



## 102 Ideas for Greater Personal Effectiveness

by Alan Shaw

Personal effectiveness describes the impact and influence that we have on the people around us. We exert that influence by the way that we communicate and behave in their presence. Underpinning this behaviour and communication are the things that are going on in our bodies, hearts and minds.

People who require relatively high levels of personal effectiveness can include anyone who interacts frequently with other people, whether that is in a social or a working environment.

Categories of people who need higher levels of personal effectiveness include leaders of others, entertainers, sales people, service staff, trainers, consultants, front-line staff, shop assistants, teachers, managers, supervisors and many, many more.

The **benefits** of greater personal effectiveness range from simply feeling better about oneself, to attracting a greater following, to greater personal impact upon others, to improved productivity, to establishing higher credibility and lots, lots more.

# Personal Effectiveness

## Physical

### 1 **Exercise**

Take regular non-strenuous physical exercise each day. Anything that adequately stimulates the circulation and breathing for 20 to 40 minutes is helpful. Walking, swimming, cycling and roller-blading are all worthwhile pursuits.

### 3 **Cleanliness**

Wash, shower or bathe regularly to maintain personal freshness and hygiene. A strong personal odour - either produced naturally or added artificially - is generally offensive to most people in close contact.

### 5 **Relax**

Physical relaxation and good quality sleep are essential to maintaining a reasonably good state of health. Without relaxation there can be too much physical tension that can lead to aggression or stress.

### 7 **Speak clearly and simply**

Use simpler, shorter words and deliver them with a strong voice when addressing any group of people. Your influence will diminish greatly if they cannot hear or understand what you are saying.

### 9 **Prioritise tasks**

Set priorities for each day by using the ABCD category grid based upon urgency and importance.

A = Act now; B = Better earlier; C = Chase later; D = Do, Delegate or Dump.

Daily 'do lists' ideally are written down at the start of the day or during the previous day.

### 11 **Remove clutter**

Removing physical clutter from our everyday life allows us to focus better upon what is important rather than what is a continual distraction. Getting clutter out of sight is a good way to keep it out of our minds

### 13 **Participate with others**

Join in activities with other people in activities that are enjoyable or fulfilling or both. This will satisfy a basic human need for social interaction and will enable you to practice your personal effectiveness skills.

### 15 **Presentation**

Personal presentation needs to be as good as

### 2 **Grooming**

Ensure that you are well turned out at all times when in the presence of others. We all attach great importance to visual appeal. Inattention to grooming indicates a lax attitude.

### 4 **Posture**

Sit, stand and walk with a good posture to avoid the development of irritating problems with muscles and joints. Also, people who adopt poor postures give the impression of not caring or having a low self-worth.

### 6 **Avoid toxins**

Ingesting toxic materials - deliberately or accidentally - impairs our bodies' biochemical processes. That means we do not function so well and our effectiveness is impaired.

### 8 **Do it now**

Do things as soon as you can to prevent procrastination, the enemy of success and achievement. People who are more effective get more done by doing things right away. Less effective people wait until they have too many choices to make and then risk doing nothing

### 10 **Eat sensibly**

Eating a balanced diet is easy in principle but few of us seem to achieve it. Most modern diets do not contain enough fruit or fibre and they usually contain too much fat and too many calories. A balanced diet will also help us to stay regular

### 12 **Develop good habits**

Acquire and develop good habits to replace doing the things that we are not very happy about. Stopping any bad habit is notoriously difficult for most people; it is easier to displace it with some better habit

### 14 **Write down goals**

Writing down our goals, aims or objectives enables us to clarify them, to focus upon them and to commit to their accomplishment. Having goals that are not written down achieves the opposite effect and then they lose their impact

### 16 **Keep fluid**

Drink plenty of good, clean water to keep

you can make it. Smart dress is always important in creating a good impression. Materials prepared by you also need to look professional.

**17 Plan ahead**

Planning the use of our time enables us to use that time more efficiently particularly when we are faced with several demanding tasks. Also, having a plan will often mean that we can gauge progress and therefore gain satisfaction and motivation.

