

Habit Stack for Operators

Use the method

Attach one small sustaining action to a routine that already happens. Use this when an intended habit gets lost during busy work. The result is a specific cue, a small action, a fallback, and a one-week observation record. This is a practical experiment; it does not promise a fixed time to form a habit or a medical benefit.

- 1. Choose one useful action.** Pick an action small enough for an ordinary busy day, such as checking the next appointment or writing one handoff note. Avoid building several habits at once.
- 2. Find a stable cue.** Choose an existing routine with a clear end, such as closing the morning planning note. A vague cue like when I have time is hard to recognize.
- 3. Write the connection.** Use: After I finish [existing routine], I will [small action] at [place]. Define a visible completion condition.
- 4. Remove friction.** Put the needed note or tool at the cue location. Make a smaller fallback for an unusually busy day and choose what to do when the cue does not occur.
- 5. Observe without punishment.** Track whether the cue occurred and whether the action happened. A missed day is information; resume at the next suitable cue rather than adding a penalty or doubling the work.
- 6. Review after a week.** Keep, shrink, move, or stop the experiment based on usefulness and fit. Increase the action only when the smaller version remains workable.

Worked example

Illustrative stack: After I close the morning calendar review, I will write the day's first work priority on my desk note. Complete means one task and its first step are visible.

The desk note is placed beside the calendar. On a compressed morning, the fallback is just the task name. If the morning review does not happen, the operator uses the first work login as the alternate cue.

The week shows the cue on five days, the full action on three, and the fallback on two. The operator records that the note helped avoid one unclear restart; there is no streak penalty.

The operator keeps the small action for another week. A missed day leads to resuming at the next cue, not to a claim that the habit failed or that a particular number of days guarantees success.

Before you put it to work

- ☐ One recognizable cue is linked to one small action.
- ☐ Completion is observable.
- ☐ Fallback and missed-cue plans are feasible.
- ☐ The review asks whether the action was useful.

If the problem keeps returning

If the action keeps being missed, check whether the cue actually occurs and whether the action is too large. Change one element at a time; stop a habit that adds work without a useful result.

Connect the tools

Use PW-04 for a work-close routine and LS-02 to capture useful lessons.

Working worksheet

Name or team _____ Date _____

Scope and setup

Experiment week, existing cue, action location, useful result, and review date.

Reusable record

Day	Cue occurred	Full fallback or missed	Useful result or obstacle

Duplicate rows or this worksheet for additional records.

Use your own records. The examples on page 2 are illustrative. Continue on a duplicate worksheet when you need more space.

Personal observations are optional. Keep this worksheet in a private location and share only the work decision you choose to share.

Complete and review

Stack statement

After the named existing routine, I will do the small action at the named place; completion means what?

Fallback and missing cue

Smallest useful version, alternate cue, materials to prepare, and next-cue restart plan.

One week decision

Keep shrink move or stop; evidence of usefulness, change to test, and next review date.

Review after use

Was the cue stable? _____

Was the action small enough? _____

What useful result supports continuing? _____

Next action _____ Owner _____ Due _____