



# How to grow your business by making the most of every day...

Wouldn't it be great if every day and every week you achieved greater results for your business?

What if, instead of working hard and feeling as though you're getting nowhere, you feel a sense of progress for your business every day?

Here's a bitesize business breakthrough you can start implementing today!

## In a nutshell

What you achieve in life and business is determined wholly by how you use the 24 hours of every day.

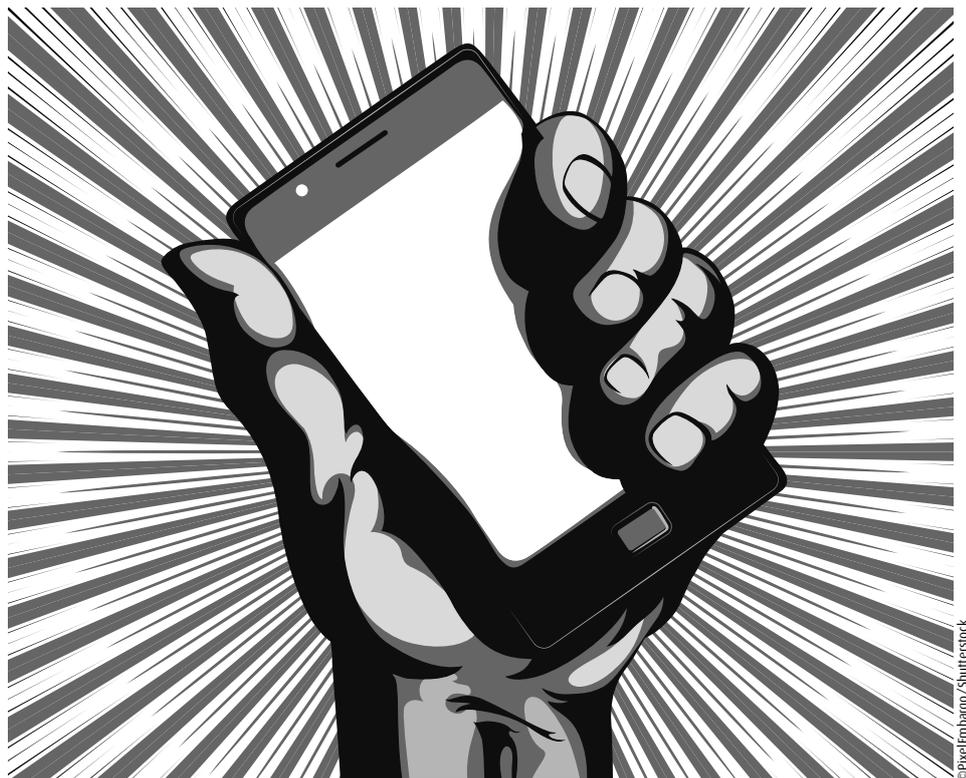
If the research is true, and there's lots of it, for half of our waking hours we behave habitually, we're on autopilot (one study suggests 90% of the day!).

Only when you change your habits (re-direct your autopilot) will you achieve the success you seek. Apply the 5 habit triggers and you can!

You want your people in your business to achieve more, don't you?

You want to achieve more yourself.

Learning and applying the science of habit



change is your only hope. However...

You know the phrase?

**"Old Habits Die Hard"**

It's wrong!

## Here's a simple solution...

What's reassuring is there are only 5 signs, 5 triggers, 5 cues you must be aware of to get the habit change and the results you want.

Recognise and manage these 5 triggers/cues to get control of your autopilot, change your habits and improve your results.

The research suggests habits do not die at all!

That's why the phrase **"...it's like riding a bike"** rings so true.

It's also why Alcoholics Anonymous is recognised as one of the most successful change management programmes of all time. At the start of every AA meeting they greet each other with the phrase; **"Hello, my name is ..., and I'm an alcoholic"**.

They are acknowledging their old drinking habit still exists. Old habits don't die.

Your job is to REPLACE your old habits with new habits, bad habits with good habits. When you do, your results improve.

## START: It pays to play a personal game of habit change...

You help yourself build your habit change muscles when you make it personal.

**“With each habit change we get better at changing habits”**

Why not start with personal habits then apply successful habit change to your business.

Change your route to work. Drink water with every meal. Brush your teeth differently! Stand up when talking on the phone. Plan your day before anything else. Get up 30 minutes earlier.

**Personal Habit Example:** You brush your teeth in an identical way every morning. All the five triggers are at play.

1. Same location (your bathroom)
2. Same time (first thing in the morning)
3. Same people present (maybe nobody)
4. Same preceding action (toothpaste!)
5. Same emotional state (groggy?)

Chances are you start brushing your teeth in the same spot every morning too without thinking – I start top left, where do you start?

Change a trigger and watch what happens...

