



teamworks

Making the Workplace Work for You



New Attitude, New Job

So what's it going to be—same old job, same old attitude, or new attitude and new perspective on an old job? A wise author, pastor, and speaker once said, “Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.” –Chuck Swindoll

Actually, it is proven that a negative atmosphere on the job—or anywhere else for that matter—doesn't have to chain us to a sour disposition. We all have had people in our lives that have proven that. We observe what they have been through and wonder how they are able to still have a great attitude, much less, smile. For some I'm sure it's a bad case of denial. For others, they could be completely oblivious to what's going on in the work culture. However, the ones we respect the most are able to stare negative situations in the face, call them for what they are, and choose to take control of their spirit, responses, and personal outcomes.

Think with me for a second. If another person at work could control your emotional climate for a day, and completely ruin that workday experience for you, then what we are saying is that the negative person in question could actually decide when they wake up that morning (if they were that devious) to completely control how you

feel that day. Now I don't know how you feel about that, but in my opinion as a consultant and counselor, that is way too much power to give to anyone!

A few facts to consider:

Attitude at Work is a Choice

Listen to this one: Viktor Frankl, author of “Man's Search for Meaning,” spent time in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp and witnessed inhumane treatment of his fellow Jews. He managed to survive the entire ordeal and summed up the experience by stating, “One's ultimate freedom is the ability to choose one's attitudes in ANY given set of circumstances.”



New Mindset
Chapter One

New Attitude, New Job

I just taught a workshop called “Attitude is everything in the Workplace.” When we began the training on that very dreary, freezing fog morning here in Southern Oregon, I asked if the reason they attended was for someone else’s attitude down at the office or their own. To the person, they said primarily their own.



You know that makes sense, since the only attitude we can actually control or change is our own anyway.

Attitudes are Contagious

Positive or negative doesn’t seem to matter. You know the bad apple scenario. One bad apple, if touching another apple, will eventually spread the rottenness from one apple to the next. I went to grab an orange the other day and saw that the one I grabbed was wet and shriveled. I saw that there was one good one left and to my disappointment the backside of it was gross. Need I say more? On the other hand, someone with a sincerely realistic and good attitude in spite of what’s going on, is completely and totally refreshing to be around (that is, of course, once we work through the discomfort of not feeling that way ourselves).

Attitudes Can Be Changed

It hit me the other day while looking in the mirror, that I think I’m getting older. I started reflecting on my attitude in life in general. I knew I was about to speak to 25 senior citizens over the age of 80 in a few days. I remember thinking, “I don’t want to finish my life someday like some elderly have: soured by life, with poor health, and grumpy.” I thought, “I don’t want to be that kind of stereotype or statistic. I want to finish well, smile a lot, have a hearty laugh, and be seen as someone who lights up a room, not as one who casts a shadow over it.”

Sometimes it doesn’t take much to turn a bad attitude into a good one. Here are a few ideas if you need to do some tweaking!

1. Admit that your attitude needs a tune up.
2. Acknowledge to your boss, co-worker, supervisor, or anyone else that’s been on the blunt end of your attitude that this is a new day.
3. Assess what changes, if any, at work you can bring to the table that could be helpful.
4. Choose to be different and just try to smile a tad more.

Conclusion

This concluding phrase by Steven Covey seems to sum up what I’ve been saying:

“You can’t talk yourself out of a problem you have behaved yourself into. No, but you can behave yourself out of problem you have behaved yourself into and often faster than you think!” –Stephen Covey