

High Performance Faculty

Engineer Habits.

A brief guide to help you get s^{***}
done.

Engineer Habits

2nd Edition

I wrote "Engineer Habits" for several reasons;

1. Consolidate my thoughts into a larger guide/eBook rather than smaller blog posts.
2. To continuously update my own research in the area of habits and behaviors (I'm not a scientist, but I love learning.).
3. Most importantly, to help others create a system for progress and success based on what I have learned over the years.

It is important to me that I create the best material possible. I also want to provide the majority of my material to all, for free. If you feel that you have gained new insights and want to pass this on to someone else, than please feel free to do so.

I will continuously be updating this guide, with the latest edition of "Engineer Habits" always being available for free download on my website at hermannk.com.

Thank you for taking the time and interest in wanting to learn how I have established habits in my life and how this has led to me getting s*** done.

Enjoy the read.

H. Kratochwill



Introduction

What if you succeeded at everything you set out to do? You literally had a *guarantee* to never fail. Imagine, regardless of what you began, you knew that you would not quit and you never became distracted. You would pull through all the way to the end!

This High Performance Faculty guide will give you the insights into key strategies I use to execute my undertakings with precision and success. Things you can also do to ensure that you no longer meander aimlessly, rather convert your precious time into becoming laser focused through the implementation of a few changes in your life – new and better habits.

The reason I created this guide is to help you get s*** done. Period. I want you to understand what it takes to go from procrastination to crossing off your bucket list of action items. I'm sure that you probably know someone or have seen other people who seem to get a lot checked off their list and wonder "how do they do it?" That someone, who when they say they will execute on something, actually goes out and gets it done. They pull all the way through. All emotions and factors aside. Continuously.

That is where I want you to be.

The problem, and perhaps the reason why you may be reading this guide is because you feel that when you tackle any of your goals you often end up failing. You kick off well, in other words you're highly motivated, but then things begin to spiral in the wrong direction. You begin self-doubting. You hit a wall. Perhaps you feel as if you're hit with a challenge you cannot overcome alone. After all this you look at yourself in the mirror and become frustrated with the fact that you just can't seem to accomplish anything you set out to do. This in turn (logically) becomes discouraging and a pattern in your goal setting process kicks in. The pattern → it happens again and again. I've been there. I get it!

You are reading this with a purpose. Put all things aside, clear your mind as you read this next statement. If there is one thing I want you to take away at this very moment, it is the fact that you can achieve any goal, like anyone else, myself included. It's true.

What you need to make that statement happen is a blueprint. A plan. A strategy on which you can execute that will allow you to get anything done. No matter what you set out to do, a strategy that puts your state of mind into the right place. A method, if you will, that allows you to focus on an important aspect of engineering a successful life.

This High Performance Faculty guide is going to show you how you can do it. The methods I use that have helped build my career and along with that enhance my personal life. I'm not promising anything here. You need to put in the work.

The ultimate question you need to ask yourself is this;

Are you ready to pull all the way through and achieve your goal?

I want you to know that the information and support you find in this guide will give you a fundamental understanding of how you can focus and prune out the things that do *not* matter and create good habits that will stick.

Now on top of that you may be wondering why I am dishing this out for free. Look, plain and simple. I built High Performance Faculty on the grounds of my ethos which evolves around bringing out the best in every one of us. I believe that each human has incredible potential to achieve the most out of life and I believe my part is to help you understand how to unlock that potential. If I can accomplish this and help you build habits to success, perhaps you may be able to help someone else and together we can make the world just *that* much better.

To me, the focus is not the money, if it was, I would have earned a whole lot more at my last corporate job. To me it's all about living life on my own terms, helping others grow and succeed at their challenges. That truly ignites a fire within me.

Look, it took me years to fully understand how to utilize my full potential and achieve the most with the resources and time I had. In high school I loved sleeping. I'd often procrastinate on homework to the last moment possible. I was a good kid, but I didn't have the best habits in a variety of areas in life. Through a combination of learning, trial and error and refining methods and systems I have been able to unlock potential in areas of my life that have propelled me to where I want to be today. And I continue to utilize habit creation to progress and get better.

I want the same for you. I want this guide to help you stop being a daydreamer of accomplishments and actually begin executing. I want you to take action. Exactly what I did.

I want you to know that you could read books on end about the subject, but I feel, *no*, I know that my material and commitment to make the world a better place by helping you experience what I have experienced will reward both you and myself. As obnoxious as it may sound, we are in this together.

So, who is this for?

Engineering habits is for everyone who is seeking to create change in their life. For all those who need to read a few words that may plant a seed within one's mind. If you are someone who faces or has faced challenges in completing what needed to get done, regardless of what that may be, then this guide is written for you.

I lay out the strategies and processes that will begin to help you change the way you think about creating and sustaining habits. You will learn how to better utilize one part of the "engineering success" program and incorporate that into your daily life so that you can tackle anything, successfully.

Your time is now. Make it happen! Be. D.M.C.
(You'll find out more about that acronym later)

What will I learn?

1 Understanding the fundamentals of goals

You often hear about goal setting, how to create goals and a majority of people tend to think that goal setting is an easy task. Select something you want to do, and then go do it, only to end up failing. Then pondering what happened along the way.

In this first lesson I will walk through the bare bones of engineering goals.

2 Don't become distracted

Have you ever started something and then feel the urge to find other things along the way that you feel like you need to get done? Taking a step back and understanding the entire picture is often difficult to do, but it needs to be done in order to carry yourself through the end of what you originally set out to do.

In this second lesson I will show you methods that you should execute on to help you focus on the things that really matter.

