

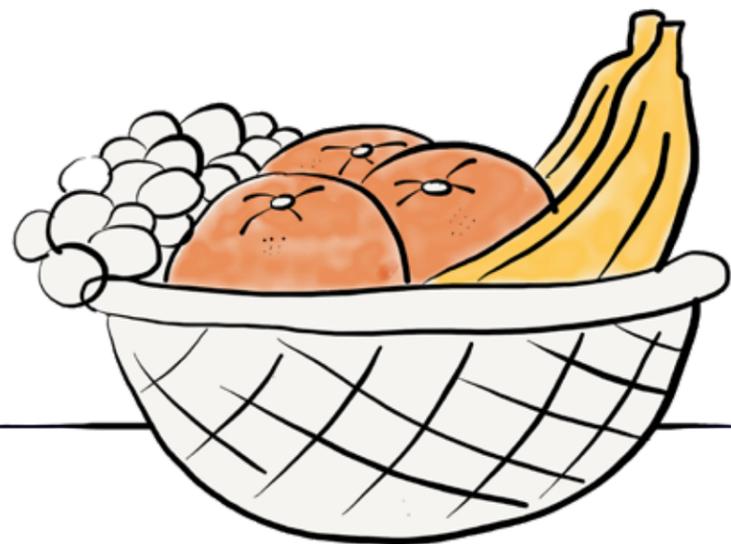
THE BANANO ACTION

More and more companies offer their employees a piece of fresh fruit as a healthy perk. Often, you'll notice that the bananas are gone, and the oranges are still there. How is this possible? It's not that bananas are objectively more delicious than oranges. The difference in their popularity comes down to one thing: how easy are they to peel.

Tania Luna & Jordan Cohen have done research on this topic and call this phenomenon the 'banana principle'. Human beings operate on the principle of the Least Effort - given several paths, we choose the easiest. How can we reduce friction so that positive actions feel more like a glide than an uphill trek? We can use this banana-principle to support all kind of change initiatives. How can we reduce friction if we want our employees to behave in a certain way?

Make the change as easy as possible. For example, do you want more brainstorming in your offices? Then make sure people have access to post-its and flipcharts in every room. You want people to switch off the lights when they go home? Put the garbage bin under the light switch because there's a good chance that people want to throw something away before they go home.

Positive psychologist Shawn Achor talks about the 20 second rule. He believes that 20 seconds can make all the difference when it comes to behavior change. Specifically, making tasks slightly easier or more accessible will encourage you to do them, whereas making a behavior slightly harder will decrease the likelihood that you will give in to your urges. If something – such as checking your social media – takes you 20 seconds longer to do, you're less likely to do it.



A BaNaNo action is the first, small step that you can take to check if an idea or project has potential. Imagine that you have a limited amount of money (max. 10 euro/dollar) & time (max. 1 hour)

BANANO ACTION: OLD REPORTS

At a larger financial organisation in Belgium, I had the opportunity to collaborate with a team responsible for delivering monthly reports with key figures for 9 other departments. Every month these departments receive an extensive report with key figures of the previous month. I call them the 'Report Team'. They felt that nobody was really reading these reports, although they were time consuming to create.

The Report Team decided to change the extensive paper report into a short digital summary, with only key figures that the specific departments needed. Due to egos and political games, they knew that the department's heads wouldn't agree to this. Consequently, the report team decided that they would experiment with a 'BaNaNo-action'.

The following month, they resent out an 'old' report (from 2 months earlier) to one department, only changing the title and announced it as the most recent report available. Nothing happened. The next month, they sent out the exact same 'old report' to all departments. None but one department noticed the mistake. This proved the Report Team's hypothesis that hardly anyone paid attention to their reports.

THE PIANO STAIRS

'The piano stairs' is an initiative from the funtheory.com. The stairs will play notes of a melody or piano tones when people walk on them. These artworks stimulate people to take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.

thechangemindset.video/piano-stairs



This encouraged the Report Team to organise a meeting with the department's heads, announcing that they would only receive a digital summary in the future. As expected, they were annoyed, claiming they needed the extensive report.

Thanks to the BaNaNo actions, they could prove that people weren't reading the reports. The heads conceded to smaller digital report, saving a lot of time and money for the Report Team as well as giving them the satisfaction of actually having made an impact on a change that in future allowed them to focus on more important tasks.