do a better job to strive and achieve the goals I set forth before me. I also need to determine my circle of influence because it contains the things in the world that we show concern for. If I can better determine my circle of influence then I know that I can face reality in life's situations and even in future projections.

Becoming more proactive will dramatically help both of those. Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind. I define this habit to mean: imagine what you want for

yourself and imagine how you are going to get there. If you keep this in mind and live by criteria that will get you there, then you will be taking steps in the right direction. This habit begins with the principle that all things are created twice. This means that you should plan and envision the creation before acting upon it. Therefore, you create the vision once in your head, and twice upon completion.

Also, it is important to live out of imagination rather than memory. Living out of imagination allows you to examine your deepest values, and realize whether or not you are living your life in harmony with the values you set forth before yourself. This all plays off of the most effective way to begin with the end in mind. That is, approach your role in life with clear values and directions. Begin each day with those values firmly in mind. The best way to do this is to develop a personal mission statement. A mission statement identifies where you want to be and helps you determine where you are.

It gives you important information on how to get there and tells you when you've arrived. Achieving the end is harder than we usually imagine it to be. Some ways to help our progress can be found in the four life-support systems: Security, Guidance, Wisdom, and Power. These represent your self worth, give you a sense of direction and balance, and provide the capacity to accomplish goals. Good affirmation has five basic ingredients: it's personal, positive, present tense, visual, and emotional. Using the affirmation process day after day will eventually change our behavior.

We will learn to live out our lives by the script we wrote for ourselves.

Discussion and Rating. Right now is the time in my life where I need to be

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thinking about the next step in my life. I need to focus on my future and figure out what I want to do with my life. Habit 2 will be very useful to me in the next coming weeks as I look for jobs or internships that lead into jobs. Jumping from Habit 1 to Habit 2 will probably take place within the next semester for me. In my career as a salesperson, beginning with the end in mind is very important.

Not only will I be more successful but I will feel good and have fun doing it. I know that I want to do well for myself and Habit 2 will help me achieve that goal. Rating: 5. I feel that my overall effort to begin with the end in mind is average. I realize that if want to successfully complete private victory than I need to improve in this area otherwise moving on to the third habit is pointless. I feel that at this time in my life it is hard to envision my next move because I love college life. The sad part is that I only have 2 semesters left and I do not know what I want to sell or where I want to sell it.

Instead of planning my future, I'm hoping that something comes my way. I definitely need to improve my planning skills in regards to future decisions. Habit 3: Put First Things First. Habit 3 is what Covey calls the ' physical creation' and cannot be achieved without first making a vision and a focus on the principle centered contribution that precedes it, also known as, Habits 1 and 2. Putting first things first is essentially done through time management. But, to accomplish successful management, you must first accomplish leadership. Leadership is high-powered and right brain powered. Management is only accomplished through leadership and is then left brain powered. Though time management is important in achieving Habit 3, time

management isn't the real challenge. The true challenge is to manage ourselves. One way we can measure ourselves is by integrity, the value we place on ourselves. Time management can be distinguished by the time management matrix, deeming whether something is urgent or important. The time management matrix is split up into four quadrants, and defines what a person is like who focuses their activities in each.

Each quadrant tells how the person breaks down their time. The heart of effective personal management lies in quadrant 2 where activities are important but not urgent. In this quadrant, people build relationships, write personal mission statements, and plan effectively. Quadrant 2 deals with the things we know we need to do, but somehow seldom get around to doing. Lastly, Habit 3 deals with thinking in terms of effectiveness, not efficiency. We need to find this to be true because efficiency deals with time. A principle centered person thinks in terms of effectiveness when dealing with people.

It is important to direct daily decisions based on this because it will help you resort to using your values when making decisions. Discussion and Rating. Habit 3 will be effective for me as a salesperson and in general life because it is the final piece of Private Victory. It allows us to go from dependence to independence in the seven habits paradigm. Striving to reach independence is important because you shift viewing the world from other's perspectives and start focusing on the world as you see it. Habit 3 is the culmination of Private Victory and we begin life totally dependent on others until we can essentially take care of ourselves.

