

Supporting your team to make exercise a habit

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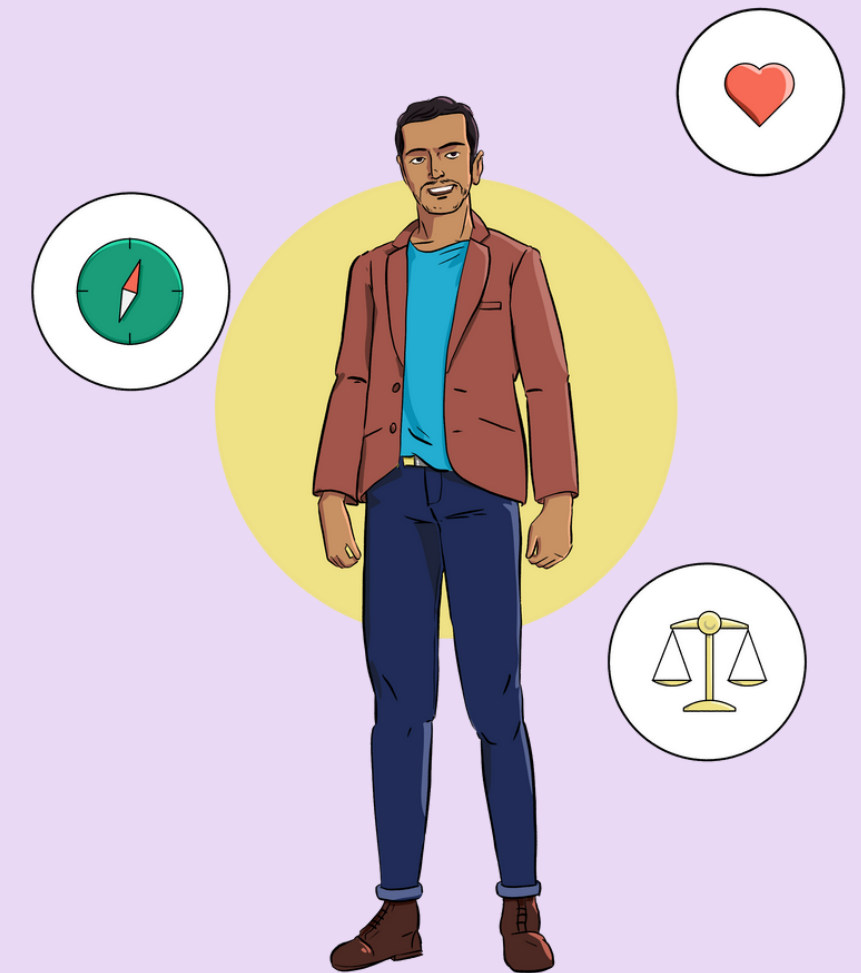
Mental wellbeing for the modern worker

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What we will be covering today

- Why do we need exercise?
- Benefits of creating healthy habits for all employees
- Why we need habits and how to create them
- Lifestyle choices
- Setting exercise goals
- A 4 step approach to set you and your team up for success



