

7 Habits of Highly Effective People

Good morning, teachers and students. Three years ago, I shared with students a book called “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”. The author of the book is Stephen Covey. Today, I would like to share with you this book one more time because the seven habits mentioned by Stephen Covey are really in line with our school theme “Stay Fit. Stay Healthy. Stay Positive”.

As Stephen Covey says, “**Our character is the results of our habits.**” If you have a good thought, you will have a good action. If you have a good action, you will have a good habit. If you have a good habit, you will have a good character. If you have a good character, you will have a good destiny and future. The seven habits of highly effective people are: Habit 1: Be proactive (主動積極); Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind (以終為始); Habit 3: Put first things first (要事第一); Habit 4: Think win-win (雙贏思維); Habit 5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood (學習傾聽，知彼解己); Habit 6: Try to have synergy (協同效應，統合綜效); Habit 7: Sharpen the saw (不斷更新).

For **Habit 1 Be proactive** (主動積極), try to be positive. Try to be part of the solution, but not part of a problem. Try to admit, correct and learn from mistakes and do not get into a blaming and accusing mode. Don't sit and wait in a reactive mode, just waiting for problems to happen before taking action.

For **Habit 2 Begin with the end in mind** (以終為始), this means you have vision on what you want in the future so you can work and plan towards it. Try to start your work with a clear understanding of your destination. You should understand where you are now and know where you are going. You are also sure that the steps you take are always in the right direction.

For **Habit 3 Put first things first** (要事第一), in terms of importance and urgency, all things can be divided into four main types: First, important and urgent; second, important and not-urgent; third, not important and

urgent; fourth, not important and not urgent. Try to spend more time on things that are important but not urgent, for example, relationship building and sports activities. Try to have a burning “yes” inside your mind that makes it possible for you to say “no” to other things that are not important.

For **Habit 4 Think win-win** (雙贏思維), try to have mutual benefit for all human interactions. Try to see life as a cooperative, but not a competitive one. It is not your way or my way. It is our way. It is a better way and it is a higher way.

For **Habit 5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood** (學習傾聽, 知彼解己), try to listen to others first. Try to listen to others with your eyes and with your heart. Try to spend time with your classmates and family. Listen to them, understand them. Look at the problems they are facing through their eyes. Give them air. This would create an atmosphere of caring and positive problem solving.

For **Habit 6 Try to have synergy** (協同效應, 統合綜效), synergy means combining the strengths of people through positive teamwork, so as to achieve goals that no one could have done alone. Try to cooperate with others. Try to respect differences among people. Try to build on the strengths of others. Try to compensate for the weaknesses of others, but not criticize.

For **Habit 7 Sharpen the saw** (不斷更新), try to balance and renew your resources, energy, and health to create a sustainable, long-term, effective lifestyle. Try to eat the right kinds of foods, get enough rest and relaxation, have sport and exercise on a regular basis, and read good books for mental renewal. Most of us think we don't have enough time to exercise and sharpen the saw. But in fact, we don't have time not to.

Boys and girls, I strongly believe that if you practise these seven good habits, you will surely become a highly effective person. But remember, **“To learn and not to do is really not to learn. To know and not to do is really not to know.”** So, learning the seven habits is not the most important thing. The key point is: practice the seven habits and do it.