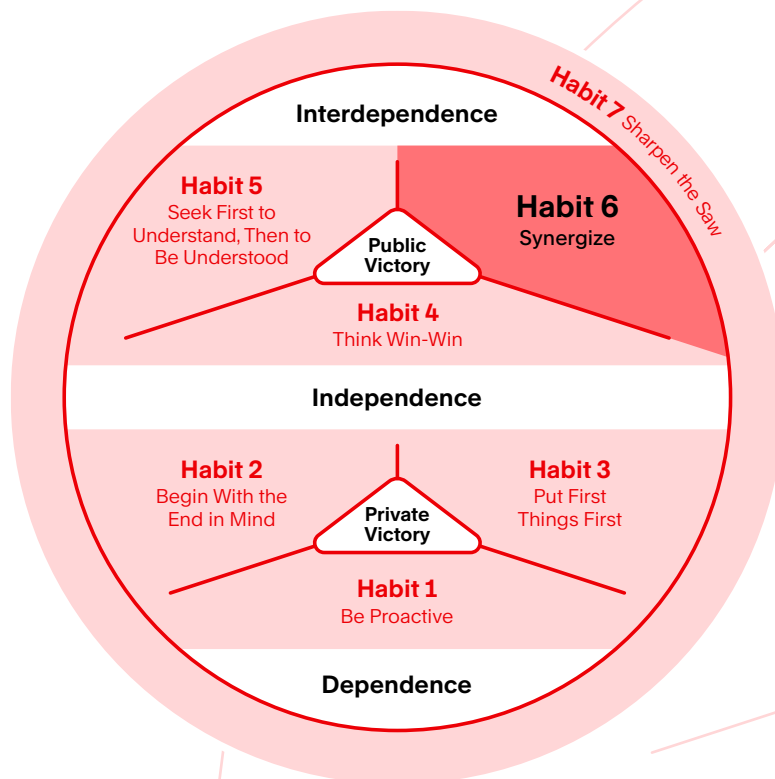


Habit 6: Synergize®

The Principle of Creative Collaboration

What Does It Mean to *Synergize*?

Synergizing is about seeking perspectives that are different from ours—that challenge us and help us better solve problems, navigate conflicts, or develop something new.



Common Paradigm

Let's just compromise.

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Highly Effective Paradigm

If we work together, we will discover something better than what either of us has in mind.

Practice 1: Value Differences

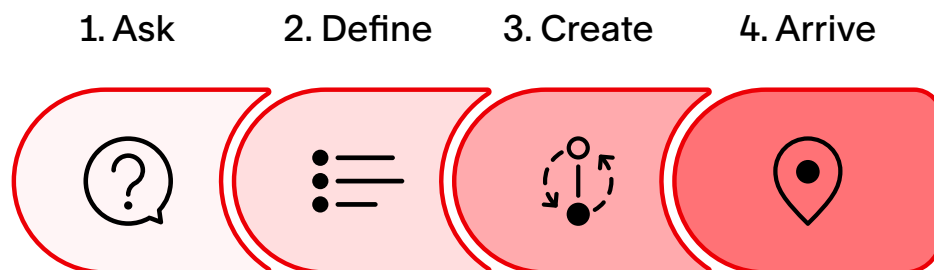
To value differences is to intentionally seek out perspectives and ideas that challenge your view. Seek out differences in these and other areas:

- Skill
- Experience
- Age
- Culture
- Role
- Gender
- Department
- Team
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Geography

Practice 2: Seek 3rd Alternatives

A 3rd Alternative isn't just "my way" or "your way"—it's "our way," a higher, better way. We get to these ideas by valuing differences.

THE STEPS TO SYNERGY



1. Ask for willingness

First, ask yourself: Are you willing to try something new and different?

Then ask others: Are you willing to come up with a solution that could be better than anything we've come up with on our own so far?

Then listen. By simply asking, we invite people to share their unique perspectives without making them feel defensive.

2. Define success

Determine the end in mind. Identify non-negotiables and dealbreakers. Consider the perspectives of people who aren't part of the conversation. When you have a vision of what success looks like, you can start to think about solutions.

3. Create

Generate ideas, question them, and test them. The goal is experimentation, not judgment.

We use the term *prototype* to describe any idea that might satisfy the criteria for success.

A *countertype* is an idea that refines the prototype by revealing its flaws or taking it in a new direction. This step is about prototyping and countertyping.

4. Arrive at a 3rd Alternative

When individual minds come together to discover a new solution—a 3rd Alternative—you have achieved synergy.

SHIFT YOUR PARADIGM. CHANGE YOUR PRACTICES. BE MORE EFFECTIVE.