This habit will be useful to me in the world of sales because it helps me remember that I essentially cannot finish the third habit without finishing strong on the prior two. I figure that I can use this methodology on all aspects in the sales world that need to be completed in an orderly fashion. For instance, I need to do a job prospecting and cold calling a potential buyer before I can even think about sitting down to give a sales pitch Rating: 8. I believe that this is probably my strongest attribute in the Private Victory section of the seven habits paradigm.

I contribute this to the fact that I am more of a doer rather than a planner or imaginer. I would rather see results in a physical manner than spend most of my time planning how I will achieve results. Don't get me wrong, I understand that all of these components need to be done correctly in order to be an effective person. I feel more comfortable with the third habit than with the prior two because I see results, and that in turn, gives me more motivation to continue on. Habit 4: Think Win/Win. There are six paradigms of human interaction, but only one is a total philosophy of human interaction.

Win/Win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. This means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial and mutually satisfying. To fully understand Win/Win, you need to believe that it is a belief in the third agreement. This means that it's not your way of thinking or my way of thinking, but rather a better way of thinking. There are three character traits essential to the Win/Win paradigm. The first is that of integrity; identify values and execute upon them. The second is maturity; the balance between courage and consideration.

The last is abundance maturity. This means that there is plenty of the second trait, maturity, out there for everyone. The balance of courage and consideration is essential to Win/Win because people think in dichotomies. An example of a dichotomy is when someone characterizes you as one thing or another. For example, you're either nice or you're tough. This isn't the case with the Win/Win paradigm because it says you can be both. You have to be considerate and sensitive while being brave. Trust is also an essence of Win/Win because without trust the best we can do is compromise.

Without trust we lack credibility to be open. Lastly, Win/Win can only survive in an organization when the systems of that organization support it. You aren't able to use Win/Win unless everyone in the organization fully understands how to use it, and knows that they have to use it. Discussion and Rating. The Win/ Win paradigm is important because it can be very useful to me in both life and to me as a salesperson. In sales, you want to sell your product to make money, but in order for you to profit, the buyer also needs to see the benefits of buying your product.

In other words, if you want to " win", then the buyer also needs to " win". This is also a nice philosophy to live by in life because you should enjoy your life to the fullest. One way to do this is by compromising with yourself. If you want to win and enjoy life to the fullest, then you need to compromise with yourself by understanding your boundaries and support everything that you decide to do. Rating: 8. This is one of the stronger habits that I exude. I have always tried to make it possible to get the results I desired. I have learned



that the easiest way to do this is by compromising with yourself and others as well.

Also, I think that if you display one of the other six paradigms (Win/Lose, Lose/Win, etc. ); it isn't fair to either party. I feel that I will excel with this habit throughout my life and career because it is one of my strongest. Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood. By understanding this habit, it will be easier to understand the key to effective interpersonal information. Most people do not seek to understand first. The initial reaction they have is to rush in and "fix" things without diagnosing the problem first. This reaction is most problematic and is the worst way to solve a problem.

People don't listen with the intent of communicating; rather they listen with the intent to reply. There are five levels of listening: Ignoring, Pretending, Selective, Attentive, and Empathetic. The highest level is empathetic listening because you get accurate data to work with and see things from a different point of reference. When you get inside another person's frame of reference, you essentially understand how they feel. If you know what motivates them, then you are able to meet their needs. The only way to do this is by developing the pure desire, the personal strength, and a positive emotional bank account.

Discussion and Rating. I find this habit to be extremely important to me when dealing with a career in sales. People generally like to talk about their self and about what is going on in their lives. It isn't hard to get people to divulge information because they like to talk, but it is extremely important to listen and communicate when the time is right. One thing I learned in my

internship over last summer was to listen effectively, assess the information correctly, and they reply. I learned this through going on many sales calls with the Director of Sales for the company I worked for.

Through these many experiences with my superiors, I learned how to first understand and then go on to be understood. Rating: 9. Through my experience at my internship I harnessed the skills of listening before speaking. Therefore, I rate this habit as my highest because I feel the most comfortable using it. I believe that I seek to understand the potential buyer then proceed to communicate with them and seek to be understood.

However, with more experience and practice I believe I can perfect this skill and use it more effectively in sales calls in my future. Habit 6: Synergize.

Synergize comes from the word synergy, which is the essence of principle centered leadership; the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It is the most catalytic, most unifying and exciting part. By communicating synergistically, you are opening your mind, heart, and expressions to new possibilities, new alternatives, and new options. Communication can come in many forms, whether it's the defensive communication, the lowest form of communication, or respectful communication, a more middle form of communication. However, the highest form of communication is synergistic communication.