3 Only one road leads to Rome

You've heard the saying that all roads lead to Rome. That may be true, however when it comes to creating habits only 1 road ends up leading you to where you need to be going. And you cannot rely on motivation to get you there. Do so and you are already setting yourself up for failure from the start.

In this third lesson we look at what you need to do to stay on the path to creating processes that enable great habits.

4

Engineering habits

Everyone tells you to make those small changes that will have a drastic effect on your life as a whole - yet the question that remains unanswered is "*how do you do it?*" Why are some people inclined to make those changes easily while others struggle to execute on them?

In lesson four, we look at the method of engineering habits and putting systems into place that will support your endeavors.

5

Habits, like glue

Habits can be made and they can be broken. Just like any pattern or system you need to know how you can utilize your engineered habits eternally. A habit, just like anything else in life can melt down and back fire, but your goal is to ensure positive habits that cause positive behavioral changes in your life on a daily basis.

In lesson five we will cover how you can hammer down on your habits to make them last.

**“Don’t limit your
challenges. Challenge
your limits. Period.”**

Lesson 1:

Understanding the fundamentals of goals

There is a bucket load of information available out there, from books to articles to podcasts and YouTube videos on how to set goals and carry through with them. Some are better than others. Some are very detailed. Some are overly complicated. Yet, all in all, I encourage you to read, watch, listen, and learn through a variety of methods, because for one, learning should be ever eternal in life, and two because this guide is not about goal setting.

Nonetheless, this first lesson looks at the basics in regards to engineering the right goals through enablement of the process which I call “lifestyle”. This is a large component of engineering success for your life, which in turn will contribute to how you engineer habits in the future. (That is a lot of engineering! Did that blow your mind?)

See a majority of goals are born out of the nature of wanting to achieve something. Logical no? The problem with that is that a majority of those goals come out of the motivational pool. We get motivated by something – a spark of our senses, set a goal, only to end up realizing that we run through failure over and over again. Does that sound familiar? Yes? No? Let me break it down for you.

The inner motivational pool process goes like this:

1. Something hits you through any medium (see, hear, feel, etc. – our senses.)

2. You get excited about the idea and start setting a goal to tackle in line with what just ignited your senses.
3. You begin executing towards that goal, and perhaps a few other things along the way (Come on, you're motivated, right?).
4. Initially - all goes well, however as you move forward and don't see results you begin to procrastinate, losing focus.
5. Next, you end up with feelings of remorse, but still do nothing about it, because in your mind you justify yourself with the excuse that "that's life".
6. Ultimately, you give up. You raise the white flag.
7. Then, motivation hits again and the whole process starts over.



Note: The length of the arrows indicate the time between each phase. Give that some thought.

Does this sound like you?

If so, know that you are not alone. I have been there, and a majority of people go through this same “simple” process. Even those who are successful, who you look up to, those sports stars and Instagram influencers you hear and read about, at some point in their lives, have gone through the same cycle until they began cracking the code.

At his point, if there is one thing, just one that you should fold over and over again in your head over and over again - it is that this process **can** be smashed out. You can learn a better way to execute on your goals by focusing on the things that truly matter. You can live guilt free and engineer the process to make your goals a reality.

How?

Understanding the process in fully utilizing three specific areas in how our minds are wired to make sure you execute the right thing at the right time.

Let's have a look.

First, understand how you can translate motivation into a system. Straight forward!

If you have read my “Get Motivated” mini-guide, than you will already know of what you need to look at when it comes to “motivation utilization”. In the guide I explain in simplistic terms what motivation actually is (my personal viewpoint) and what you need to dig into to make the best use of it. I believe there is a huge

misconception in our society to what motivation actually is. The term gets thrown around a lot.

In other words the takeaway here is comprehending how to use that roller coaster ride (the ups and downs of motivation) and executing not on the motivation itself towards your end goal, rather doing things that will support you when that motivation is gone to ensure you continue pushing towards your goal, rather than just calling it a day and eventually giving up.

Note: Do not focus on the result! ***The key is the process.***

When I speak with people, regardless of age, experience and industry I often hear the same thing over and over again, people always speak of “putting in more than 100%” or “being inspired to achieve something.” But think about those phrases. If I were to ask you to describe motivation for me, what would your answer be? (Not valid if you have read my mini-guide).

Honestly, we interpret too much into motivation and a majority of people misunderstand its actual concept. Motivation is not an attribute. It is not an integral part of who we are. Motivation *is an emotion*. Something that comes and goes. It's stirred intrinsically through a variety of factors.

I'm positive you know exactly what happens (to you) when that motivation hits. At the blink of an eye you have a great idea. You then ride that wave only to reach the shoreline tired. You give up because you no longer want to paddle out to catch the next wave - in other words complete task after task to reach your goal.

The change that needs to happen in this scenario is that you need to use those motivational bursts to set you up for the long run. Not tackle the immediate tasks. You need to support yourself by laying out a strategy that will assist in making it easier for you to paddle back out every time you surf back in.

You see, we get caught up in making amazing goals, along with lists of what we need to do to get there, but we fail to look at the most important part of the whole process - what is it going to take to execute on those tasks to reach your goals? What is going to keep you motivated to actually carry them out and DO them. I hope your grasping the difference in terminology.

Let me break that down in an even easier process for you in what I believe is the cycle a majority of us live in:

You get excited about your goal → you make a list of to-do's → you begin checking off that list only to find yourself tired and unmotivated.

What needs to happen?

You get excited about your goal → you make a list of to-do's → you put a system in place that ("what is it going to take to execute...") supports you → you check off the entire list.

Sounds easy enough, no?

