

06 Habits of Champions

Summary Resource

Let's Recap

Module 6 'Habits of Champions'

You have discovered a selection of champion habits. The **small actions** performed every day that make them who they are.



This guide offers a quick recap on the key points covered. You can come back to it at any point throughout the course, or why not download and save it alongside your notes?

It's then yours to keep forever!

What are habits?

Habits are the **small decisions** you make, and **actions** that you perform, every day.

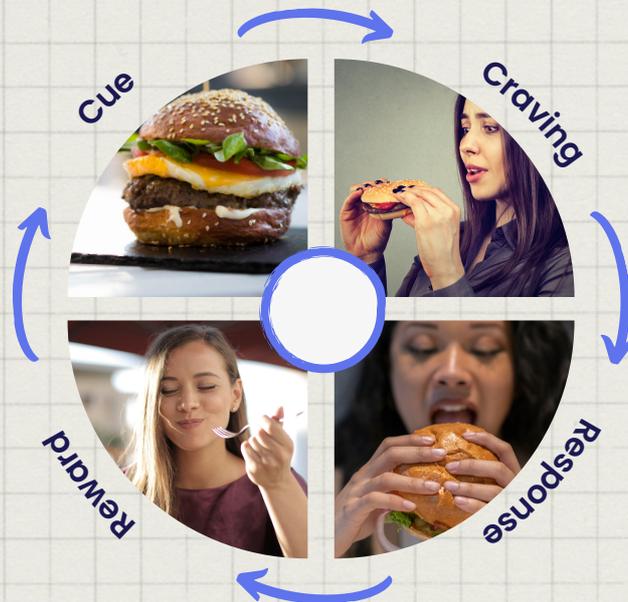
Around **40%** of your actions on any given day are automatic actions, or **habits**.



Credit: Rich Cruse

How are habits formed?

Habit formation can be summarised into **four key steps**:



The Cue

The cue is the element that triggers the brain to notice an opportunity for a reward, or pleasure. A cue can be a smell, a sound, an event, an interaction, or anything else that triggers a desire. The desire is known as the 'craving'. An example could be the smell of freshly made pastries (the cue) that triggers you to want to gobble them up (the desire).

The Craving

The craving is the emotional relevance attached to a certain cue. When you notice the cue, the brain anticipates an opportunity for a change in your physical or emotional state. You crave the satisfaction that the action will give you, and **this craving is what prompts you to act**.

The Response

The response is the actual behaviour, or habit, that you perform to bring about the change you desire. Your brain prompts you to take a certain action that it believes will create the feeling of satisfaction you want.

The Reward

The reward is the satisfaction gained from the action taken. You have successfully satisfied your craving and changed your physical or emotional state. The brain builds a pathway from the cue to this stage of pleasure. Every time you experience the same cue, the brain will be triggered to desire that pleasure again. You will be prompted to perform the same action, thereby creating a habit.

What do high performers say about habits?



Consistency is king!

"High performers always see the bigger picture. Consistency with your routine - and healthy eating habits - outweighs the one or two poor decisions that we all make from time to time. Your routine doesn't need to be lost because of one or two less favourable choices. Aim to master each quarter of your day in a way that sets you up to master the next quarter!"

- Troy Deeney
Professional Football Player, Author.

Champion identity

Ellie suggests that being prepared is linked to the type of person she is, and wants to be. In other words, it's linked to her *identity*.

Ellie's success was based around structure and routine - committing herself to the *world class basics*, consistently, to unlock consistent world class performance.

- Ellie Simmonds
5 x Paralympic Gold Medalist & Multiple World Record Holder.



"Set small goals."

"Don't be overwhelmed by the big picture (your bigger goals).

Break it down into small steps such as hourly, daily or weekly goals, and try to make them realistic so that you're not constantly deflated if you don't reach your targets every time."

- Chrissie Wellington
4 x Ironman Triathlon World Champion & World Record Holder



Credit: Rich Cruse

How can you develop long lasting habits?

1

Make it a part of who you are (aka your identity).

The most important thing to grasp is that habits are all about identity. It's more about who you are and want to be, rather than what you want to do.

2

Break your goal(s) down into small actions.

It's important to break down your goal(s) into small actions that amount to the same overall bigger goal(s). It's much easier to focus on small actions, and you're much more likely to succeed. This helps to reinforce the behaviours over time.

3

Pledge it!

A pledge is a form of [commitment device](#) that increases the cost of not meeting your goal. In the context of a habit, you can make a pledge to yourself and to your close family or friends that you will develop this habit. It's a surprisingly effective way to increase the chance of you sticking to new habits and succeeding over time.

4

Bundle it!

You may also want to give temptation bundling a try for tricky habits that you're struggling to develop. List some habits that don't serve you well and could be considered temptations, then list the habits you would like to develop. Even if you don't really want to cook a meal, you'll become conditioned to do it if it means you get to do something you really want to do along the way - such as listening to your favourite music.

5

Track it!

Finally, a great asset that can help you develop and maintain your habits is [tracking](#). We've created a habit tracker for you that is simple to use. Doing this will increase the likelihood of your habits sticking. You can record your small wins and your misses - making it easier to move forwards. [It's key to keep it simple](#). We recommend choosing, focussing on, and developing 3-4 new habits per month.

Nobody is expected to be perfect all of the time. High performers are exceptional at [accepting](#) and [recovering from 'failures' very well](#). They allow themselves [flexibility](#) in their habits, meaning their auto-pilot also becomes flexible.

When is the best time to start?

A fresh start such as a new year, month or week, a birthday or anniversary give the illusion of a fresh start.

This is a great way to leave less favourable habits behind and feel **optimistic about the future**. When you have filled out your **habit tracker**, identify a day that represents a fresh start for you.

Time to take action!

1

Identify and understand your own habits.

Reflect on your own nutrition habits and **write down** the nutrition habits that you think are serving you best, as well as some that you would like to modify or phase out of your life (those that aren't serving you best).

2

Identify your goal(s) and start tracking.

Use your new habit tracker to **identify** what you wish to change.

What small habits will help you reach your goal(s)?

Once you've written these in your habit tracker, **make a pledge** to your close family and/or friends to reach your target.

You've got this!

3

What were the most important things you gleaned from our Champions?

In this module you heard from a multiple-time world champion, who consistently performed at the pinnacle of her sport. We encourage you to **list three take-home messages** that you felt were most influential on you.

How could you use these messages to help you in your own life?