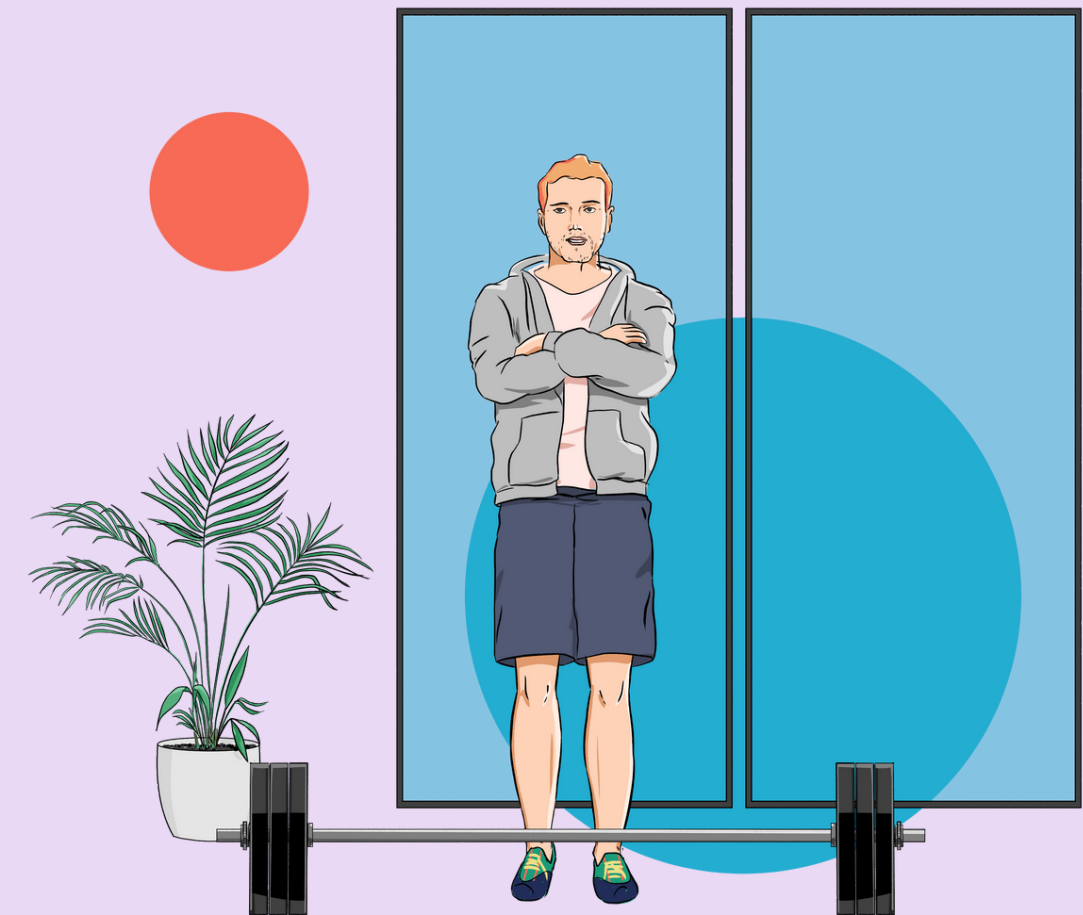
What is physical activity?

- Physical activity is defined as any movement of the body that requires energy expenditure
- This includes any motion you do throughout the day excluding sitting still



The importance of physical activity

- Both physical and mental health benefits
- Physical activity not only changes your body, it changes your mind, your mood and your attitude



The impact of physical activity and workplace culture

INDIVIDUAL

- Enhances employee wellbeing (linked to improved physical and mental health)
- Increases cognitive function and concentration, leading to improved productivity
- Proven stress-reliever, helping employees manage work-related pressures

ORGANISATION

- A reduction in absenteeism and staff turnover
- Positions the company as forward-thinking and in tune with the evolving needs of its employees
- Improved public image of the company, making it more attractive to an employee

What does physical activity at work look like?

Staff monthly/ weekly walking challenges

Team building physical challenges

“Walk and talk” Wednesday meetings

Step into fitness challenge

Standing desks

Workplace sports leagues

Mindful movement breaks

Staff incentive retreats

Fitness technology integration (steps app)

Charitable fitness challenges

“Fit buddy” scheme

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What is exercise?

- Exercise is a another type of physical activity but not all forms of physical activity can be classed as exercise
- What makes physical activity into exercise?
 - Exercise is a planned, structured and repetitive activity for the purpose of improving or maintain your physical fitness

Why promote a culture of exercise?

An organisation plays a crucial role in promoting a culture of exercise by recognising the significance of employee wellbeing and actively supporting initiatives that encourage physical activity. The responsibilities of an organisation in fostering a culture of exercise could include:

- Leadership commitment
- Providing resources
- Wellness programs
- Incentive programs
- Supportive environment

What is your organisation doing to support your employees exercise habit?

