

The **MASTER HABIT**

Converting Knowledge into Action



The Master Habit

Converting Knowledge into Action

Roice Krueger, James Skinner, and Mark Victor Hansen

“The Master Habit” is the universal habit of all successful people. It is the habit of changing your habits!

Give this book to anybody who needs a change in their life. It will change your life as well as theirs!

www.youpublish.com

The Master Habit

The Authors

ROICE KRUEGER co-founded Franklin Covey, the world's largest training company, and has supervised consulting projects for 80 percent of the Fortune 500.

JAMES SKINNER is the founder of two global financial groups that manage billions of dollars of assets. He is also recognized as one of the world's foremost business thinkers and appears regularly on Japanese television.

MARK VICTOR HANSEN is the co-creator of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* empire and is the best-selling nonfiction author of all time. His goal is to make the planet work for all humanity!

NOTE: Ideas That Can Change Your Life™ is a collaboration of three of the world's most amazing authors, speakers, and thinkers. The first person "I" may refer to any of the authors.

To contact the authors for keynote and other speaking engagements:

www.youpublish.com

The Master Habit

The Master Habit

Thousands of workshops and seminars are taught around the world each day. Participants become immersed in new concepts, and many of them are eager to apply what they learn. Yet within a few days, maybe even a few hours, the learning they have been exposed to fades along with their desire to change.

Why?

At one point they wanted to change and could even see the benefits of changing. What happened? Has this ever happened to you? Have you read a book, heard a speech, attended a workshop or seminar and wanted to incorporate what you learned into your life but then failed to do so?

If you would like to break this cycle in your life and assist others in doing the same, this book is for you! You can create change in your life by learning the principles of The Master Habit!

The Master Habit

The Master Habit is a series of steps that you can take to convert the knowledge you have learned into new behaviors in your life.

It is the habit of creating new habits in your life!

The Master Habit Principles

1. Create a compelling vision
2. Use a tool to stay focused
3. Measure your progress
4. Celebrate your successes
5. Leverage the strength of a coach
6. Enhance your learning

Let's examine the basic concepts that support each principle:

Create a Compelling Vision

Passion is at the heart of all intentional human behavioral change. A vibrant, compelling vision will provide the fuel, the passion for change.

The Master Habit

A vision answers the question “Why should I change?” Human beings are comfortable with the habit patterns they have developed. It gives them the results they want. However, if we want to change, we first need to know why we should change. Why should I break my existing comfortable habit to go through the discomfort of developing a new habit?

It is said that we change to avoid pain or to achieve gain—probably even a combination of both. In order to change, the pain or gain needs to be greater than the discomfort of change.

Try this simple yet effective exercise. Fold your arms. Yes, right now fold them in a comfortable position. Now carefully change the position of your hands until they are in the opposite position above and below your arms. How does it feel? What do you *immediately* want to do? You feel uncomfortable and immediately want to go back to the original position. Why? Because the original position is the habit pattern you have created that makes you feel comfortable. What would allow you to change to a new pattern, to the

The Master Habit

opposite positioning of your hands? Two basic reasons:

1) For some reason your existing habit creates pain. For example, you get a sore on your arm that is rubbed when you fold your arms, and it creates pain in your original folding position; to stop the pain you will adopt the new position. Or 2) There is some gain or reward that you can achieve for adopting the new position—say recognition from your friends for doing it the way they do it!

When we learn a new idea or concept, many times we become enthralled by it. We want to make it become a part of our lives because we can see how it will relieve pain we are feeling or it will allow us to achieve a desired result—or even both! We wish for the change to happen in our lives. We hope it will happen. These are only wishes and hopes. Good, yes, but not enough! Without a clear vision that is compelling enough to create a deep-seated passion for change, we will not have enough energy to persist through the discomfort of change to achieve the new desired behavior!

The Master Habit

Create a compelling vision of the benefits of the change in your life!