No one tells you this stuff. When it comes to goal setting everyone literally (90%) tells you the same thing - set SMART goals, or write down stretch goals that are achievable or create a list of 3 goals rather than 5 that enable you to stay focused.

You see, while all this may be true, no one tells you how you should live to meet those goals, because a majority of the ones you set regardless of how SMART you make them will ultimately fail because they lack a system to support you in attaining them.

That is where I (High Performance Faculty) want to jump in. I am digging into the core of psychology, talking to experts, interviewing successful people, chatting with professionals (both medical and otherwise) to understand the subject matter. I aim to really look at all my research and see what actually makes sense and what will actually benefit someone into achieving results. Does that make me the absolute expert? Heck, no! But I am convinced that I go far beyond the fluff and puff you'll get in most other places. I mean, I completely respect the work others put in and it all may hold true, I am no guru (!) but together I want us to dig deeper into ourselves. Go beyond the superficial and spur thought, to act out by trial and error to see what will actually benefit both you and myself. And believe me, ***this is my core.***

So, don't stop setting SMART goals or using other methods. However, do translate motivational highs into systems. That is my ask. Use them not to "reach your goals," but to put in place systems that will form routines and eventually habits. Only then will you succeed at what you set out to do. Keep in mind, like my surfer example that at some point your motivation will dwindle, yet if you put into place a regular practice while riding a motivational high, that system will ultimately become automatic. You will regularly follow through with what you need to do, because even during those times when you're no longer motivated two things will kick in –

1. Conscious awareness. Within a mental state you become fully aware about the events and situations in your life.

2. Habits beginning forming through small changes. How? You simply execute the pattern long enough and it goes from being a tiresome chore, to becoming an empowering habit and ultimately an entire routine.

Think this is bogus? Here is an example from my personal life:

A while back I was trying to form a habit of riding my bike regularly. I have a beautiful road bike and I love biking. I have since I was a kid. The problem (or better said, my excuse) was that I had my morning routine, emails, meditating and other projects so that I just couldn't (didn't) want to make the time to grab my bike and go for regular rides. I eventually "found" time, riding once or twice during the week, typically in the evening, but soon figured it was just easier to run or do freeletics instead. So I procrastinated. But I knew I had to change this. What happened? Rather than riding the next motivational wave to the shore line and calling it a day, I began to put a fail proof system in place.

I remember reading a bike magazine and seeing a bunch of reviews on bike trainers for road bikes. I bet you can color out the rest of the story. Nonetheless, I went out and purchased a bike trainer, set my bike on it, and every evening laid out my clip shoes, my shorts and a water bottle for the next morning. I now have put a system in place that will make it easier for me not to make an excuse to not jump on and cycle. As a result of doing this I now have incorporated 3-4 rides per week depending on my training schedule. That pattern of laying out my things and knowing that the bike is there ready to go has evolved from being a chore and burden to becoming something I love doing, a habit. My mind clicked.

You might think that this sounds silly, but I can tell you that it is a guaranteed system for success. You need to use your motivation to setup processes that will allow you to follow through with what you want to achieve, the tasks you need to complete even when that motivation really does begin to disappear. And you know it will!

So what does this mean? That means, rather than doing what everyone says when it comes to tackling your goals (focusing on the results), I want you to go think about how you can setup your fail proof system. Think about the things that you need to do in order to execute your goal even when you think you no longer want to do it. Use the next motivational high to your advantage.

Let's practice this. Take a pad and pen out and jot down a goal that you have in mind. Now underneath that goal, list down the to-do's (small tasks) you need to check off in order to complete it. Then, for each of those sub tasks map out your plan as to what you would need to do (next to each sub-item) in order to create a habit that will allow you to automate the whole process by giving yourself a routine to run through. You see - you are still setting up a goal, however the focus is on the process you initiate in regards to each sub-item that will translate into positive habits, automated at will - continue until you reach that goal.

Remember, it's not about running on your motivation. It's about utilizing your motivation to put these habits (and routines) into place. Don't waste your precious motivational moments.

Secondly, bits are smaller than bytes. Now that is a reference to storage space on a hard drive, but the same is true when it comes to creating habits. Regardless of your personality type, whether a nurturer, idealist, giver, visionary, performer or

any of the other personalities, the "bits" hold true for all of us. See, we tend to want to execute a huge task (something big), because we believe that the outcome will be just as large. It will give us the result we want to see quicker and with a bigger punch, than if you just began on something small.

The problem with that is we tend to tackle those big tasks first. Again, it's in our nature to want to see results fast. Especially the way society conditions us today. Yet, believe me, doing so only leads you into a state of demotivation.

Why?

We become intimidated and/or simply take out the joy of what we originally planned to do. Visually speaking, we tend to think that if we go to the gym and put on the biggest weights first, that we'll walk out with huge biceps.

You need to look at it differently, keeping in mind that the "bits" are always better than the bytes. If you plan on working out regularly, than going to the gym once per week and really doing so is indeed better than simply planning to going every day of the week (except perhaps for rest day) only ending up doing so for a short period of time until your motivation wears off, then going irregularly and ultimately being so demotivated that you end up not going at all. That of course until your next motivational wave hits you. (Keep in mind the motivational pool process).

However, if you plan in a session or two or three, depending on your schedule and seriously stick with that, it will become a habit. It may be a small victory for your overall goal of becoming a healthier, better you. Yet making the commitment, regardless of how small it may seem and actually sticking with it

will in the mid to long run be more rewarding than going full blast at once only to end up where we all have been before - a dead end.

Literally, break down not only your goals, but the sub tasks of each item into bit-sized victories. The more you think about it, and what it will take, the higher the chances you will have in being successful in executing your desired goal.

