

Kati Enamorado
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Dr. Stephen Covey: Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Dr. Stephen Covey has earned millions of dollars with his book, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People; in his book Dr. Covey develops a model by which he believes people can become effective. In addition to his book Covey also conducts seminars about how to develop these habits. Many commercial, private, government agencies and Fortune 500 companies promote Covey's philosophy and use the model he developed in training. Covey's book is not only a self-help guide to achieving success but peace and happiness as well.

Covey's, Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, have proven to move employees progressively on a continuum from dependence to independence to interdependence. First, Covey recommends taking the time to listen to yourself (habits 1-3) in order to identify your own core values and goals. This step makes it possible for you to behave exactly as you believe the person you wish to be would behave, because it allows you to consult your own values and goals before acting. Thus you act only in ways that are consistent with those values and goals. This step should be repeated regularly as time passes and circumstances change. Second, Covey recommends listening to others (habits 4-6) in order to become aware of the values and goals of others. This enables you to find common ground and thus maintain productive relationships with them. Third, (habit 7) Covey recommends regularly seeking to improve and reinforce yourself in ways that are important to you.

Covey's seven habits are:

1. Be proactive-Foster courage to take risks and accept new challenges to achieve goals.
2. Begin with the end in mind-Brings projects to completion and unites teams and organizations under a shared vision, mission, and purpose.
3. Put first things first-getting the most important things done first and encourages direct effectiveness.
4. Think win/win-Encourages conflict resolution and helps individuals seek mutual benefit, increasing group momentum.
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood-Helps people understand problems, resulting in targeted solutions; and promotes better communications, leading to successful problem-solving.
6. Synergize-Ensures greater "buy-in" from team members and leverages the diversity of individuals to increase levels of success
7. Sharpen the saw-Promotes continuous improvements and safeguards against "burn-out" and subsequent non-productivity.

Under Covey's model, my personal strongest habit would be to put first things first.

By managing both a job and school I have learned how to prioritize my time and give myself enough time to complete each assignment. In order to keep track of assignment, meetings, and special events I use an agenda to help organize my day.

By planning ahead I have been able to maintain a stable job and good grades. I

have learned how to make the most of my time by reducing time spent on things that

are urgent but unimportant and devote more time to what is more important but not necessarily urgent.

The problem however with being self-sufficient and learning how to manage my own time comes in when working in a team. Unfortunately, I forget that not everyone works on my time and my plans this in turn creates a problem when working in a group and trying to get everyone to work as a well oiled machine. It is not to say that I am a bad team member however I do believe that I work harder than others to get everything that needs to be done accomplished in a timely manner. Working in a team gets to be aggravating because not everyone works at their maximum potential and like to ride off of other people's thunder.

To salvage my relationship with team members, the best thing that I can do is have a little more faith in them and hope that in the end they will come through. Regrettably I have not had good experience with working with team therefore I am a little apprehensive every time I am called upon to be in a group. On the other hand working in a group helps to create a solution/ design or approach better than either party could have produced individually. As a plan of action, the logical thing would be to assign team member with specific duties and create deadlines which must be met, only then will we truly achieve the level of success which Stephen Covey's model for success outlines.