

# Attitude Is Everything

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Would you want to have an employee who is extremely good at his or her job but has a bad attitude or an average employee who has a positive attitude? Experienced CEOs understand that bad attitudes can reduce the effectiveness of their organization. Skills can be taught. Attitude is difficult to change.

People with positive attitudes are winners. They build an environment that values employees, suppliers and customers. They think positively. The words *don't* and *can't* are not in their vocabulary.

How do we identify winners? It is hard to tell by casual observation. Winners dress the same as everyone else, eat at the same restaurants and work at the same companies. Successful people come in all personality types, physical characteristics and professions. We identify them by their attitudes, behaviors and results.

Winners don't give up. The sad truth about people who give up is they are just as capable as those who don't. The main difference is their attitude.

Conscious thoughts precede actions. By choosing our thoughts, we act our way into certain circumstances. Positive attitudes help us be more productive. We are who we think we are. If we think we can, we can. If we think we can't, we can't.

## Attitude Defined

What is an attitude? Some say it's a mindset, a way of thinking, which is partly right. In simple terms, an attitude is a habit of thought. Usually we think of habits as behaviors; the way we do something. Habits can be mental as well. Therefore an attitude is our habitual way of looking at our world.

We develop attitude habits through conditioning. Conditioning begins at a very early age and continues throughout our lives. Sometimes our conditioning is negative, for instance a mother's admonitions to a young child. This negativity may generate many self imposed limitations.

The elephant provides a simple example. An elephant is staked to the ground. As a baby it isn't strong enough to remove the stake. Later when the elephant is full grown and could easily pull the stake, it doesn't because it "knows" it can't.

Our attitudes are the key to our health, relationships, happiness and achievements. They determine how we live and whether we succeed in life.

We control our attitudes. We alone have the responsibility to shape our life. Walt Kelly said: "We have met the enemy and they is us. We are all that is holding us back."

## Attitudes of Winners

Winners have many positive attitudes. Three that are particularly important in professional lives are *enthusiasm*, *persistence* and *desire*.

*Enthusiasm* produces the confidence that announces to the world, "I have what it takes."

Enthusiasm is often misunderstood. It is frequently confused with the temporary exuberance seen at sporting events.

Long lasting enthusiasm is different. It is a confident commitment, a wholehearted action, an ardent belief. When you possess enthusiasm life is more enjoyable and work is always part play no matter how demanding. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

*Persistence* is critical. Faced with difficulties, you can quit or keep pushing on. The choice is yours. But if you want to be a winner you will stay with the task and see it through.

Modern technology has taught us to expect instant gratification. We become discouraged if we have to wait. Many people give up when faced with delay. Time, dedication and commitment are always the minimum price tag we pay to complete projects that are important.

How do we project persistence? Never, never, never give up!

*Intense desire* creates opportunities and reveals new personal talents. Desire is much more than wishing or wanting. Desire differentiates between mature commitment and unfocused daydreaming.

Those who lack desire are always too busy to do what needs to be done. Desire pushes you to work harder in a positive sense. People with strong desire understand the pure joy of work. Their success comes not at the end of a battle, but as the culmination of a game. Every day they work towards their long range goals, reinforcing their desire to do more and do it better each day.

Desire is the attitude that transforms us from average to outstanding achievers.

### **Attitude and Work Environment**

Many employees believe that their employer is solely responsible for the conditions that lead to job enjoyment. This is only partially true. Both the employer and employees have a shared responsibility for building positive workplace expectations.

Yes, the company and management have responsibility. Effective CEOs build a culture where people want to work and want to excel. They ensure, by leading with a Servant's Heart, that their employees feel appreciated and know the company has their personal best interests in mind.

Employees also have responsibilities. If they have a positive productive attitude they will be happy. Conversely those who always complain create an environment that drags their coworkers down. Employees are responsible for creating their personal satisfaction on their job.

Employees with positive attitudes make their work environment a positive experience. They strive for an attitude of excellence and exude excellence in the way they work.

They go the extra mile. Instead of thinking "I did my part, someone else dropped the ball," they ensure a positive outcome by refusing to accept the alternative.

We can choose to do the minimum required or we can decide to excel. This decision to make a difference is a personal attitude that desires us to be the best we can be.

## **Summary**

Experienced leaders understand how positive attitudes play an important part in driving the success of their organization. They build a culture where positive people can thrive and reach their personal goals. These leaders understand that when both the organization and employees reach their goals great accomplishments are possible.

People with positive attitudes are winners. They think "I can," not "I can't."

Attitudes are the mental habits through which we view our world. They are key to all the success and happiness we gain in our personal and professional lives.

People with positive attitudes overcome problems. They don't accept mediocrity. They view their work as a game helping them reach their long term goals.

People with positive mental attitudes exhibit personal leadership. Regardless of their professional responsibilities, they live their lives in a manner that inspires others.

Paul Meyer said it well: "Whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass."