



to not save money, therefore proving that my illusion is correct.

To change my actions to that of saving money, I must have the courage to examine the illusions from which I am operating. I must be willing to admit that *I am* part of the problem. Only then can I effectively change my actions and achieve the results that I desire. To do this, I need to use reflective intelligence strategies: in this case, *I am* able to save money. On reflection, what I discover is that I'm not willing to give up spending money, in order to save it. For example, instead of buying a cafe latte (\$2.50 a cup) once a week as a treat, I purchase a cafe latte every day — sometimes twice a day. I justify this expenditure by saying to myself: "I deserve this. I have worked hard today, and this is my only treat." However, my actions do not stop at a simple cup of coffee. In that same day, I go for lunch (\$10.00), instead of packing a lunch. I use the same justification for my actions.

Before you can modify your actions, you need to know what your actions actually are, and to understand those thinking patterns (i.e., experiential intelligence) that are driving your actions. Basically, action science techniques ask you to follow seven steps:

1. Examine your actions to determine what results your actions create.
2. Examine the justifications that you use for your actions.
3. Examine your thinking, by asking yourself whether your justifications for your actions are helping or hindering you in achieving the results that you desire.
4. Decide which thinking patterns and actions you will modify, in

order to achieve the results that you desire.

5. Develop a plan to change your thinking patterns and actions.
6. Practice the new thinking patterns and actions.
7. Analyze the results of each practice session, and make modifications based on what you learned from practicing the new thinking patterns and actions.

The first step is the easiest, because you can see your actions, or you can ask others to give you feedback on your actions. Each step becomes progressively more difficult, because it is harder to examine how your brain is operating. Since these steps are so difficult to achieve, action science provides techniques to help people to succeed at each step. The best way to do action science is over a long period of time, with an experienced facilitator guiding the process and providing feedback on each individual's progress. In organizations, the best group with which to work is an intact team.

In this series of newsletters, I will guide you through this process. You may wish to form a support group of people who wish to try this process. For the next two months, work on step 1: Examine your actions to determine what results your actions create. To do this, you need to keep a log book or journal of your observations. Here are some guidelines for doing step 1:

1. List all of the situations, actions, and circumstances that you currently experience that bother you the most about your personal life and/or your work situation (e.g., never enough time, too much change).
2. Select one of the listed items in number 1 above to examine in more depth.
3. For the next two months, pay attention to those times when the

selected item crops up. Record your observations in your log book or journal. What did you want to have happen? What actually occurred? Who was involved? What were your actions? What were you thinking? What were your reasons for your actions?

Action science requires discipline. Over the next two months, take the time that you need to do step 1 thoroughly. If you don't take this time, ask yourself what you are thinking to justify the fact that you are not changing your actions by trying this activity. It will be very easy to say that you don't have the time. However, if you don't take the time, you will continue to achieve the results that you don't desire. Is this what you want? Be gentle with yourself. This is very difficult. Your first task is to become aware.

"... illusions gain and maintain their power, not because we're ignorant of reality, but because we sense or know the reality and choose to avoid it. We might *tell* ourselves that we don't know anything different or have all the facts, while what we're really doing is entering more deeply into the process of illusion building."

— James R. Lucas, **Fatal Illusions** (1997)

**MHA Institute Inc.**  
Unit 248, Suite 205  
259 Midpark Way SE  
Calgary, Alberta T2X 1M2 Canada

Phone: (403) 257-4597  
Fax: (403) 257-4649  
E-mail: [info@mhainstitute.ca](mailto:info@mhainstitute.ca)  
Web: [www.mhainstitute.ca](http://www.mhainstitute.ca)