**19 Keep promises**

Keeping promises preserves our credibility and integrity. Other people then view us as dependable and reliable. Breaking promises is the fastest way of removing our personal effectiveness and credibility

**21 Speak from the heart**

Saying what you believe to be true at all times will enable others to trust you and believe in you. People whose words do not match their beliefs and values are seen as insincere; others will not willingly follow such people.

**23 Invigorate voice tone**

Make your voice go up and down in pitch and volume to reflect the message that you wish to convey. Take your lead from the wide range of public speakers that you might hear in person, on the radio or on TV.

**25 Use body language**

It encourages people to believe more easily the message that we are trying to convey. Body language that sends a message different to our words will totally undermine our message. Using appropriate body language enables us to generate much greater impact with our spoken words.

your system flushed of waste products. If you prefer flavoured drinks, there are many fruit flavours you can use. Avoid large quantities of tea, coffee or alcoholic drinks

**18 Energise movements**

Putting a little extra energy into our movements conveys to others a level of enthusiasm. This is far more influential than when people adopt a slow, lethargic or casual style of movement. Putting some zip into our stride can be very helpful.

**20 Be decisive**

Being decisive about the myriad of daily events is far more effective than dithering or not making decisions. People who do not know what they want in life, or lack direction, or have no plan or suffer great stress will all have some difficulty in making good decisions.

**22 Celebrate success**

Ensure that when you achieve something worthwhile - however small - you celebrate that achievement with people who are important to you. This enables others to share in your achievement and it will probably lead to greater future accomplishment together.

**24 Smile**

Develop a smile that is warm and genuine and use it whenever you interact with others, even over the telephone. People will then be attracted more to what you have to say. A false smile will achieve the opposite.

**26 Show interest**

Showing a genuine interest in others without being overly familiar is a prerequisite to personal effectiveness. Without it we cannot hope that others will take an interest in what we are trying to do.

## Communication/behaviour

**27 Listen attentively**

Listening to others in a manner that active and responsive is a prime key to personal effectiveness. We are all rapidly turned off by people who do not listen to us or who only half listen and then jump in with what they want to say.

**29 Say what you mean**

Say what you mean and mean what you say at all times and others will be convinced that you are genuine. Too often we hear the 'politicians' of this world speaking in a special form of indirect language that convinces virtually no-one.

**31 Maintain consistency**

Adopt a consistent behaviour so that you avoid "blowing hot and cold"; that only makes people feel nervous and uncertain about you.

**33 Assert yourself**

Being assertive - standing up for one's personal rights while respecting the rights of others - is a balanced way to communicate and behave effectively. It can also build confidence and feelings of self-esteem.

**35 Empathise**

Trying to see things from another's point of view - empathising - can help us to achieve the required depth of understanding. With a proper understanding we can choose the most appropriate ways to respond to others. That makes us more effective

**37 Seek feedback**

Being open to, and actively seeking feedback from others - whether that may be praise, criticism or some of each - sends a powerful message that we wish to improve what we do. People who simply defend their current position are less likely to improve and are also less likely to influence others on a personal level.

**39 Avoid negative people**

Escaping and successfully avoiding the vast amount of negativity that so many people generate is a well-honed skill. This negativity is all around us and is propagated intensely through modern media. We may not even

**28 Maintain 'soft' eye contact**

Maintaining a form of eye contact that is attentive without staring is a key skill in personal effectiveness. It shows others that you are listening and that your thinking is not some distance away.

**30 Set an example**

Act in ways that reflect who you really are or who you want to be. Saying one thing and doing something that is inconsistent with what you say will totally undermine your credibility. You will know it is working when people want to follow your example.

**32 Maintain congruence**

Keeping a consistency in verbal messages and the corresponding body language - congruence - is crucial if we want people to believe what we have to say. Incongruence is usually the first clue given when someone tells a lie.

**34 Persistence**

Keeping going in the face of enormous adversity sets apart people who are really effective. No-one wants to hear from people who gave up at the first obstacle

**36 Ask forgiveness**

Asking forgiveness from others is an act of modesty and humility where we openly admit to some mistake or error of judgement that we have made. We openly wish for the consequences of error to be wiped away. Asking may be the only way to achieve that.

**38 Use questions**

Asking relevant questions - open or closed - enables us to maintain our interest in others and understand their situation more fully. We can then use that understanding to influence how they communicate and behave. That is very powerful.

