



Four Steps to Help You With Any Situation Or Problem

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

Published

December 21st, 2008

When people say "I want to change" they often don't know where to begin. This article outlines the steps to deal with any problem or situation.

1. Awareness - The first step to changing anything is to realize that there is a problem and be determined to change it. Unfortunately, when it comes to health issues, people often do not make a commitment to change until their physician threatens them with the consequences of things such as being overweight, continued smoking or lack of exercise.

When you become aware of an area that you want to change you need to clearly identify what problem is. For example, stating that your company does not pay enough commission for your sales may not be as honest as stating that you are not making as many sales as you could..

Take a few minutes to think about the problem and then write down exactly what it is in clear terms.

2. Assessment - Consider all the factors that contribute to the problem or interfere with you overcoming it. To carry on with the financial example in step one, for example, you might find in your assessment that you actually earn enough but spend too much. Perhaps you have expenses that are unnecessary or you are wasting time that could be converted into earning hours.

Begin a list of all the things that either support your problem or prevent you from resolving it. Then add to the list over the next three weeks so that you can identify the patterns that you have developed around this issue. For financial problems, write down everything that you spend every day. For health problems, write down the things you eat and the activities you engage in over the three weeks.

3. Intervention - This step requires that you make a plan to change the patterns you have identified in step two and begin to take action. You might, for example, discover that your daily latte is costing \$100.00 a month and decide to make a beverage at home instead. You may decide to add exercise to life and begin walking 20 minutes a day.

Consider accessing resources to help you with the problem. You can join an exercise group, take a course in budgeting or seek the services of a therapist to help you deal with the issue.

Any habit can be drastically changed or eliminated with three weeks of deliberate effort. Continue to record the things that you are doing so that you can recognize the change as it occurs.

4. Evaluation - This final step is made up of several tasks. First of all, you need to identify the changes that have been made. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your plan. You may need to alter your plan to help you make further changes. For example, 20 minutes of walking every day might not be realistic. Perhaps you will adjust the plan to three days a week. You will likely want to increase the number of minutes you walk over time so that your

stamina will increase. If you find that cutting back on expenses is not enough to help your financially, perhaps you need to take a course in prospecting or apply for another job.

You might want to find other resources to help you to grow and change. Research options on the internet or at the library.

This four step model will help you to deal with any problem you may be experiencing.

Try it and you will soon be celebrating your accomplishments!