Clearly see the pain it will cure and the gain you will achieve! See it so clearly in your mind that you can emotionally taste it, touch it, feel it, want it! Use the power of your creative mind to visualize the change you desire and the impact it will have on your life.

Take time to visualize your new desired state. Write it down! Over time improve it. Make it even more compelling.

Here is a sample vision statement:

I am a healthy person who eats nutritious foods and exercises daily. I have ample energy to work hard, play hard, and rest well. People admire my physical appearance. I feel wonderful. My personal relationships are enhanced by my healthy lifestyle, and I have very high levels of energy. My physical health supports my emotional strength.

The Master Habit

Start by visualizing the benefits of the change you want to make. Write them down and refine them until your vision becomes a compelling force in your life.

No significant change is ever achieved without a compelling vision!

Not only will you need a compelling vision but you will also need to make decisions about what you are going to stop doing in order to have the new behavior or action in your life.

Back to the healthy lifestyle; it cannot be achieved without letting go of current behaviors that create the unhealthy lifestyle. If weight loss is part of the vision, then not eating the fattening high-calorie foods must stop. In their place fresh vegetables, fruits, and other nutritious foods must be eaten. One habit pattern is replaced by a new one.

Many times the new behavior is not achieved because the person is unwilling to let go of the old habit pattern. It is as important to stop the old pattern as it is

The Master Habit

to start the new pattern. A passion for the benefits of the change will dramatically assist in sticking to the new behavior. Constantly keeping the vision of the new state of mind will motivate a person to change.

As much energy should go into letting go of the old habit as adopting the new habit!

Use a Tool to Stay Focused

We want to change. We can clearly see the benefits to change, yet things keep distracting us! How can we stay focused?

A to-do list is a common tool used by people in organizations. It is very likely that you have a to-do list of one sort or another. It could be handwritten on a notepad, in your cell phone, on a PDA, on your computer, or even on a Post-it Note! You have one. Why? It helps you to stay focused on what you need TO DO!

Look at your current list. What are the types of tasks on the list? Usually people have their work-related tasks

The Master Habit

with maybe one or two personal tasks. Very few people use their checklist as a tool for changing their personal behavior!

This list can become a powerful force for change in your life! You can use this existing habit pattern to achieve the change you visualized in your vision statement. You can use this tool to keep you focused on the results you want to achieve!

You already use this personal process or tool to help you keep focused on work-related tasks. Now use it to stay focused on the change you want to make. Break the change into some bite-sized chunks that you can DO each day and/or week. The focus is on DOING something that will create the change. If it is a goal of excellent health, start with the step of DOING: eating nutritious foods. For the next week pick a meal, say breakfast, and commit to eating fruit for breakfast. Put it on your to-do list. Buy the fruit. Prepare it. Eat it. Accomplish that step towards achieving your vision.

The Master Habit

Use the tool to keep you reminded, to keep you focused, and to keep the desired change present in your mind.

Convert the vision to actionable behavior by writing bite-sized steps in your tool (to-do list) and DOING those steps each day or week!

Measure Your Progress

Measurement is a very useful tool in the process of change. It lets us know if we are winning or losing. It allows us to see progress.

The change that occurs when converting knowledge into action can be observed and measured. Measuring allows you to recognize that you are making progress in increasing your knowledge and in changing your behavior. You build a sense of achievement as you measure the improvement. It also lets you know if you are slipping so you can take corrective action.

Remember the bite-sized chunks discussed in the previous section? Normally those are the right size to

The Master Habit

measure. You can measure how many times in a week you had fruit for breakfast. You can measure the number of pages you've read about the value of eating fruit for breakfast.

When you measure progress, it causes you to examine the facts of your progress. It causes you to evaluate how you are doing. It causes positive or negative emotions; both can motivate you to do even better.

When you step on the scale to weigh yourself, it gives you a number—a number you can compare with other numbers to measure your progress. You know whether you are winning or losing! This is very important to know in creating change in your life!

Create a graph that shows your progress. It allows you to see the measurable progress in a visual format. As the chart improves upward from left to right, you will feel a sense of achievement that will encourage you forward!