**40 Praise freely**

Being generous in our praise of others generally improves our communications and relationships with them. People feel energised when they receive praise and recognition and are generally more co-

recognise the negativity until it has affected us.

**41 Be enthusiastic**

Being enthusiastic about what we're saying or doing can be very that infectious and will hold people's attention. No-one is really interested in those people who do not show some degree of enthusiasm - they are simply just a turn-off.

**43 Use pictures**

Use pictures, images or diagrams where possible instead of words or to supplement words. They communicate so much more information more rapidly and effectively.

**45 Ask for help**

Ask for help whenever you need it and be specific about what kind of help you want. We all need help from time to time but some people are just simply afraid to ask. People are normally very willing to offer their help, even to complete strangers

operative as a result. This increases our influence and effectiveness

**42 Remember thanks**

Actually remembering to say thank you when we feel grateful cannot be assumed. Our attention gets drawn to other things and our intention might not happen as we thought. And yet it is so quick, costs nothing and is so important.

**44 Speak in the positive**

Speak in the positive even when what you want to say has a negative message. It is far better to say that someone can / could do better at something rather than to focus upon what was not very good. Focusing upon the negative can induce many types of anxious thoughts and emotions.

**46 Accept others' opinions**

Accepting others' opinions does nothing to devalue our own opinions; accepting does not mean approving or agreeing with the opinions. It also means that we do not need to defend or justify our own opinions.

## Emotional

**47 Give love**

Giving love in an unconditional manner is probably the most generous act that we can do. It can be used to cure so many problems of the heart, mind and soul. Then we get back all the love that we gave and often more besides.

**49 Keep in tune with nature**

Care about all the other plants and creatures on this planet as if they are your own. Nature is profligate and abundant and we can call upon it when we need additional resources. Nature has its own rhythms and if we are out of tune with them we can feel stressed

**51 Be respectful**

Showing respect for other people - particularly when it does not seem necessary - is a pre-requisite to obtaining genuine respect ourselves. It is also one of the key un-stated expectations that customers have.

**53 Have compassion**

**48 Know your feelings**

Getting in tune with our own feelings is essential for us to understand others' emotional states and what impact we have upon them. Feelings are the precursor to action and we need to know what motivates others to act or not act in the ways that they do.

**50 Give friendship**

Being a good friend to someone generally brings the reward of others offering their friendship to us. Developing the ability to give and receive friendship is one of the most important interpersonal skills.

**52 Consider others' feelings**

Considering others' feelings and understanding their emotional make-up at any given time will enable us to interact more sensitively with them.

**54 Build trust**

Have compassion for the people in this world that are much less fortunate than yourself. By valuing people - and showing that you value them - you are likely to attract the warmth of many others.

**55 Seek good company**

Seek out and spend time with those people you admire, who inspire you and with whom you can establish rapport. The benefits of doing so can be many and you will certainly feel better as a result.

**57 Be tactful**

Be considerate of the fact that particular circumstances can make people rather sensitive to certain words or behaviour. Ignoring these can bring about a rather negative response towards us and that

**59 Treat yourself**

Treat yourself to something that you value whenever you have achieved something important in your life. This is your reward and recognition that you give yourself to help maintain your self-motivation. We so often miss such opportunities

**61 Be loyal**

Showing loyalty towards those who influence our future will enable us to grow in stature in their eyes. This can in turn bring various benefits to us in ways that would not otherwise be.

**63 Show gratitude**

Showing gratitude is our emotional response towards people who have helped us in some way. It opens up possibilities for receiving more help and support from the same people.

**65 Be charitable**

Being charitable towards others means that we can give of ourselves, our time and expertise without seeking reward. It can be reward in itself. Nature will normally bring us greater rewards in ways that are entirely

Building trust is like building a spider's web - it takes much time and skill to develop and yet can be destroyed in an instant. Build your ability to give trust in order for people to trust you more.

**56 Enable happiness**

Enable happiness to enter and reside in your life. Make happiness part of your life's goal and study how to make it possible. Most unhappy people who do not plan it seem to think that happiness will somehow pass their way by chance

**58 Become non-judgemental**

Develop the ability to become non-judgmental in how you express your views, particularly where you find a situation unacceptable. The unskilled handle these situations poorly and upset others.

