



Changes in Attitudes, Changes in Altitudes

Did you know that you can raise your level of living by improving your attitude? It's true. Most people don't realize that their attitude controls where they are in their life, career and relationships. They blame circumstances or someone else on their mishaps. There are five truths about your attitude that will make you more successful than you have ever dreamed. Attitude is everything. More people are hired and fired because of their attitude than their ability. While many people are chasing the success carrot in life, successful people know that it is their attitude that will get them to the top. In fact, did you know that if you take the letters in the word "ATTITUDE" and assign them their numerical order in the English alphabet (A=1, T=20, T=20, I=9, T=20, U=21, D=4 and E=5) it adds up to 100. Attitude is 100%! "Success" only adds up to 93. Once you realize that your attitude is the key to success, you have most of the battle won. So are you ready to take a journey into improving your level of living by improving your attitude?

1. You choose your attitude. Jim Stovall was a very good high school football player in Oklahoma. His dream was to play football for the Oklahoma University Sooners. But during a routine physical at age 17 he was told that he was progressively losing his sight. By 19 he was legally blind. His athletic dream dashed, he sat in front of his television and listened to old movies. He tried several jobs assisting handicapped children but hadn't found true happiness. Then one day in his early twenties while listening to more old movies on television, he got the idea of narrating the movies so blind people could hear what was happening on the screen. Almost everyone told him that his idea was ridiculous. At every turn he was met with discouragement, but undaunted he would just work harder. First he started a local television show in Tulsa and interviewed any producer, director or star as they passed through town. He produced narrations for the movies in his basement. Several trips to New York (and more discouraging comments later) he formed what is now known as the Narrative Television Network. Today he is a famous speaker and Network executive. His advise: when people tell you that your idea won't work, ignore them and they'll go bother someone else." Attitude is a choice.

2. You get what you expect out of life. Psychology 101 teaches you this. One

of my favorite "philosophers," Flip Wilson said it better: "What you see is what you get." I tried this with my daughter several years ago on her way to Girl Scout Camp. She had experienced a bad day on Monday, so on her way to camp. On Tuesday, I urged her to say, "It's going to be a great day!" It told her she would have the day she expected so to repeat this mantra before every activity. When it is time for crafts, say, "It's going to be a great day." When your group goes swimming, say, "It's going to be a great day." Try this and see what happens. That afternoon when I picked her up, she said, "I've had a wonderful time at camp today. Daddy, you were right. It was a great day!" She had the day she expected.

3. Your attitude determines your relationship with other people. In a Stanford Research Institute study, it was found that most job successes were 87% people knowledge and only 13% product knowledge. It doesn't matter what you know, it's who you know and how you treat them. Earl Nightingale coined the phrase: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." You get back what you send out to other people. Have you ever shown up for work feeling great and someone asked you why you were in such a bad mood? Sure one person can't talk you into being angry, but if two or three people start asking you what is wrong, before you know it you're really ARE in a bad mood! What happened? You let other people determine your attitude. Have you ever had a "bad hair day?" Did you notice how your attitude influenced everyone around you? Don't blame it on your hair, blame it on your attitude. Treat everyone as if they are the most important person in the world and notice how it will change their attitude. You'll also notice that you will feel even better in return. You get back what you send out--in abundance.

4. Your attitude will influence how you view problems. How do you view problems? Do you view them as set-backs or opportunities? I talked with a trucking COO one time who told me that he thought problems were just that--problems. He said, "When you've got a truck broken down on the side of the road somewhere, that's a problem." What a negative view he had. What if you were that trucker beside the road waiting to be rescued? Wouldn't you want your supervisor to see your circumstance to be seen as an opportunity to help you? Wouldn't you as a supervisor want to send the message to other employees that when someone is in trouble in your firm, you will be quick to help them? We can learn from our problems. Problems can be like the warning lights on the instrument panel of your car. Did you know that every miracle in the Bible started with a problem? Isn't it nice to know that if you have a problem it automatically makes you a candidate for a miracle? If you don't have a problem, you don't get a miracle. Learn to look at problems as attitude enhancers, not destroyers.

5. Your attitude will raise your altitude in life. My dentist has one of the most positive attitudes of anyone I've ever seen. His staff considers it a joy to work with and for him. Several years ago they wanted to take off more time at Christmas. So they could continue to log in enough hours to take off a couple of

weeks at the end of December, they agreed to work on Fridays--a day the usually are closed throughout the year. Every Friday in autumn, when you come in for an appointment, you hear Christmas music being played over the intercom. The office is decorated for the Yuletide season--only on Fridays! It's a way of keeping the goal in front of everyone. They not only stay focused on working to take off the two weeks at Christmas, but they have fun in the process. Both his patients and his staff enjoy visiting the office from August through November on Fridays. And don't think it doesn't influence everyone's attitude the rest of the week. You might even say it "bleeds over" (I'm sorry, I couldn't resist that one).

What is your attitude doing to help or hinder your level in life? Is it lifting you (and others) up, or holding you down? Remember it is your choice. No one gives you your attitude. The choice is yours.

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