It comes from a combination of ingredients and creates the ideal situation for synergy. Having a high emotional bank account, thinking Win/Win, and seeking first to understand are great ways to create that ideal situation. The essence of synergy is centered on the very strength of the relationship and

having another point of view. When synergy is used, it is using the motive of Habit 4, the skill of Habit 5, and the interaction of Habit 6. Synergy ties the last three habits together to master public victory in the seven habits paradigm. Discussion and Rating.

Synergy is important and useful in life and in my future career in sales. We talk about synergy in every class, but Covey really explains it well in his novel. Synergy is in every situation I face, but it is my decision whether or not to use it. In my future careers, synergy will be extremely useful in making sales with potential buyers. Opening up and being genuine is a great way to sell yourself over selling your product. Synergy will be helpful in life because I will have to face problems in my family and friendship circles. When I communicate with synergy, those problems will be solved easily and successfully.

Rating: 5. I give myself an average rating for this habit because sometimes I can synergize when faced with problems, but other times I cannot. I need to work on this habit a lot more and therefore find myself in the middle. At this point in time I believe that I need to use synergy to put everything into perspective. In my daily life I try to get what I want more through respectful communication. I think that it would be beneficial to use synergistic communication because I feel that I can find more possibilities or alternatives in life. Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw. Habit seven is taking time to sharpen the saw.

It is the habit that makes all the others possible. It works by preserving and enhancing the greatest asset we have, ourselves. The investment in

ourselves is the most powerful because it is the only instrument we can have with which to deal with life and to contribute. One way to sharpen the saw is to exercise. Exercise is a quadrant two, high-leverage activity that most people do not partake in consistently because it isn't urgent. Soon after that, people are faced with health problems due to their neglect. It is important to exercise because people need to build up endurance.

Endurance is the ability of the heart to pump blood through the body. Blood flow increases happiness and stimulates the mind. By pushing the body beyond its limits, it increases the body's ability to do more outstanding things. Once this is true, people find normal activities to be more pleasing. Sharpening the saw may also come through renewing spiritually. Prayerful meditation, immersion in literature and music, and communicating with nature are great ways to do so. Also, keeping a journal of our thoughts and feelings is valuable because it promotes mental clarity, exactness, and content.

This mental renewal is associated with Habits 1, 2 and 3. The more social and emotional dimension of our lives focus on service, empathy, synergy, and intrinsic security. This dimension centers on habits 4, 5 and 6. Habit 7 preserves and enhances all of these dimensions. Discussion and Rating. Habit 7 will play a beneficial role in all aspects of my life because it reminds me to stay sharp with all of the prior six habits in the seven habit paradigm. However, Covey does have some very positive methods on how to accomplish this. I will continue to work out well into the latter years of my life.

This will help me stay sharp both physically and mentally. When I have children I plan on showing more of my spiritual side because I know that I want my family to continue to be religiously devoted. All the other aspects are a work in progress. Rating: 4. A below average rating is in order for this habit because though I exercise, pray, and go to church, I still need to improve in all other aspects that sharpening the saw entails. My current focus in life is that of a college student. I try to live my life one week at a time, barely looking into the future to study for exams and get a jump start on writing papers.

Mental renewal and spending time perfecting my social and emotional center is put on the backburner. I never think about those types of things unless I have to. I feel that when it comes closer to graduation and when I become part of the workforce, I will be more inclined to shift those dimensions from the backburner to the forefront of my life. Rating the Habits: Overview. My strongest three habits were Habits 3, 4, and 5. This is the case because I feel that I have had a good amount of experience and practice when dealing with situations that these habits help with.

However, I understand that I have not achieved a full devotion to any of these habits and more work will be needed to get where I need to be. My least strong habits were those of 2, 6, and 7. I know that Habit 2 will get stronger over time as long as I try to envision where I want to be in life. Habits 6 and 7 also need improvement because I feel as if I haven't had too much experience in these areas. Also, they tie the other habits together more so than provide for their own solutions. I think that once I become

more accustomed to using the other habits then I can start to work on becoming stronger in these two.