**60 Share emotions**

Sharing our emotions with others in appropriate ways helps us to develop deeper and more meaningful relationships with those people. The closer we are to people the greater the influence that we have with them - and they with us understanding their emotional make-up at any given time will enable us to interact more sensitively with them. Many people carry around a lot of emotional baggage and we need to be aware of what that might be in order to be effective with them.

**62 Maintain a 'you' focus**

Concentrating our attentions upon how we can serve others and benefit them will bring direct and indirect benefits to ourselves. Our progress in life will depend upon the quality and quantity of service that we can deliver to help others.

**64 Maintain modesty**

Maintaining an approach that shows modesty and humility makes us more approachable to others. When we are approachable, many more opportunities arise for us to provide service and support

unexpected

## Mental/Spiritual

### 66 **Exercise your mind**

Exercise for the mind means developing and looking after what is probably our greatest asset. It is something that has the potential to grow beyond what we imagine possible and to keep expanding in almost limitless fashion. A powerful mind is probably the greatest single influencer that we possess.

### 68 **Have a vision**

Having a clear concept in our mind of our life purpose helps us to set related goals for our achievement. It provides us with a focus and direction in life; it also helps us make sensible decisions about the pursuit of those goals.

### 70 **Act on fear**

Acting on fear to overcome anxieties and reservations is the way to overcome those fears and develop personal courage. This enables us to be more creative and handle risks more effectively.

### 72 **Work towards win-win**

Working towards solutions to problems where each party gains something useful is preferable to those where one or more parties feel they have lost out. Achieving workable compromise is usually the target.

### 74 **Adopt a positive mental attitude**

Choosing to think positively in a rather negative world is simply a matter of choice. We are the only person with control over the way we choose to think. There are many tools to help the positive thinker stay positive - and achieve more.

### 76 **Use affirmations**

Using affirmations is the way that we tell ourselves how we want to feel. The power of our subconscious mind then takes over to create the reality. This builds confidence in our ability to influence others.

### 78 **Meditate**

Meditate in one of the different ways available and achieve deep relaxation for the mind. Once relaxed, the mind can think more clearly, more creatively and more positively. This has a major influence upon our personal effectiveness.

### 67 **Maintain self-discipline**

Keeping a tight rein on our thoughts is the precursor to control over our actions. Self-discipline is much easier when we have internalised the core values and beliefs that make us who we are.

### 69 **Know yourself**

Having a well-tuned self awareness helps us to develop a practical and realistic view of our lives. We can be proud of who we are and realistically assess what we are capable of doing

### 71 **Plan to succeed**

Planning to succeed brings about the greater likelihood of personal success. Failure to plan success usually results in failure through a lack of planning. People who enjoy success rarely leave success to chance.

### 73 **Remove cluttered thinking**

Removing unwanted thoughts and their associated feelings is essential to achieve clarity. Letting go of unwanted thoughts is a simple mental exercise that improves with practice. Clear thinkers have much greater influence on others.

### 75 **Embrace change**

Embracing change is probably the greatest challenge that we all face in a world that is changing ever faster than ever. Being proactive enables us to take advantage of the opportunities that change always brings.

### 77 **Decide what you want**

Deciding what we want out of life is not easy for some people who focus more upon what they do not want. Whether we focus upon what we want or what we don't want, that is likely to become the reality. So always choose what you want

### 79 **Focus on solutions**

Focus on possible or potential solutions to the problems that life throws at us so regularly. Otherwise, if the focus remains on the problems, the problems expand in our mind and solutions become more difficult to find

**80 Be optimistic**

Choosing optimism enables us to open up possibilities in our mind, whereas pessimism just produces blockages. If we deny ourselves the possible then we are unlikely to take the actions that will enable what is possible in our lives.

**82 Be creative**

Being creative is something that requires practice for most adults who have lost the ability they once exercised in childhood. It requires us to reactivate our right brain at a time when we can reduce daily routine thoughts.

**84 Maintain self-control**

Keep your emotions under some degree of control, particularly when facing a challenging situation. You will be able to plan better how to deal with the challenge and achieve better outcomes.