Start small and work your way up to the big leagues. Rome was not built in a day (especially not all the roads that lead there), so take it bit by bit.

Here are a few examples on how to break down the thought process into the "bits." A kick start to spur your mind in creating your own goals:

- Use 10kg weights the first week and work your way up to curling 30kg in a fixed set to get you into the habit of curling correctly and regularly, while reaching small victories through the additional weight along the way.
- Rather than forcing yourself to drink 3 liters of water a day, start with drinking a glass or two. Then "up it" each day to get the system going to the point where drinking 3 liters is a habit, something automated.
- Rather than trying to clean out your inbox at work, focus on the top 5, 10 or 20 mails that need to get done. This way each day you feel accomplished at getting things moving, sifting through unimportant ones and really creating a sense of actual accomplishment and creating a habit of better time and email management.

Taking small bit-sized steps towards your goals will help you fulfill your ultimate end goal. Restrain yourself from wanting a big-bang, because you believe that that is the only way to go. Don't set yourself up for failure from the start. Give

yourself time for thought. Use the motivational highs to form small habits that will engineer rituals that lead to success.

Now that you have a better understanding towards smaller being better, look at your goals. Write down what you need to do to make them happen and then go a step further by breaking those down into the absolute smallest and easiest to-dos you can think of.

Now, let's take a moment. After reading to the end of this paragraph, grab the same pad and pen you had previously and jot down the small "bits" you will take over the next weeks to hit each one of your targets (subtasks) you wrote down earlier. Always remember - goals are reached by accomplishing the small things first and utilizing that advantage to focus on what matters to be successful in creating habits. Once you accomplish that, you can begin looking towards tackling your bigger objectives.

Now ask yourself what small things you can do today to begin your journey to habitual success?

Lastly, leading to point number **three** is executing "on" or "at" the selected time. We tend to think a lot of goal accomplishment is planning, planning, planning. We think that if we concoct a great plan and in addition had the right set of tools, the right amount of knowledge, the right amount of support - we would succeed at achieving our goals. Yet I believe those things are not as important as we make them to be. Many people plan around those things and believe that by putting in the hours to plan, they are automatically set up for victory. Don't get me wrong - planning is a crucial part of life, but when it comes to motivation and creating habits, execution is what really matters.

Let's go back to our gym example. If you and Michelle Lewin (for the ladies) or Rich Froning Jr. (for the men) walked into a gym - say you had the best gear - new shoes, new shorts, Lycra tank top, gloves and sweat band on and all they had were torn shorts, old shoes, no gloves and a plain cotton shirt and the two of you went at it in a cross-fit competition. Who do you think would win?

See, regardless of the motivation you have you need to know that everything around your goal becomes irrelevant if you do not execute. In other words, without the actual **doing** you cannot form lasting habits and rituals.

Forget the Lycra top and new shoes. You need to focus on the right things and execute on/at the right time. In the case of our gym example it's about setting that bit sized time slot into your weekly schedule and executing it by **going** to the gym. Putting points 1 and 2 from above into practice.

Make it simple on yourself, because it truly is. The easier the system, the more likely it will succeed. We have this preconceived notion in life (any area), that the more complicated something seems, the better the outcome must be. Bulls***.

Let others think what they want to, because you now know better.

Execution is key. Follow through with the small things you set out to do, do them regularly and set yourself up to engineering a new habit.

Having gone through that, you now hopefully have understood how you ride your motivational highs and utilize them by putting a system into place rather than tackling your goals aimlessly. Utilize those moments to create small bit-sized

successes, map out specific times and periods as to when you will do what. Put those timelines on your pad that you have been using and review them constantly. Burn them into your mind and think ahead.

Only now are you beginning to set yourself up for success. And believe me this is what really works in life. You have actually planned out what needs to be done, adding a physical time and perhaps date and are now no longer anxious about missing a deadline. You're ahead of your game. You'll begin to repeat this cycle and before long the whole process, these three steps will begin to become a natural cycle of your goal setting strategy and will ultimately translate into positive, successful habits that you actually execute on.

**“Focus on where you
want to be, not where
you were, or where you
are.”**

Lesson 2: Don't Become Distracted

We tend to set goals, create our plan and ride that motivational high as far as it will take us, however along the way usually end up doing several things on the side, because heck - we are motivated, no? Why not clean the house? Start a new painting? Lose 10kg? All while actually just trying to write a blog post about "saving the environment."

Does that feel like something you tend to do? Be honest, because everyone does it. I am guilty of this just as much as you. Engineering habits takes strong focus. We can't get side tracked by all the other noise, that in the end, is irrelevant towards what you want to accomplish.

Several years ago, in the corporate environment, my then supervisor asked me "What is the single most important goal in your career?"

The question at the time sent a short wave of anxiety down my backside. It's a question that no one wants to answer. You see the problem we associate with that question in the work space is that we feel that giving an answer will lead to certain doors being closed, or being mocked, or other goals one potentially may have being pushed out farther depending on one's answer.

My initial reply was diplomatic one along the lines of: "I want to be an executive, someday, but I also want to first be a country manager and also work in strategy so that I get in sync with this and that...."

My supervisor cut me off and said "Leave out the fluff and tell me what your number one goal is?"

My reply:

"My number one goal is to one day become CEO."

There you go. Easy as that. What had just happened? The person pushed to get a clear and concise answer. The reason we tend to avoid this is because we believe we shackle ourselves and make the potential results smaller than we want them to be. We feel as if we limit ourselves, because we are asked to focus on one thing, despite having a huge list of things we want to achieve. It is in our nature.