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Four Step Approach For Supporting Your Team To Make Exercise A Habit

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No. 1

Identify The Barriers

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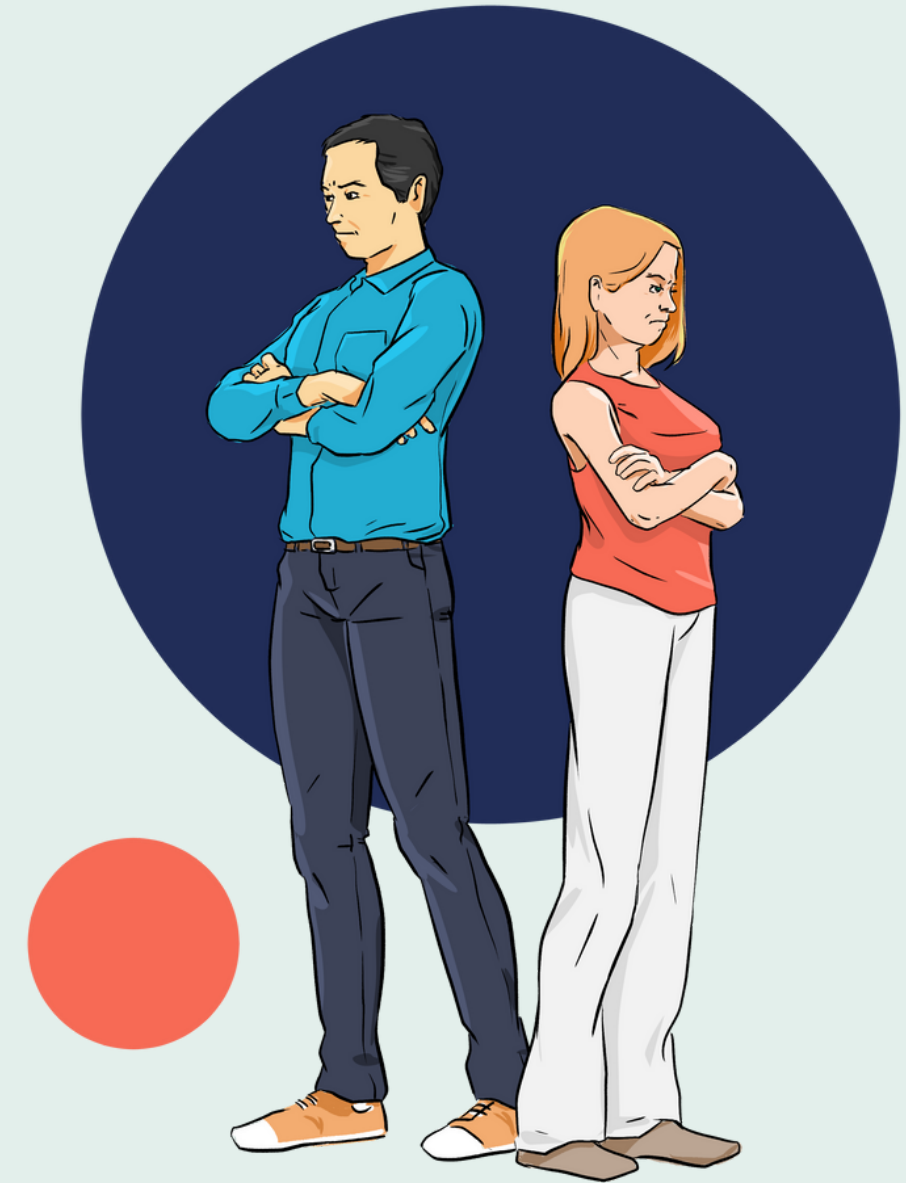
Common barriers

- Many of us are familiar with some of the more common barriers:
 - lack of time
 - lack of motivation
 - meetings
 - daily commute
 - lack of resources
 - work commitments
 - work pressure
 - company culture



Exercise: Identifying barriers

- It's important to identify what may be standing in your employees way so that you can create a plan to help them overcome potential barriers
- List 3 barriers you can see which might be standing in the way for individuals in your organisation



Which barriers did you identify?