The Master Habit

Use the power of a scorecard to assist you in measuring and achieving your desired results!

**Measure the change you want to create in your life,
and know how well you are doing!**

Celebrate Your Successes

Along the way to mastering the new habit, pause at certain benchmarks to celebrate your progress! Don't just wait until the goal is achieved to celebrate; create mental energy and replenish your reserves by recognizing your interim achievements!

The power of positive reinforcement is enormous. It enables us to pursue the change journey. Purposefully utilize this power by taking the time to recognize and celebrate your success!

For example, in a quest for good health many people set up a weight-loss goal. Of course, a set of scales to measure weight is essential. A plan for reasonable reduction in weight with specific timelines will be very helpful. Above the scale or close by place a

The Master Habit

chart that graphs the progress. At certain increments on the chart place a marker that indicates target progress points, such as five-pound or two-kilo increments. When those marks are achieved, pause to reward yourself. Do something that recognizes your progress and makes you feel good. (It may be best in this case not to celebrate by eating something such as ice cream that will cause you to retrogress on your goal!)

It may be very useful to celebrate with another person. Let them know of the challenge and your progress. The care and support of another person is very useful in sustaining your progress! This is especially true when your goal relates to interpersonal issues. A spouse or close friend will notice and appreciate your weight loss and will celebrate it with you!

Celebration creates a motive for you to take action. Think of motivation as *"Motive-Action."* Create a significant reward for the significant changes you want to make. When you achieve it, celebrate; enjoy the success of achievement! Why not take a vacation to a beautiful resort setting to celebrate achieving your

The Master Habit

wellness goal? It will have great motivational value to you!

The celebrations and rewards will build self-confidence. It will build your pattern of success in converting your knowledge into practical habits in your life!

Pause along the way to celebrate your success, and at the end reward yourself for a job well done!

Leverage the Strength of a Coach

A commitment to change made to another person dramatically strengthens the resolve to achieve the desired behavior or goal! And that person can coach! They will provide insights, feedback, encouragement, and suggested course corrections that will be invaluable!

There are two different types of coaches you will want to consider. The first type of coach is a personal confidant. This is someone who knows you well and cares about you. They will be interested in helping you to change. These are usually people who love you, care

The Master Habit

about you, and who are very willing to meet with you from time to time to discuss your progress. For example, it could be your spouse, who may be very interested in your life change. Certainly, if your vision is to attain a healthier lifestyle, they will be interested in assisting; in fact that change will have a positive impact on them! What's more, as you change, your coach will recognize the change, which will allow them to let go of their past images of you.

The other type of coach is one who has specialized knowledge and skills. They can give you the technical assistance to guide you along your change journey. If your goal is a healthier lifestyle, a physician, a nutritionist, or a training coach would be a good coach. In fact, you may want to ask more than one to assist you.

How you utilize your coach is vital. Sit down with them face to face if possible. Share with them your vision. Let them know why you want to make the change. Share with them your plan, your measurement tools, and your intended celebrations. In short, let them

The Master Habit

see the big picture. Then ask them if they will be your coach. Explain the role you would like them to play. When they accept, set up specific times when you will meet with them to share your progress and to receive feedback from them. Sometimes this will be once a week, sometimes once a month, based upon the goal you have set. Do it frequently enough to help sustain your change!

In the first meeting explain your plan and get their feedback. Their advice and insights will assist in making the plan even better.

When appropriate include the coach in your success celebrations. Share with them your graphs. Let them know of your struggles. Ask them questions for ideas on how to overcome roadblocks that may come along.

Many coaches become some of the best friends we have in life!

Leverage the strength of a personal-change coach!

The Master Habit

Enhance Your Learning

The more you learn, the more apt you are to change. Raising the bar of your knowledge level creates a positive tension to lift the level of behavior to meet the new knowledge level!

Any significant change is created by first having a significant change in our thinking. Our minds must move first. This then encourages us to consistently be feeding our minds so we feed the desire to change, to achieve the new knowledge.

