

SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

PERSONAL GROWTH

The first three habits relate to your own personal philosophy

Be Proactive

Be aware of yourself, your strengths, weaknesses, blind spots, motivations - and be proactive in finding out as much as you can about yourself. Then be proactive in applying that knowledge to your relations with others.

Begin with the End in Mind

In summary, create and live by a personal mission statement. This may lead onto more specific goals and objectives, but the idea is that you try to live as the sort of person you'd like to be remembered for when you've passed on.

Put First Things First

Define what it is that really matters in your life, then spend your time on those important things. Rather than spreading our time thinly across too many activities, concentrate on doing a few things well

RELATIONAL GROWTH AND SUCCESS

The next three habits relate to your interaction with others

Think Win/Win

Not an original phrase, but in all your dealings with others, aim for each little negotiation to provide success (a win) for both sides.

Seek First to Understand, then be Understood

Put another way, "God gave us two ears and one mouth, and they should be used in that proportion." In your communications, be sure you know the other person's point of view before you start expounding your own ideas.

Synergize

Look for ways to take your ideas and other people's ideas and build on them together, on the basis that the outcome will be something greater than the sum of the inputs

PERSONAL RENEWAL

The seventh habit that makes all the other six last is **Sharpening the Saw**. This powerful idea can really only be described by Covey's word-picture:

Suppose you were to come upon someone in the woods working feverishly to saw down a tree.

"What are you doing?" you ask.

"Can't you see?" comes the impatient reply. "I'm sawing down this tree."

"You look exhausted!" you exclaim. "How long have you been at it?"

"Over five hours," he returns, "and I'm beat! This is hard work."

"Well why don't you take a break for a few minutes and sharpen that saw?" you inquire. "I'm sure it would go a lot faster."

"I don't have time to sharpen the saw," the man says emphatically. "I'm too busy sawing!"

Sharpening the saw is about renewing yourself - physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

Thousands of managers have found these habits a powerful philosophy, and when you boil them down, there's a lot of common sense in them.

By Stephen R. Covey from his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, published in 1989