However, in reality, what actually happens is you break the shackles you have bound yourself too. You begin understanding how to cut out the noise and where you need to invest time and energy to actually execute. Once you are clear as to where you want to go, you can focus your attention on the tasks that truly matter in order to first engineer the habits that will lead you to fulfilling those goals, then expand from there. It's as simple as a straight-forward answer and leaving out all the fluff.

You are the only one that hinders yourself from doing and achieving all the things you want in and of life. The case I want to make is - in order to successfully engineer habits and put in place systems that work - you need to focus and become absolutely crisp and clear as to what **you** want.

In other words you need to be precise, like a Swiss-made watch. Holistically speaking, when it comes to engineering success as a whole - you need to drill down to the core of where you are going to be heading. No "ifs" and "buts".

Take the example of purchasing a new car. You don't just walk into the car dealership not knowing what you want. You need to know what type of car you are looking for. What is its purpose? A two seater sports car? A family van? A pickup truck of sorts?

Seriously. Just picture the car dealer asking you "What kind of car would you like? We have all types of cars on our lot. Thousands to choose from! Where should we start?"

And you end up answering: "Well, it should have 4 wheels, a steering wheel and a good motor."

Guess what? The dealer is going to pull money out of both of your pockets. However, if you go into that dealership and know exactly what you are looking for, then you'll end up narrowing down your options to a select one or two.

"I'm looking for a 4 door, SUV, preferably hybrid, white color, automatic transmission that sits at least 5 and has decent amount of liters in trunk space."

It's plain and simple, no? You are focused and know, without distraction, what you want.

See, we tend to worry, like in the answer I gave involving the corporate environment earlier, that we limit ourselves, believing that we close other opportunities, even though we want them.

You need to be able to commit to that 1 thing, to make that critical choice and like glue - only hustle on that. Execute on it, and then apply the same principle to the next item.

So, to make it easy on you (and we are keeping this as generic as possible) - to get focused, take out your pad and pen and write down the goals you have over the next 6 months.

Whatever those goals might be, jot them down and then pick the one closest to you from an emotional standpoint. One which you believe will make you feel accomplished if you hit that goal over the next 6 months.

Next, write down the to-dos that you learned from Lesson 1 and map out those goals into chunks. This way you are working on building a time line that takes your gigantic goal and chops it into smaller eatable bit-sized pieces.

You need to get into the mind set of being focused on the task at hand. Ask yourself continuously "Is this going to get me to where I want to go?"

Cut out the noise. Cut out the distractions and put a leash on yourself. When you are able to do this your success rate grows rapidly. Once you have cleared your goal and begun creating the right habits, you can utilize the same or similar strategy to do all the other things one chunk at a time.

**“In order to succeed,
your desire for success
should be greater than
your fear of failure.”**

Lesson 3: Only one road leads to Rome

As you have learned by now, motivational highs are not the sources you should rely on when it comes to execution. Motivation will dwindle and regardless of how water tight you think that your strategy may be in assisting goal achievement, it will at times fail you. Not every plan, no matter how well thought out, will always work the way you had hoped or planned for.

This is part of our daily lives. Sometimes you just get a curve ball and you need to figure out whether you are going to swing or hope that it swivels by the plate without being in the strike zone. (For non-Americans, that is a baseball analogy) The thing with what we have covered in lesson one and two is that when your plan begins to go a bit awry, it often does not take that much effort to actually get back into the groove of things.

This leads us to the question - if only 1 road leads to Rome what happens when I end up on a cross road or take the wrong turn?

Here's my take on this. Once you have created a habit by implementing the steps in the previous lessons, you may come across a point in the system where you do begin failing. Just because you begin making a ritual of something does not mean that this will automatically carry on for the remainder of your lifetime. Remember, that any process or system can be broken, fixed and/or optimized. The same is true with your habits and rituals.

Once you take the wrong turn, you need to stop, step back and analyze. It's like any other process whether at home or in the business world. If something is

broken, you are going to need to deep dive into the root cause of the issue in order to correct it. Hence, you either keep walking down the wrong road until you find a path that leads back to your original one or you fix it immediately by creating a path of your own back to your original road. (Bring out the heavy gear and start building.)

It happens to the best of us. We may have built a good system, like putting aside a couple hundred Euros into our savings account each month on pay day, only to reassess that because we "need" the money for something else, we break that habit. At some point any system may begin breaking down, which is completely natural. Why? We are humans and we all make mistakes. We all fail regardless of how well thought out things may be. The key is to not give up. The feelings and emotions that come along with failing gets our heads spinning, but when you do experience it, you need to utilize that failure to your advantage. So rather than throwing in the towel, analyze your behavior to see what the quick fix to the issue may be. So, don't feel guilty if after 10 months you suddenly don't put that money into your savings account, rather use it for yourself to purchase a new piece of furniture. The key is to fix the issue, not the attitude. Don't let a hiccup get the best of you.

Don't fear failure, utilize it!

The problem within society is that we are taught to fear failure. Failure is not something that is widely accepted. It makes us look weak. It makes us look like we have no clue what we are doing. It makes us look like idiots. Well truth be told, let it make you look like whatever others want to perceive you as, because

in the end, when you execute it's you creating your habits and engineering success for yourself, not by or for anyone else.

What you need to work through is accepting the fact that you might just fail. Please do not give up easily. If you applied for a specific job, expect that you may be rejected as an applicant, however part of your plan should be what happens if it is a "no." What specific action will you take after having been declined? That "no" is only the first step of the process. You need to make it a behavior, a habit to challenge that and see how you can utilize that "no" to take yourself to the next level. This is true for all areas of life.