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Lack of time

Some of examples of how to breakdown the barrier of a lack of time:

- Incorporate physical activity into daily Tasks (walk to work, take the stairs, walking meetings)
- Effective time management (prioritise and schedule workouts as non-negotiable appointments)
- Lunch break fitness (utilise lunch breaks for a quick gym session or outdoor exercise)
- Workplace wellness programs (actively participate in workplace wellness programs or initiatives)

Work meetings barrier

- Walking meetings (propose the idea of walking meetings, especially for one-on-one discussions or brainstorming sessions)
- Meeting efficiency (advocate for shorter and more focused meetings)
- Flexible meeting locations (explore the option of holding meetings in locations that allow for physical activity, such as outdoor spaces or areas with standing desks)
- Use technology wisely (leverage technology to attend virtual meetings while on a treadmill or stationary bike)
- Incorporate team building (introduce team-building activities that involve physical movement)

Daily commute

- Active commuting (consider walking, biking, or using public transportation that involves walking to and from stops)
- Combine activities (coordinate with colleagues for joint commuting or fitness activities)
- Prioritise active transportation (opt for stairs instead of escalators or elevators at transportation hubs)
- Carve out short workout windows (plan shorter, more intense workouts that fit within the time constraints of your commute)

Lack of resources

- Fitness apps
- Online workout platforms (youtube fitness channels)
- Wellness websites (American Council on Exercise (ACE) / National Institute on Aging: Exercise and Physical Activity Guide)
- Employee workout classes
- Online wellness workshops
- Fitness trackers
- Online fitness communities

