

### 3 Habits That Sabotage Workplace Success

Changing habits is hard work. It has been said that it requires 21 times of doing something in order to make it a habit. Here are some ways to figure out how to turn unhelpful habits into positives.

- 1. Never Feeling Good Enough** - Are you constantly evaluating everything you do and generally finding fault. Do you have an internal voice which critiques you on everything, seeing only the negatives, not the positives? This voice is often described as a "gremlin." When you are feeling not good enough it can show up by your being indecisive, relying on others to direct you, using language of uncertainty and even having poor posture. Generally there is a feeling of self doubt. Clearly a change is necessary. First, you need to become aware of your limiting beliefs and in what situations they occur. What actions do you take which might be perpetuating these beliefs? Sam was recently promoted to a managerial position and was both excited and scared about his new responsibilities. He knew that a lot of his colleagues were envious of his promotion, which added to the pressure he already put on himself. He evaluated and re-evaluated everything he said and did, to the extent that he was immobilizing himself. His "gremlin" was in high gear. Sam worked with his coach to identify what he needed to change and what action steps were necessary. The result was his "gremlins" went into retirement and he had strategies in place if they returned.
- 2. Avoiding Conflict** - You are by nature a peacekeeper. You like everyone to be happy and agreeable. The problem is that in life there is always some level of disagreement and conflict and how we deal with it can become the problem. In the workplace, managers need to be able to manage conflict. Your team members will not always agree or like each other. They might not agree with you or like what you are telling them. What if their job performance is interfering with the goals of the company or the team's morale? How will you deal with it? Avoiding conflict could be an obstacle to your taking on more of a leadership role. Joyce disliked conflict, but recognized that if she wanted to be seen as a leader she would have to step up. She worked with her coach to develop a 3 step action plan.
  - 1. Acknowledge the conflict.**
  - 2. Invite the other person to have a say and listen to their perspective.**
  - 3. Jointly develop a game plan for change.**Acknowledging out loud what a challenge conflict was for her, allowed her to "own" it and make changes.
- 3. Poor Boundaries** - We have all known someone who has trouble saying "no," and therefore might get into situations where they are doing more, but are stressed and unhappy about it. Sometimes people take advantage of them because of this weakness. Being able to set limits about what you can and can't do is an extremely important skill. Assess your team. Is there someone who has trouble saying "no?" If so, what can you do to help them? There are other issues which also fall under the category of poor boundaries: being aware of when, where and with whom you speak; the issue of confidentiality. What is the forum and policy for discussing client information? At some companies conversations may inadvertently occur in corridors or at restaurants where talk might be overheard by others. At times there can be a fine line between sharing information and gossiping. Your job as manager is to help create the guidelines and structure, so everyone is clear.

Changing habits is hard work. I've just discussed a few ways to help you figure out how to turn unhelpful habits into positives. You can do it, all it takes is 21 times of doing something in order to make it a habit! Copyright 2007, Gail Solish.

#### About the Author

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