



Changing Habits

Changing your behaviors can be a gradual process. Here is the description of phases people go through when trying to recognize habits that do not work and implementing new ways and approaches to tasks.

Phase	Description
Shock and Surprise	Confrontations with unexpected situations that make people realize that their own patterns of doing things are not suitable for new conditions any more. Thus, their perceived own competence decreases.
Denial and Refusal	People activate values as support for their conviction that change is not necessary. Hence, they believe there is no need for change; their perceived competency increases again.
Rational Understanding	People realize the need for change. People focus on finding short term solutions and expect immediate results. There is not yet willingness to change own patterns of behavior.
Emotional Acceptance	This phase, which is also called 'crisis' is the most important one. Only if management succeeds to create willingness for changing values, beliefs, and behaviors, the organization will be able to exploit their real potentials. In the worst case, however, change processes will be stopped or slowed down here.
Exercising and Learning	The new acceptance of change creates a new willingness for learning. People start to try new behaviors and processes. They will experience success and failure during this phase. This will lead to an increase in peoples perceived own competence, but only if the individual puts in the effort.
Realization.	People gather more information by learning and exercising. This knowledge has a feedback-effect. People understand which behavior is effective in which situation. This, in turn, opens up their minds for new experiences. These extended patterns of behavior increase organizational flexibility. Perceived competency has reached a higher level than prior to change.
Integration	People totally integrate their newly acquired patterns of thinking and acting. The new behaviors become routine.

Remember, you get better at what you practice! If you practice procrastinating and making excuses, that is what you get good at, not the habits that would contribute to success.

Table source: http://www.themanager.org/strategy/change_phases.htm