

Creating an Essential Habit: Conduct One-minute Reminders

Creating a habit can be both simple and easy to do. Unfortunately, in many cases, it's just as easy to not do it, which is why a process is needed.

In this exercise, you will define a habit, document the actions you need to bring it to life, and establish ongoing accountability to sustain the habit over time. There are five steps to making a habit stick:

1. **Decide on a mindset:** Behavior change requires a change in thinking, a rewiring of your brain. What will you need to think about differently or focus on to keep your new habit a high priority?
2. **Create routines and behaviors:** The word habit implies "repeated action." What are the repeated actions you will take to form your habit?
3. **Demonstrate willpower:** Obstacles inevitably present themselves and willpower is needed to control your attention, emotions, and desires. What obstacles will challenge your willpower? What actions will you take to overcome obstacles?
4. **Focus on benefits:** Look for small wins. Provide yourself with positive reinforcement. Pay attention to the personal and/or business impacts and results.
5. **Track effort daily:** Daily effort tracking ensures you take a few seconds to reflect on the effort level you put toward your habit (not the results). If you keep trying, you will get better! Ask yourself every day, "Did I try?" And, don't worry, there is an app for that! (Search "habit tracking" in the app store of your smartphone for a variety of tools to choose from.)



WHAT IS THE HABIT YOU WANT TO CREATE? Conducting One-minute Reminders

STEP 1: DECIDE ON A MINDSET

Why is building the habit important?

Behavior change requires a change in thinking. What will you need to think about differently to keep your habit a high priority?

Your new mindset (*check all that apply*):

- It is my job to make the values part of the conversation.
- Doing it helps create a focus for my team and sets clear expectations.
- It doesn't take a lot of time.
- Doing it leads to real outcomes, such as employees doing more of the actions I need them to do.

Capture additional ideas below or on back:

STEP 2: CREATE ROUTINES AND BEHAVIORS

What routines and behaviors will make up your habit?

Habits require established routines and behaviors. What are the repeated actions you can do to support your habit?

Routines and Behaviors (*check all that apply*):

- Add it to the top of every meeting agenda.
- Tell my team we are going to do this and ask them for help if I forget.
- Make a calendar appointment to prepare for the One-minute Reminder.
- Keep the One-minute Reminder worksheet somewhere I see it every day.
- Send out a schedule to the team with a different person assigned to do the reminder each week.

Capture additional ideas below or on back:

STEP 3: DEMONSTRATE WILLPOWER

What obstacles might challenge your willpower?

Willpower is the ability to do what really matters, even when it is difficult. Running out of willpower can ruin your habit. Willpower is in short supply each day and deteriorates as we get more stressed and tired. Predict where you might run out. When might you be tempted to forget or say, "Aw, screw it"? Review routines/behaviors from Step 2 to ensure you have the right ones to overcome willpower obstacles. Add new ones as necessary.

Obstacles (*check all that apply*):

- I become very busy and think I don't have the time.
- My team will think it is hokey.
- I feel awkward and unnatural.
- Our meeting agendas are already too full to add another minute.

Capture additional ideas below or on back:

STEP 4: FOCUS ON BENEFITS

How is mastering the habit going to positively influence your life?

List the benefits you should be looking for over time. Ask yourself: What future personal benefit or business result might be just a bit more expensive to achieve or not accomplish at all if I don't develop this Essential Habit? How will mastering the habit make a positive difference in your life?

Personal Benefits (*check all that apply*):

- I am seen as a more strategic, proactive leader.
- I enjoy our meetings more when we start with a focus on what is going well.
- I feel empowered to send my team on a mission instead of harping on them when they don't do it.

Capture additional ideas below or on back:

Business Results (*check all that apply*):

- People start to recognize what is going well and appreciate others they work with.
- Ability to communicate expectations in a positive method
- Greater alignment on expectations
- Increases team morale
- Increases training and learning opportunities

Capture additional ideas below or on back:

STEP 5: TRACK EFFORT DAILY (10 SECONDS OR LESS)

What routines and behaviors make sense to track daily?

What we track determines where we focus and what we are motivated to improve. Daily effort tracking ensures you take the time to reflect on your actions. Doing so increases the likelihood you will make your habit stick.

Look back to Step 2 and determine which routines/behaviors are ideal for daily effort tracking. Take ten seconds to stop, think, and rate your effort. Just ask yourself, "Did I try?"

Did I try to *[insert habit here]*?

It takes 90 days: Behavioral research indicates that it takes 90 days to prepare for change, consistently demonstrate the routines/behaviors, become confident in the face of obstacles, and move past the likelihood of giving up. Research also shows that it takes a few months of practicing a habit and tracking it daily to create permanent change. So, what's the rush? Give yourself 90 days!