Failure is part of the plan, the question is "what will you do when it comes?" Tell me, how often have you gone through something in life and began dreaming up in your mind that you would not make it, would not be accepted or would not be promoted, among other things? It's natural, right? What it boils down to is how you manage that failure and translate that into success for you.

Understand that learning how to engineer habits in and of itself is not the victory. It's not the ultimate fulfillment. Understanding what to do when you fail at that habit is what will carry you through.

So, you may be asking yourself how will you know? When do I stop and break my habit or when should I shift gears?

Grind vs. Towel

Let's say you have created a habit of going to the gym every day. You want to bench press 100kg at the end of a 6 month period. You're not pushing 90kg just yet, but you have consistently been doing 80kg for the past weeks. Now one day

you get up and even though you have your system in place, your gear is ready, shoes are laid out nice and neatly, gym bag is packed and proteins are ready to go, you're just not feeling it. Nonetheless you head out the door, but then it hits you. Should you go to the gym or just call it a day and take a break?

Regardless of the type of habit you are wanting to build in connection with a goal you have already laid out - what you need to end up asking yourself is a series of questions to confirm whether you take one path or the other. Do you continue walking down the 1 road to Rome or do you take a turn somewhere because it just might be better?

The "Grind" questions to answer for yourself should you have "one of those days" and you're looking to see whether you should continue include:

- Why am I doing this? Is it aligned with what I really want?
- Will I be bitter if I do not execute this activity now?
- If I do not do this now, will I risk missing my end goal?

If you answered any or all of these with a yes, then you need to continue grinding. Perhaps you're just having one of those days. So stick with it.

Get the "Towel" questions that you ask yourself are:

- Am I feeling depressed or feel like I'm running on an empty tank?
- Am I able to skip a day without affecting my planned strategy?
- Is this commitment negatively affecting relationships?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions than you may need to throw in your towel for the day and give it a rest. Take the time to collect your thoughts



and work out the “whys.” Why are you doing what you are doing? Why am I negatively impacting others? Why.....and so forth.

**“We must first establish
our habits, and then our
habits will make us.”**

Lesson 4: Engineering Habits

Congratulations. You now have reached lesson 4. This lesson is all about how you begin changing your mindset to create habits continuously and successfully. For some people, change comes easy. For others there may be a bit of an inner battle.

Yet regardless of the type of person you are, imagine if every time you set out to do something you actually achieved it. No questions asked. You chuck out a goal and off you go to success. That just sounds too good to be true, no?

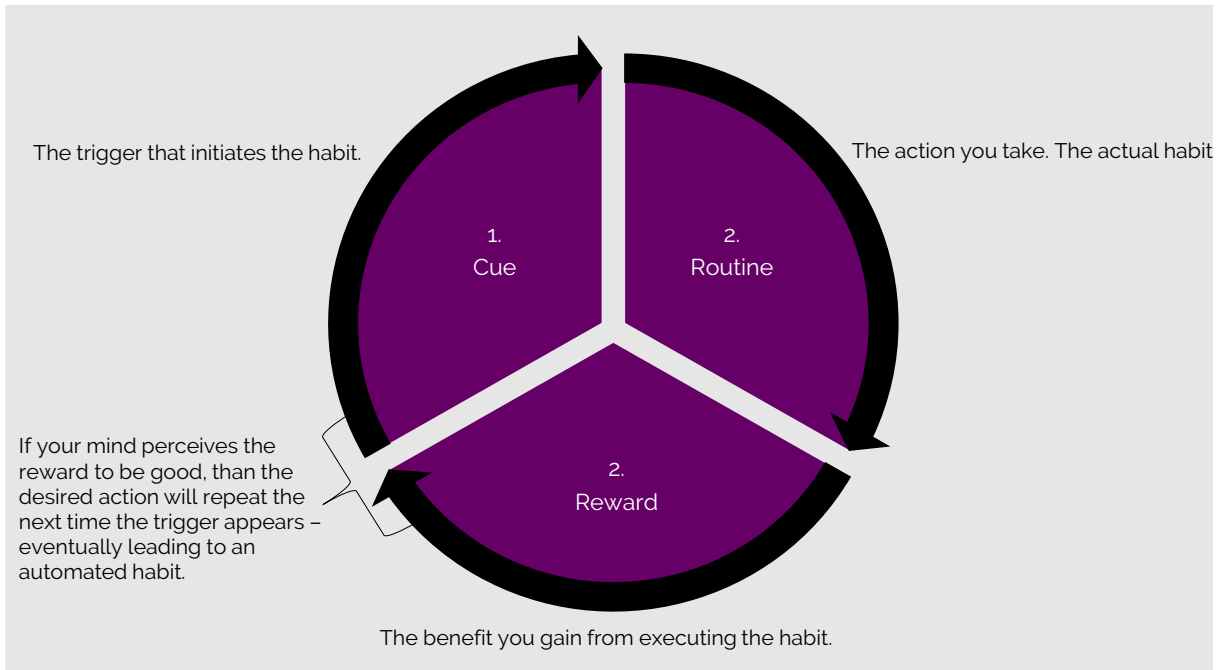
Well what if I told you that it is possible. You can engineer habits with ease. Take this with caution because as I just called out in the previous lesson, habits can and will fail, the question is what you do when they do fail.

Now regardless of that, the key is to understand how habits actually work. Have you ever heard of the 21 day rule? No? It takes, on average, 21 days to make or break a habit. However that is not our focus. I just wanted to point that out and spur some thought. What you really need to grasp is your understanding what a habit actually is.

When you look up the word "habit" in the dictionary you'll find that it means: "a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up."