However, as was discussed in the beginning of this book, we might desire to change, but unless we take practical actions to achieve the desired change we will not achieve it. The desire for change is fed by increased knowledge; thus we must be constantly improving our learning AND applying steps to achieve those things we have learned that we want to incorporate into our lives!

When you set a goal to change, to incorporate new behaviors in your life, also set a goal at the same time to learn as much as you can about the new behavior.

The Master Habit

For example, if you desire to achieve a healthier lifestyle, you will want to study nutrition, exercise, rest, and so forth. Normally, if we have not achieved a goal, it's because we do not have a full understanding of HOW to achieve it! Our faulty knowledge keeps us trapped at our existing levels of behavior!

A physical examination and some coaching by a doctor can significantly improve our knowledge about how to change as well as why to change! Reading a good book on nutrition can open our eyes to healthy ways to eat, foods to avoid, and foods to eat. The advice of a trainer at the local gym can change our exercise patterns so we can achieve better results! Knowledge precedes change.

An inquiring mind is a valuable asset to change. Look for the profound knowledge that will enable you to achieve what you want. Seek out learning from those who have the specific knowledge you need.

The Master Habit

**By enhancing your learning you will enable change
in your life!**

Review and Integration

There is greater power in applying all The Master Habit principles rather than only applying a few of them.

Creating a compelling vision sets a foundation for the desired change. It becomes a source of emotional energy that will fuel the change we want to make.

Using a tool such as our to-do list to help keep us focused on the vision we have created keeps the mind actively engaged on the goal. It does not allow it to slip away. It is written down and is not just a desired emotion in our minds that can become fuzzy or even ignored. It keeps the goal alive!

By measuring your progress you keep a scorecard that lets you know whether you are winning or losing. It makes the journey real. The measurement can be done by using a focus tool of your choice. It can be in the form of a graph. The measurement is made of things

The Master Habit

you can see and hear. It allows you to make course corrections.

Build positive reinforcement in your life by *celebrating your successes*. When we celebrate, we recognize the incremental step we have taken in the direction we want to go. We build self-confidence that we can achieve the desire result. Our measurement tool lets us know when we have achieved the goal. We start to know that we can achieve the goal versus just believing it!

When we *leverage the strength of a coach*, we commit ourselves to someone external to ourselves. It is no longer a personal priority that we can easily demote to being less important. We are committed to someone. We have our “face” on the line! The coach can review our measured progress and can assist in our celebration. They can help us to create a plan to achieve our vision.

The seed for the desire for change come from newly acquired knowledge. It creates a desire to avoid some pain or to achieve some gain in our lives. We need to be *continuously enhancing our learning*. Especially when we start

The Master Habit

a change initiative in our lives, we need to learn as much as we can about the change we want to make. It will sharpen our vision, clarify steps for our change plan, and help us to measure better. And coaches will provide invaluable feedback to help us to change.

These are The Master Habit Principles

1. Create a compelling vision
2. Use a tool to stay focused
3. Measure your progress
4. Celebrate your successes
5. Leverage the strength of a coach
6. Enhance your learning

Postscript

For years I have taught workshops of many kinds. The most common question that I am asked by participants is “How can I apply the learning?”

As I have reflected upon the question and have pursued investigating the meaning with the participants, I have discovered that what they were really asking is

The Master Habit

“How can I change? What is a process I can use in my life to create the change that I want?”

These questions gave birth to The Master Habit. The process of The Master Habit is my answer to those asking the question about “How can I incorporate the new knowledge I have into my life?”

Personal change is not easy. We have taken years to become who we are. The habits we have created are deep and ingrained in us. Regardless of this, we can choose to change. We can change. We can learn the processes to create that desired change.

I personally believe that people like to change—if it is a change they choose!

Choose to change. Choose to apply the knowledge you have. Apply The Master Habit!

The Master Habit

Best wishes,

Roice Krueger, James Skinner, Mark Victor Hansen

For additional copies:

www.youpublish.com