Mission Statement Review and Renewal. Original Mission Statement I will try to balance my studies and my recreational activities during the school year because having fun is equally important to me as a good education. I will try to maintain a positive outlook on life, and try to find joy, comfort, and happiness with my family. I value the opinions of others and will seek out to be more understanding with new and unknown topics. I plan to find financial independence as I grow and pay off my accumulated debt of student loans.

#### New Mission Statement

I will balance my studies and my recreational activities during the school year because enjoying life is equally important to me as a quality education. I will maintain a positive outlook on life, and try to find joy, comfort, and happiness with my family and friends. I value the opinions of others and will seek out to be more understanding with new and unknown topics. I will be sincere yet decisive in my reasoning. During a career in sales I will plan tomorrow's work today. I will seek help when needed and obtain the counsel of others because my way isn't always correct.

I plan to find financial independence as I grow and pay off my accumulated debt of student loans. Lastly, I will concentrate all of my abilities and efforts on the task at hand, not worrying about the next task ahead. Changes I have added some new information that I know is important to me after completing another semester at college. The more information I accumulate, the more knowledge I will have to better my life in the future. Some changes I made

included changing all of the possibilities and making them certainties. I believe it is important to be optimistic and affirmative in life, especially in a career as a salesperson.

My new mission statement is more of a revised version of the old because I believe the previous mission statement illustrated some good habits that the book talks about. Each portion of the mission statement can be correlated to one of the seven habits. I think this is important because I understand that I can become a highly effective person if I follow these seven habits. Summary Discussion and Evaluation I think that Stephen Covey's book The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People is one of the best books I have read in regards to personal change.

I have had a chance to read several books in a change management class here at Purdue, and I truly believe that this is the most effective. I have brought up topics in this book to start conversations in other classes because I believe it had an absorbent amount of information. I think that the author does a great job at breaking down each habit effectively and uses good examples in doing so. The most important insight came from the habits in which I did not know much about. I found these topics to be the most interesting because this book captured my attention since page one and I am always looking for ways to improve.

This final paper assignment, along with the Covey worksheets, helped emphasize key points in the book. I think that this paper is an important piece to our class and I enjoyed writing about the seven habits because it helped me understand them more. This book and assignments won't change

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my life too dramatically. However, I learned a great deal from this class and will take every ounce of information with me. I usually sell back books at the end of the semester, but Covey's novel will be one of the few I keep. I plan on using his book and my paper as a reference to leading my life.

I will refer back to these to get an idea of what I can be doing better with my life and in my job. Plan for Change and Renewal. I would like to implement a plan for change and renewal in my life after college. I think that a fresh start into the real world could be greatly aided by the seven habits. The first step is to be proactive. Typing this paragraph and saying that I will implement a plan after college isn't enough. I will need to actually get up and do it.

Secondly, I will plan out my life with the end in mind. This is going to be a harder objective to complete because right now I am having some difficulties with Habit 2.

Nonetheless, I will have time to practice and will complete the objective.

Next, my plan will include putting first things first. For instance, one of my first goals that I would like to attain is finding a job that I like. Also, I would like to make money and pay off loans. I think these two objectives can be attained relatively close to each other. These are just some of the specific goals I will set for myself, and there will be more goals to come as life takes its course. The next step in my plan is to think positively and figure out ways to make the things I want work.

I know that I can do this by remembering Habit 4 and think Win/Win.

Remembering that I need to help others while I help myself is a big part of accomplishing what I want to accomplish. A lot of my sales goals can be



attained by being generally successful at what I do. One way I am going to do this is by understanding the situations I am in and then acting upon them. I think that I am already good at doing this, and I think that I will continue to get better at this and use this step and a bridge to obtaining the next step in my plan.

Finally, once all of the other steps I have laid out for my plan have been completed I need to use synergy to make all of my decisions fluid. Once this is done I can be rest assured that I have lived my life to the fullest and I know I have reached the current goals I set for myself. Summary. This final paper has illustrated and explained the seven habits of highly effective people, discussed and rated how each of the seven habits are useful to me as a salesperson and in general life, evaluated past and current mission statements, assessed the material of the book, and showed a developed plan for change and renewal of the seven habits.

The stated objectives have been outlined in this paper through separate headings and subheadings to demonstrate a business style outline as well as clearly and succinctly addressed each issue separately. The book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey is a great read, and it gives everybody that reads it an idea of how to become effective in their lives as well as others.