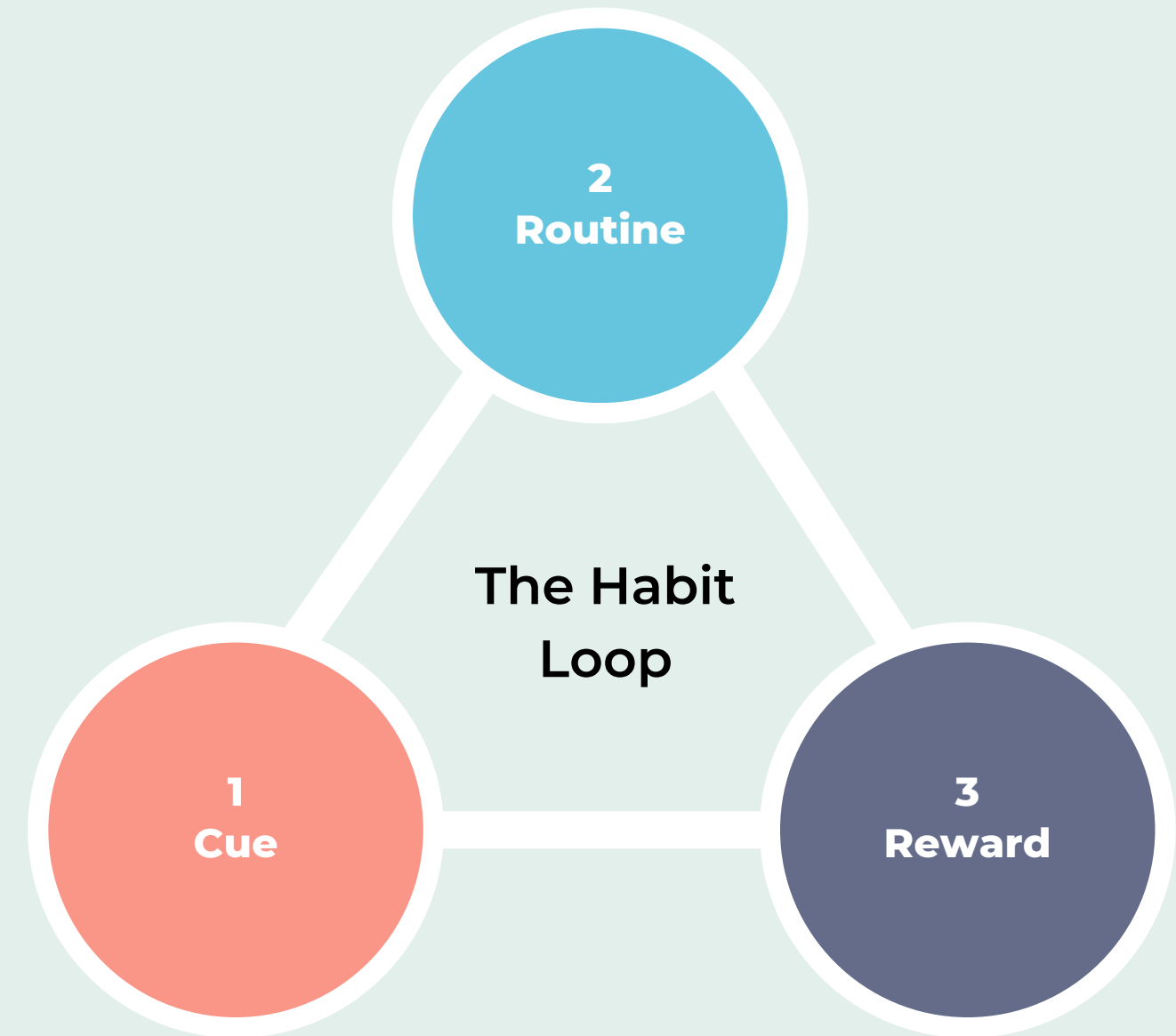
No. 2

**Support Your Team to
Build The Habit**

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The habit loop

- One way to look at building a consistent habit is as a three step loop
- This process can apply to a fitness habit or any habit you're hoping to create in your daily life



The habit loop explained

- **Step one: The cue**

- The cue is a trigger that tells your brain to go into auto mode. This is a key step to avoid relying on motivation alone

- **Step two: The routine**

- The routine is the habit itself
- The physical or mental action taken because of the cue

- **Step three: The reward**

- The reward is the benefit you receive
- It's what makes your brain happy and encourages you to continue the pattern

For example, your cue might be your alarm going off each morning. The routine could be putting your trainers on and getting out the door and walking the first part of the morning commute, and the reward is the sense of achievement you feel after completing it

Exercise: Practice the habit loop

- Take a moment to identify one habit that you would like to achieve
 - **Write it down**
- Once you have identified the habit identify what your cue is going to be
 - **Write it down**
- Finally identify what the reward will look like to you
 - **Write it down**

What habit did you identify?

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No. 3

Create Team Exercise

Goals

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Setting your goals

- Be specific with what you want to achieve (both as an individual and as an organisation)
- How are you going to measure your goals (consistency, feeling, weight, habit)
- Set both achievable and realistic goals
- Set a time to achieve your goals



Setting specific team goals

- There are many things you can try to manage your health from nutrition and exercise to sleep and stress management
- Setting goals as a team creates employee inclusivity and a sense of community
- Creating team goals can help to foster a supportive workplace culture that encourages employees to prioritise their health

Exercise: Set an exercise goal

- Take a moment to identify one goal that you would like to achieve
 - **Write it down**
- Once you have identified the goal consider when you would like to achieve this by
 - **Write it down**
- Finally identify the the reason you would like to achieve this goal
 - **Write it down**

Which goal did you identify?

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No. 4

Know Your Strengths

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Play to your strengths

- The expertise of our HR team becomes a guiding force, tailoring programs that resonate with our company's identity and meet the unique needs of our employees
- Utilising effective communication channels, engagement strategies, and employee recognition programs, we can leverage our existing strengths to encourage participation and create a sense of community
- With leadership buy-in and continuous improvement we demonstrate our commitment to employee well-being, positioning healthy habits as an integral part of your company's success

Prioritise (whats your focus)

- By identifying key areas, we streamline our efforts for maximum impact
- Whether it's emphasising physical activity, promoting mental well-being, or fostering nutritional awareness, a focused approach allows us to allocate resources efficiently
- Prioritisation ensures that our wellness initiatives are targeted, measurable, and align with the specific needs of our team