However let's go deeper than that. Let's take habit apart. If you've read [The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg](#) you'll know that every habit has 3 components:

- A cue, a specific trigger for a behavior to start (example: alarm clock)
- A routine, the behavior itself (example: getting out of bed)
- A reward, the benefit of taking a course of action (example: a cup of coffee after you get up)



See, your brain is wired to enjoy "the habit" if it knows what the reward is. This will also carry on moving forward. If your mind begins to associate as to what it will get - habits begin to take shape. It's valid for both good and bad reasons. Take smokers as an example, as a non-smoker you may find it bad, however a smoker finds it rewarding (in most instances) which is why they carry out that habit. The same goes for something like fitness. In the end it's simply your mind that picks up a cue, executes a routine and connects that to a reward.

The problem around changing a specific behavior is what you should actually be focusing on. Take smoking as an example again. Why do so many smokers who

are trying to break the habit relapse after a short period of time? The reason is very simple. It's not just the nicotine that's stuck in their lungs and veins making your body crave for more. It's the fact that those people are only focusing on breaking the routine. That's only part of the habit. You are focusing your energy on trying to change something without looking at the complete picture.

Yet with modern psychology we now understand that in order to make a habit a routine we need to focus on the cue - what makes us execute the habit, and the reward - what do we get for doing so? It may seem like a carrot and stick behavior, but it's far more than that. If you manage to fine tune the cues and the rewards then the routine will follow automatically and the behavior begins forming.

What does this mean for you when you look into engineering habits? Focus on the rewards. It is that simple. Amazing, no?

Let's take my gym example again. If you look at most folks at the gym, you'll notice one thing in common. A majority of people drink some form of protein shake or smoothie during or after their workout. Think about it. Yes, it may be protein, however it is chocolate or vanilla or strawberry, but sweetened. It's actually contradictory to the point of exercising. Why take in more sweets when you are actually trying to get fit? The principle of habit kicks in here. The reward for working out is the shake. Your brain gets the message of saying "hey, good job here. Let me make your body feel good." A habit begins forming because you enjoy the reward.

The great thing about rewards is that you are in complete control of what those rewards will be. In regards to the gym, maybe it's the shake? Maybe it's a nice

soothing shower? Maybe its message? Maybe it's just going to bed afterwards? Give yourself a reward and the habit will become easier to execute on and will continue in the long run.

The key is to give yourself any reward that make sense with what you are trying to achieve without any guilt whatsoever and that you authentically enjoy.

Now let's reverse engineer a bit. What about the habits you no longer want to execute on, but perhaps continue doing so because of behavior? The problem is more than just quitting. Take the smokers example from earlier. If you are or have been a smoker (I have not) than let me ask you - have you ever tried quitting? Was it hard? Did you succeed? The issue with this is that you get a cue that kicks off your habit and tells the rest of you to go do it.

What you need to understand is that you need to focus on changing the bad habit into better behavior. From there you can work yourself into fully changing the behavior once you create your new habit.

Another example. How many of you want to eat something sugary after lunch when at work? Whether it's part of your meal or something you brought from home or an item you get from the vending machine down the hall?

Here is the thing. The reason we want that sweet sugary thing could be for a variety of reasons - perhaps it's for energy because your blood sugar is low. Perhaps it's just another excuse to get up and not focus on your work. There are numerous reasons behind your behavior for having a snack. The key then is to change the bad habit into better behavior. Get up and have a snack, but grab a

banana instead. You're executing the same habit but morphing it into better behavior. And ultimately over time this will become an automatic routine for you.

It's not always about engineering habits. It's also about reverse engineering bad ones which can help engineer success in your life as a whole. The win-win on this is that you stop a bad habit and you replace it with something better when you execute accordingly.

If you can begin mastering this than you are already ahead of a majority of people who can't figure out why they can't complete things. It's taking those simple steps to analyze your life and see what works and what doesn't and figuring out the small things, those details you typically never think of that will make the biggest difference (yes, it's true!)

Another component to the puzzle is understanding which habits come when. Which ones to form and which ones to break. You see, just like many things in life, habits can also be ranked. There are ones that will drastically improve your life and others that may affect only bits and pieces regardless of the system you may have put in place.

Take the earlier gym example. You begin putting a system in place that guarantees you go to the gym 3 times per week. This eventually become a habit. What happens next? You begin eating a healthier diet and look after your body with more care. You make smarter choices because that habit flows over into other areas of your life.

These are what we call cornerstone (or also keystone) habits. When you begin executing the right ones, it begins to change your entire self-image. That's right,

we've now hit the sweet spot. Your mind begins noticing. The habit is no longer a conscious decision. It just happens and the affect it has on oneself is that other things begin to change with the given habit. The mind begins working in a different manner and other areas of your life begin to change along. A ripple effect. Have you ever thrown a stone into water? I'm sure as a kid you have. As soon as the stone hits that one spot, the ripple begins and everything around that one spot is affected. The same is true around cornerstone habits.

Back to the gym example - you begin making better choices on foods, you stop procrastinating. You no longer put other tasks off because you feel better by doing them, etc.

Give that some thought.

As we close out this lesson, the key message to take away around engineering habits is not only what habits to make and break, but to hit the nail head on and know what habits will affect what parts of your life. However, use the strategies I am giving you and create behavioral change that will last. Ones that will begin engineering many other successful habits as you walk through life, often automated and without much thought that you are actually doing it.

**“Success does not come
from what you do
occasionally, it comes
from what you do
consistently.”**

Lesson 5: Habits, like glue.

In order to engineer habits that actually continue in the long run we need to look at 2 things.

- **First**, we need to look at how we can build momentum.
- **Secondly**, we need to ensure we don't fall back into first gear and slow down.