**86 Be generous in spirit**

Being generous in spirit towards others is a practice adopted by people who have effective survival strategies. Being ungenerous or uncharitable stifles our spirit and personal growth.

**88 Increase your vocabulary**

Finding the right words for any situation is another key characteristic of personal effectiveness. This means constantly improving the ways in which we communicate and the words we choose to do it

**90 Use reasoning and logic**

Stringing together a cogent argument for or against a particular decision can be a very powerful persuader. Effective people are well practised in this and greatly influence others by well- reasoned argument.

**92 Assist others to achieve**

Helping others to achieve what they are trying to do can bring a wide range of rewards, both tangible and intangible. One key reward is the great inner satisfaction felt in doing so.

**94 Take control of your life**

Taking control means taking responsibility for our thoughts and actions and what happens in our life. This contrasts strongly with the notion that everything that happens in our life is dictated by someone else or by chance

**81 Remember personal details**

Remember or recall the names of important people you meet as an absolute minimum. Any other details will always help them to hold you in higher regard. Do this systematically and you will have greater impact with those you meet more than once.

**83 Respond to others**

Being responsive to others is crucial to maintaining personal influence and effectiveness. People who are much less responsive are often preoccupied with their own problems and other mental clutter.

**85 Continue learning**

Continue learning so that you can acquire new knowledge, keep up to date and develop new skills. This helps us to deal better with change. People who stop learning deteriorate rapidly inside.

**87 Improve willpower**

Improving our ability to do what we planned to do - even in the face of tough opposition - develops willpower. Highly effective people know this and can be very determined to succeed.

**89 Retain resourcefulness**

Keeping up our inner strength is especially important when faced with adversity. Do not let inner energy levels drop to the point where you give in to unwanted pressures.

**91 Be open about beliefs**

Being open about our values and beliefs allows others to know the real us. When they do know the real us better relationships become closer and greater trust can develop.

**93 Motivate yourself**

Forcing ourselves to take decisive action towards the attainment of our goals is a key characteristic of high achievers. The energy generated from this attainment then spurs us on to do more.

**95 Seek peace of mind**

Seeking peace of mind means trying to reach the point where we are genuinely comfortable with who and what we are. This enables us to express more fully the higher self within us.

**96 Pursue excellence**

Try to achieve excellence at what you do best and you will attract admiration and respect from many. Everyone wants to hear from an expert - someone who is at the top of their respective tree.

**98 Avoid arrogance**

Avoiding arrogance is a must for people who wish to avoid being viewed as haughty, insensitive and selfish. People displaying these latter characteristics attract few followers and thereby lose influence

**100 Empower others.**

Share with others the powers that you may acquire because sharing multiplies the effect. 'Giving away' power implies losing something; everyone gains when power is shared.

**102 Maintain a dynamic balance**

Keeping a continuous state of balance between heart, mind, actions and spirit is something that we strive for but rarely achieve.

**97 Control stress**

Reducing adverse stress levels depends very much upon the main causes and how we react to them. We have greater control over how we react to stressors

**99 Develop self-confidence**

Developing self-confidence means adopting good practices in thinking, speaking and behaving. It is strongly reinforced by a sense of achievement and by positive feedback from others

**101 Help others solve problems**

Helping others to solve their problems is a way of developing enduring gratitude. It is important that the ownership of the problem - and any solution - remains firmly with them.

This e-booklet was derived from a wide range of interpersonal skills employed by Carshaw Management and Quality Limited for the benefit of its clients and customers.

Printed copies can be purchased for \$6.00 (USD) or £4.27 (GBP). Larger quantities of this booklet - at quantity discounts - are available from the address below and can be customised by arrangement. The content of the booklet can be made available for translation into other languages or other media formats.

Contact details:

Alan Shaw  
Carshaw Management and Quality Limited  
4 Hutchinson Close  
Rugeley  
Staffordshire  
England  
WS15 2RG

Tel: +44 (0)1889 584147  
Fax: +44 (0)1889 585416

Web-site: <http://www.carshaw.com>

You will find some useful FREE documents here (articles, tip sheets, questionnaires)

e-mail: [Carshaw@clara.co.uk](mailto:Carshaw@clara.co.uk)

© 2000 Alan Shaw - all rights reserved.