

Your Attitude is the Control Center of Your Life

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We have hundreds of books in our business library that cover topics on leadership, coaching, empowerment, conflict, organizational design, and strategy. In each and every one of them you will find a thread dealing with the concept of "*Attitude*", and how powerful it is. A statement that synthesizes the collective message is this, "Your attitude is the control center of your life," and it is critical to nurture the power of a positive attitude as both a proactive and reactive response.

In a proactive sense, it's how you envision the possibilities about your life and world around and you. Study after study demonstrates that people who have positive attitudes are the ones who accomplish what they desire. In his book Deep Survival, Laurence Gonzales tries to understand why some people are able to rescue themselves from life threatening situations while others perish. One of the constant themes deals with the attitude of the individual. Those who act with confidence and have a deep belief that they will survive, do survive.

In his book Think and Grow Rich, (the well known protégé of Dale Carnegie) Napoleon Hill, notes that one of the common characteristics of people who are successful, is "faith," the unshakable belief that they will accomplish whatever they set their mind to.

A recent study conducted by the University of California, at Davis, has concluded that people who focus on the *positive*, as opposed to the *negative*, enjoy better health. Professor Robert Emmons noted, "...feeling gratitude reduces unpleasant feelings like envy, resentment, and regret."

In looking at attitude as a reactive response, your attitude affects how you respond to adversity. Author, Spenser Johnson said, "*It's not what happens to you in your life, but how you handle it when it does!*" Perhaps Victor Frankl, a survivor of the WWII Nazi concentration camps said it best.

"We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing—the last of human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances."

His is a powerful statement. Fortunately, most of us will never have to go through the experiences that he and millions of others did. However, the stress in our lives can tip us in a negative direction. Even with a positive attitude, there will be certain times or circumstances of adversity that overwhelm anyone. During these times the power of your relationships with others, can be an important stabilizing force. However, just like your "attitude," your relationships must be nurtured and tended to. In other words, dig your well, before you need the water.

A positive attitude is something that needs to be nurtured and practiced, in good times and bad. The true test of a positive attitude is how you react to adverse circumstances. It's worth remembering the following things:

- Recognize that you lean towards what you think about.
- Attitude shapes your ability to envision possibilities about yourself and your situation, and helps you create solutions and invent new tomorrows.

- A positive attitude can be developed by consciously thinking about your life with gratitude and appreciation, and acting with the self-confidence that will come as a natural consequence.

In today's fast-paced, high-stress, multitasking environment, it is reassuring to note that the ability to enjoy your life and get the best from whatever you do, lies within you. You are the architect of your attitude.