Put the toothpaste on in a different location. When you do you create a conscious trigger to brush your teeth differently.

**Business Habit Example:** ‘Plan your day’ is an interesting habit. It sounds simple!

What’s clear is the most productive people have goals and plan their day first. They set out their priorities, so the day plays to their tune.

Less productive people tend to free wheel around the rushed jobs of the day. It’s easy to walk into work and deal with emails, then phone calls and other pressing issues. You can feel productive this way but you’ll rarely achieve what the disciplined planners achieve.

So how can you put the five triggers to work supporting a new fledgling planning habit?

1. **Change location** – don’t go to work first – visit a café and plan your 3 priorities for the day.

If you go to work sit somewhere else to plan or wear a hat! In the mid 1990’s ASDA’s revival led by Archie Norman installed a ‘red cap policy’ to aid thinking. When a manager was seen in a red cap no one was to disturb them – they changed the location/setting using a red cap and changed business habits.

2. **Time** – start earlier, means minimum impact on the rest of the day
3. **People Present** – make sure you’re alone, an earlier start time might mean you’re alone...

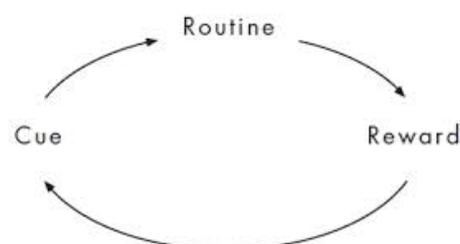


©Schmetzad/Shutterstock

4. **Preceding action** – you’ll drive to work differently, via the café

5. With changes 1-4 chances are you’ll be in a different **emotional state** too
- But remember **“Old Habits Don’t Die.”**

It is so easy to drift back to doing what you did before – whenever you turn up at work as usual, all the usual triggers/cues will prompt your usual routine and the same results too. Check out the ‘habit wheel’...

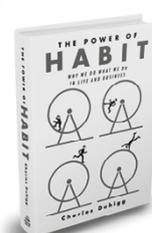


Manage your cues and you’ll be able to change your routine behaviour. With time, you’ll achieve the reward of better results.

Put the habit wheel to work for you and you’ll establish new, better, more productive habits.

### The book, the insight...

A fantastic book on habit change is **“The Power of Habit – why we do what we do and how to change”** by Charles Duhigg, award winning New York Times journalist.



If you can see the merit of habit change you’d be wise to develop a reading habit and get this book. You’ll discover inspirational stories galore about habit change and how it can pay off for you.

## IT'S OK TO DISAGREE:

**“Why does habit change have to be so long winded? I'd prefer a quick fix!”**

If medical research suggests 6 from 7 heart attack victims go back to the same routines once they recover – what chance does any quick fix solution have?

The thing is you don't want it to be easy, you want it to be hard! It's as hard for your competition as it is for you – only you now have the inside track. Like Jim Rohn said:

“Don't wish it were easy, wish you were better”

Habit change by definition is a long change. Some research suggests it takes between 66 and 260 days to install a new habit over an old one successfully. Not the anecdotal 21 days often quoted.

So to make it easier...focus on one habit change at a time! One you are in control of to begin with, like planning your day or arriving 5 minutes before every meeting. And manage the triggers as suggested earlier.

## IT'S SO EASY TO GET SIDETRACKED:

**“Business is hard enough as it is, I can't see how I can tackle habit change too”**

Fair point. But can you see by starting with a simple habit change you will be on your way to tackling those bad business habits?

**“Purposefully choosing new habits to replace old habits will greatly increase your chances of changing bad habits”**

**Use the Business Bitesize Support Tools And Resources to help you make the most of this edition of Business Bitesize – go here: [www.businessbitesize.com/obc\\_accountants](http://www.businessbitesize.com/obc_accountants) to download these**

**Your feedback is important to us.** We'd love to know what you think of this edition of Business Bitesize and how you use it or plan to use it. Also we'd welcome your suggestions for future editions of Business Bitesize. To give us your thoughts please use the simple feedback form here: [www.businessbitesize.com/obc\\_accountants](http://www.businessbitesize.com/obc_accountants)

## RECOGNISING BAD WORK HABITS IS TOUGH:

**“I don't know which habits are getting a good or a bad result in my business”**

Because we are so attached to the way we work it can be tough to spot change. However, there are people around you who'll be very willing to point out your bad work habits! Your spouse, your colleagues and your customers can be the catalyst for your habit change!

Are you brave enough to ask the question: **“If you could suggest one work habit for me to change, to help improve our results, what would you say?”** Jack D. Hodge

Here's a few ideas to help get you started:

- Turn up 5 minutes early to meetings – being late never sets you up for success
- Plan your day, plan your week – free wheeling is less effective
- Conduct 30 minutes team training every week – beats letting them go stale!
- Make all internal meetings 'stand up meetings' – they're faster and more energetic

For more insights, look at how you use your time and look for habitual ways of using your time smarter.



