

# BUILDING HABITS THAT STICK

**Ilana Zinyk, MA**

for

**Women in Technology**

The Association of Science and Engineering Technology  
Professionals of Alberta



Caption

# THE ANATOMY OF HABIT:

Every habit is comprised of the same 4 building blocks. In order to create new habits (or break existing ones), we need to understand the anatomy of habit:

## Cue > Craving > Response > Reward

\*\*Note: It's important to realize that we are often unaware of the cues that prompt us to crave a specific reward. This both makes habits useful (when they move us closer to our desired reality) and dangerous (when they move us further away). It is helpful to closely examine the various cues in our environment, and to intentionally set our environment or our system up in a way that will support the habit we are trying to form.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## 4 STEPS TO BUILDING HABITS THAT STICK: (James Clear, 2018)

1) Make it obvious

---

---

---

---

---

---

2) Make it attractive

---

---

---

---

---

---

3) Make it easy

---

---

---

---

---

---

4) Make it satisfying

---

---

---

---

**Tip:** Naturally, if you are looking to break a habit, you must take the opposite approach. That is: 1) Make it invisible; 2) Make it unattractive; 3) Make it difficult; and 4) Make it unsatisfying.

**Reflect:**

*What is a habit you are looking to build? Rather than simply focussing on the outcome you are hoping to achieve, what type of person would demonstrate that habit?*

---

---

---

---

---

*How can you incorporate each of the 4 steps to building (or breaking) habits that stick? Be as specific as possible:*

How can I 'make it obvious' (Or, 'make it invisible')?

---

---

---

---

How can I 'make it attractive' (Or, 'make it unattractive')?

---

---

---

---

How can I 'make it easy' (or, 'make it difficult')?

---

---

---

---

How can I 'make it satisfying' (or, make it unsatisfying')?

---

---

---

---

Who will you choose as your accountability buddy?

---

---

---

---

## INCREASING THE ODDS OF SUCCESS:

- Keep your focus on *who* you want to become rather than *what* you want to achieve
- Never break the chain- even 2 minutes of engaging in a behaviour is better than nothing!
- Never miss twice
- Use a habit tracker
- Find an accountability buddy. Verbalizing our planned behaviour significantly increases the odds we'll engage in it, and checking in with someone who knows our plan is helpful!
- Surround yourself with others who engage in the same habit you're looking to build
- Reframing our actions from 'have to' to 'get to' is powerful! Choice is key.
- Assign additional reward (or consequences!)



## RESOURCES:

### Books:

*Atomic Habits* by James Clear (2018)

*The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg (2014)

### Blogs:

<https://www.scotthyoung.com/blog/2019/06/05/7-habit-approaches/>

### Newletters:

3-2-1 Thursday newsletter by James Clear (sign up at <https://jamesclear.com>). Tip: He's a great follow on social media, too!

### Podcasts:

Re: Thinking with Adam Grant: *Building Atomic Habits with James Clear* (June 26, 2023)

Ten Percent Happier with Dean Harris: *Atomic Habits, James Clear* (July 3, 2019)