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# 7 Habits of High Effective People Book Review

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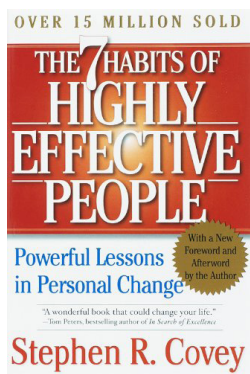
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# MSR Bookshelf

## The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

By Stephen R. Covey

Reviewed Ian Whatcott



While hundreds of books on personal improvement are written every year, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* maintains a spot among the most famous. It has sold over 25 million copies and is noted as one of the best non-fiction audio books ever.<sup>1</sup> This book has even been named one of the most

influential management books by *Times* and *Fortune* magazines. In the quest for efficiency and growth,

business managers and young employees alike will hear of this book by Stephen Covey.

This book stands out from the other self-help books in a critical way. While other books focus on key personality or behavior traits, Covey focuses on key character traits. His philosophy is that people have a hard time changing themselves because they are trying to change traits, not principles. Principles govern actions. Covey aims to change people's principles, thereby changing their behavior. Because of this focus, he directs his advice to change people's perceptions, paradigms, and values about themselves and the world. Covey admits that he does not offer a quick fix to change, but a longer lasting and deeper ability to change. This sets the stage for Covey's 7 habits. While he uses the word habit, he treats them more as principles. Each principle is a foundation for overall effectiveness in leading and

change. Covey describes each principle in depth and how each part connects to the whole. The Habits are as follows:

1. Be Proactive
2. Begin with the End in Mind
3. Put First Things First
4. Think Win-Win
5. Seek First to Understand, Then be Understood
6. Synergize
7. Sharpen the Saw

Covey illustrates how each principle must be learned in order; one cannot jump to "Synergize" without first understanding and living the "Be Proactive" Habit. Covey's method is strict, yet transformational. This foundational pathway system for life makes his method stand out from other self-help or business books.

Overall, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is an excellent book for those seeking to improve their own lives, whether in business or not. Covey's method looks deeply into the meanings of why people do what they do, illustrating how values and principles are at the center of it. Full of examples and great explanations, this book gives the reader a great perspective on what it takes to make long-lasting, personal change and will continue to be a classic for years to come.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> CNN Wire Staff. "'7 Habits' author Stephen Covey dead at 79." CNN.com. July 18, 2012. Web. <http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/16/us/o-bit-stephen-covey/index.html>