Change doesn't happen overnight

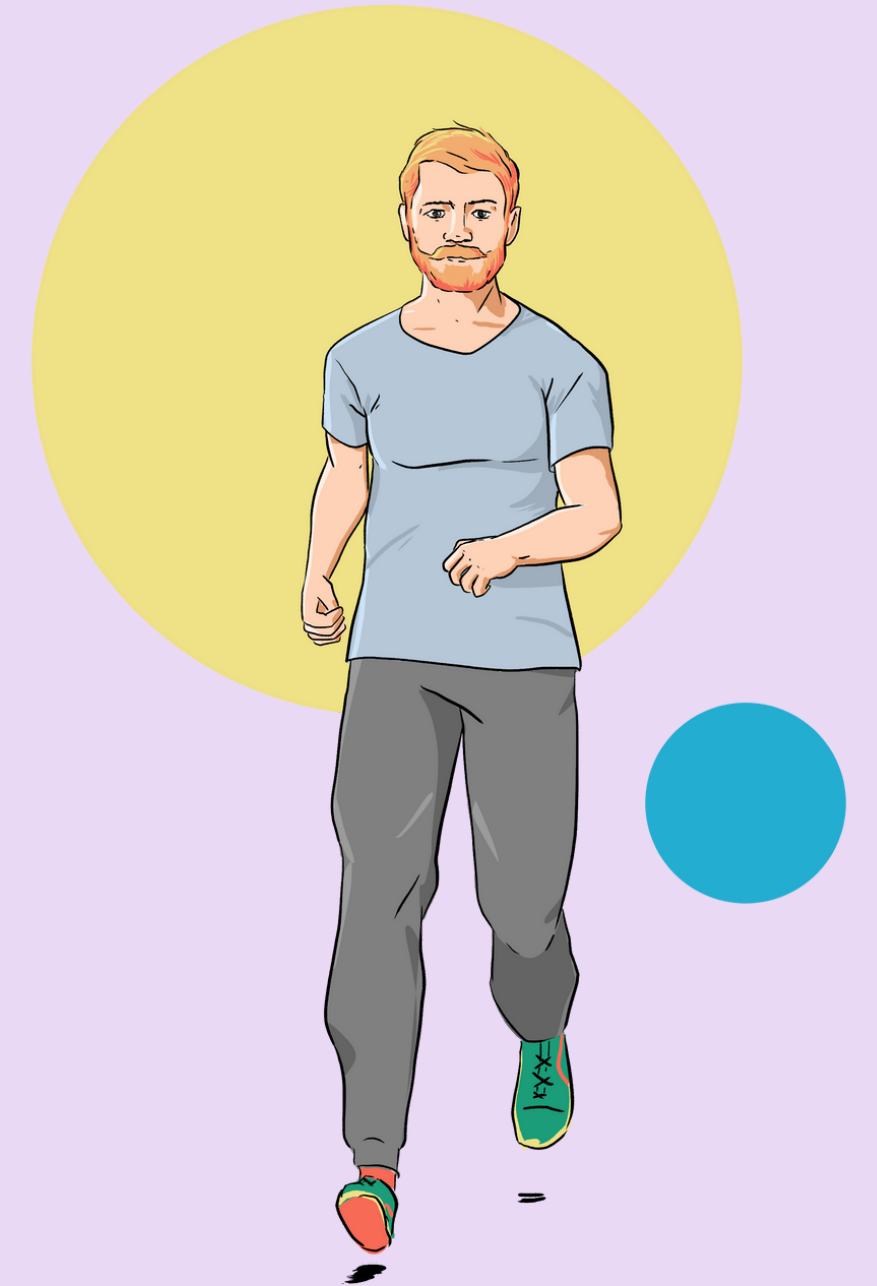
- Change involves reshaping ingrained habits that develop over time.
- Breaking or forming habits is a gradual process requiring consistent effort.
- Individuals need time to adjust mentally and emotionally to new behaviors
- Achieving organisational change requires aligning everyone with a shared vision.
- Effective communication and gradual implementation are essential for creating a shared vision
- A long-term perspective allows for sustainable and lasting transformations

Create a support system

- A support system provides consistent encouragement, motivating individuals during challenging phases.
- Having a support network establishes accountability, as individuals feel responsible to their peers
- Mutual commitment helps overcome potential setbacks
- Support systems offer valuable knowledge and guidance on when it comes to making exercise a habit
- Constructive feedback helps refine habits and maintain a positive trajectory
- A support system allows for the sharing of resources, whether it's workout routines, healthy recipes, or wellness tips

What we have covered today

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What did you find most useful today?

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