**“Your habits determine how close you'll come to reaching your genetic potential”**

## STOP DOING:

Your phone habits, your iPad and PC habits now determine your use of time as much as anything. They can be a debilitating distraction.

Stop checking your emails as soon as you sit down.

Don't turn your computer on when you get in. When you walk through your front door in the evening (preceding action, location, time, emotional state) switch your phone off.

Instead, tackle an important rather than a pressing issue! Or plan your day. Or engage fully with your family as soon as you get home.

## ANOTHER REASONABLE ARGUMENT

**“Getting other people to change is almost impossible”**

Yes, getting other people to change their habits is hard. But in the workplace you can encourage good habits by sharing this edition of Business Bitesize with them. Help them see the power of recognising the cues to prompt changes to habitual routines and better results.

A UK recruitment company developed the '10 before 10' habit. 10 sales calls before 10am. Everyone stands up for this.

They are managing the location cue (it looks different with everyone standing up), they are managing the people cue, they are managing the time cue, they are managing the emotional state cue too. They start the day with a sales habit, a habit underpinning their sales success.

Can you and your people agree on just one work habit which you all work on changing together?

How about the omnipresent obsession with emails? How about you all agree to tackle emails three times a day for 30 minutes maximum?

By getting everyone focused on one habitual change you get the 'people' cue on your side. What other triggers/cues could you and your people use to help ensure your new habit stands a chance?

## ULTIMATE ARGUMENT:

**“How do I know habit change will work for me and my business?”**

You don't, until you give it a try!

Test what you have learned about the 5 cues of habit change on something personal or something you can do yourself (such as always being 5 minutes early).

If you're feeling brave get your team involved like the '10 before 10' sales calls habit. And please remember...

**“The difference between the under-achiever and the over-achiever can be found by looking at the difference in their habits”** Jack D. Hodge

There's merit and power in measuring the changes you want to see. If you want to discuss how to better measure your chosen habit change you'll find our details in the footer overleaf.



## Your next steps:

If you want to grow your business and make the most out of each working day you need to get your habits aligned with your goals. Use the tools to help you achieve this...

# Install new daily success habits

## 1. Choose a new habit:

Just ONE habit change can start your journey to greater business success. What one habit change do you want to focus on to start with?

How about you...

- Plan every work day before you start it
- Be ready for ALL meetings 5 minutes before (with customers and your people)
- Have productive stand-up team meetings
- "10 before 10" sales calls, or customer care calls or customer survey calls

*Choose one from the four above, or one of your own...*

## 2. Identify the old routine you want to replace:

What old habit would you like to replace? Perhaps you want to stop eating biscuits, stop using the lift instead of the stairs, or you may want to stop starting the day by checking emails.

*What would you change?*

## 3. Identify the reward you get from your old routine:

What craving is driving your existing routine? Is it a sense of control, a sense of security, or maybe approval? What do you get? What's the reward from checking emails first thing every day (or even multiple times a day)?

If you're unsure simply jot down your first three thoughts after the routine activity for a few days and see what comes up. NB jotting these things down grows your awareness of the habit. Either your new habit can deliver the same

reward or you can run the old routine at another time so you still get this reward.

*"I know I'm not missing anything when I'm on top of my emails"*

## 4. Identify the cues for your existing routine:

Ask yourself five questions to identify the cues for your existing routine/habit:

- Where are you? *"In my office, at my desk"*
- What time is it? *"8.10am to 8.30am"*
- What's your emotional state? *"Eager to start the day productively"*
- Who else is around? *"Nobody"*
- What action preceded your routine? *"Got a cup of tea and sat down"*

By realising which cue is the primary prompt for your routine you know what to change and manage – you become aware of the cue so you can change your response to the cue.

## 5. Have a plan for your new habit

Now you know the primary cue of your old habit, you can now CHOOSE how you respond to kick-start your new routine/habit.

You can now consciously change something to prompt your new routine – location/setting change is a great cue to start with as it is one of the easiest to manage. You can go to a coffee shop on the way to work, you can have stand up meetings, you can colour code diaries, you can put goals up on your wall, you can park your car further away from the office so you have to walk further...

*What new habits would you like to develop?*

**Changing habits sometimes requires repeated experiments and failures over time. But once you understand how a habit operates – once you diagnose the cue, the routine, the reward – you gain power over it.**

**Go on then...change your habits today. And why not pass this on to a friend or colleague. Feel free!**

**Find the support tools to help you here - [www.businessbitesize.com/obc\\_accountants](http://www.businessbitesize.com/obc_accountants)**

**CLICK  
HERE TO  
PASS IT ON  
NOW**

**business  
bitesize**



business breakthroughs  
in minutes

**obc**  
the accountants