Let's take the first part. When you plan on executing on something - a goal like going to the gym every day. You begin doing so, however, only to then skip the 4th day, then the 6th day, then the 8th, 9th and 10th days – then falling into guilt and self-pity. (Remember the motivational pool process?)

What you need to understand is why this happens? Why is it so tough to execute good habits even when you are overly committed? This relates to productivity and results. You make a goal, like exercising daily and then, not seeing any results you begin slowing down. The key here is momentum. Remember, failing as we discussed earlier is totally fine! Even the best and brightest fail. We are all human. What separates "them" from us is the fact that they do not avoid the mistakes - it's how they get themselves back on track.

One easy way to gain traction is by visually seeing what you're executing.

1. Grab a calendar

If you check off each day you successfully execute what you set out to do, then you are giving yourself a visual place for your habits to live. It may

seem odd, but when you see the aggregate effect of your habits visually, the overall picture starts getting easier. You're not just executing each and every day for the sake of doing so. You're actually working to a common goal. You can claim and tell yourself mentally all what you plan to do, but if you note it down and really put it in your schedule (I don't care how you do it) than you will help make it happen. Keep in mind that "soon" is not considered time, nor is "some" not a digit. Note it!

2. Small things count

Skipping one workout is not going to break a good habit you may have going. However, it is the impact and accumulation of several missed days that will impact your behavior and eventually break your habit. So, do small things. Stick to your plan so that your habit doesn't miss its schedule.

As an example, I do squats in the morning while brushing my teeth. Weird? Perhaps, but it gets me going, is part of my morning routine and my mind flips the switch.

3. Accountability

Don't feel like getting up at 6am on a Sunday morning to go for a run? What if "Joe" is already laced up and waiting for you down the road for your 10k run?

See accountability has a huge effect on the way we perceive tasks. On the inside we build a feeling of guilt, because in our minds we set weird expectations that someone else is expecting something of us. Remember you don't owe anyone anything, but having someone along for the ride will

help you execute the task until it becomes something regular and positive for your life. A good habit.

4. Environment

This is valid for both relationships and surroundings. Sticking to your habits has nothing to do with willpower. That in my perception is a false notion. Yet your surroundings affect you more than you think. Everything from the interaction with negative-minded people to the things you read, the items on your desk, the furniture in your home can all trigger different behaviors and emotions.

After seeing your overall progress on your bit sized tasks and working on some of the above suggestions, you will actually see the routine you have created behind it. Keep in mind that the key here, and this brings us to our second point is to not let it slip. That means utilize that aggregate amount of accomplishments to not let your skip days turn into skip weeks or months.

What happens if this pattern begins? As we previously discussed, take a step back and look at your cue. Look at your reward and analyze your personal data. Always ensure that the right triggers to your cue are in place, ensure that you're still committed to your routine and that your rewards are clear and authentically enjoyable for you.

There is no one formula fits all. It's about setting up the right process and systems while on those motivational highs to create the habits and routines that will keep you going in the long run. That could also mean taking the system that currently works for you and fixing or adapting as you move along, should it not be working 100%.



ENGINEER HABITS

DEDICATED. MOTIVATED. COMMITTED.

Then you will begin engineering habits that stick like glue and become mindless, automated activities because your heart and mind are already in them.

**“You do not get what you
want. You get what you
picture.”**

In closing

I know this has been a lot to take in. We have covered a lot of ground together – which I think is good. This is the second iteration of this guide and I pledge to continuously update it as time goes by.

I hope that you have a better understanding of my perspective and what I utilize day in and day out. I packed it all into this easy to read guide so that you can utilize the same ideas, thoughts and systems I use to execute change and engineer habits in my life and those individuals around me.

Look I'm far from perfect. However, that being said, I want you to use what you have now hopefully learned and really take the time to hone your skills in engineering the right habits for you in your life. Remember, you only have one life to live. Live it with fulfillment by doing the things you love and achieving what you want out of life. Don't try to live anyone else's or for that matter try to live up to anyone else's expectations.

I want you to have continued success in engineering your life. I want to continue walking with you. Reach out to me if you ever need help to create the habits you need to march towards any goal. I am a flawed human being. I do not get up every day pumped and ready to go. Neither does anyone else. Not your boss, Will Smith, or anyone else. But I am here to help!

In closing I do want you to remember two more key things.

1. Knowledge may be power. However, knowledge without action is completely useless. You know what you need to do. Use these ideas and make them a reality.
2. If you want to learn more about high performance and be held accountable than join us in engineering your success today, sharing your experiences with others and creating a better world for all of us through our community on [Facebook](#).

Also, I encourage you to read lots of great books on the topic, videos and materials on the subject online and elsewhere. I encourage you to never stop learning.

And one final note before finishing up - I honestly hope this has helped you, yet do keep in mind that I do not have it all figured out. Just like you, I have days that are frustrating, however I do my best to walk the walk towards full human potential and greatness with you. I love the fact that you are taking the time to join me on this journey. I love being surrounded by great company! If you found this guide insightful, I would kindly ask you to [leave a review](#) here. Thanks!

Go beyond! Never Settle! Make it happen! And most importantly:

Be D. M. C.

(Dedicated. Motivated. Committed.)



H. Kratochwill



Additional Notes:

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- Illustrations by myself

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- [My Blog](#)
- [The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business](#) by Charles Duhigg
- [Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us](#) by Daniel H. Pink
- [Rewire: Change Your Brain to Break Bad Habits, Overcome Addictions, Conquer Self-Destructive Behavior](#) by Richard O'Conner

Engineer Habits.

A brief guide to help you get s***
done.

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