

## **Optimism and Attitude**

Optimism is more than a positive mental attitude. It is not constantly saying positive things to yourself and hoping they will come true. Rather, true optimism is a frame of reference that governs how you look at the world. Optimism means having expectations that, for the most part, things will eventually turn out OK. Being optimistic means that you really believe that you will be able to accomplish everything you set out to do. Influence and optimism come together when you can transfer your hope and courage for the state of the world, the product or yourself into the minds of others in such an irresistible way that they will be inclined to follow you.

Influential optimism means that you see the positive in all situations. Rather than focusing on disappointment or negative feelings, you look for ways to move forward. People want to spend time with individuals who have a positive view on life. As an optimist, you see the world as a series of exciting challenges. You inspire positive feelings about everything you stand for. This mindset is contagious and helps to empower other people to believe in themselves and in you. In other words, as an optimist, you help others see failure or setback as temporary. You have no doubt that success will happen. In contrast, a pessimist sees that temporary setback as permanent failure. Optimists know that when failure arises, they have something in their life they need to change. A pessimist, on the contrary, calls failure a weakness and never moves on. Optimism then is the ability to bounce back sooner rather than later or not at all.

Nobody wants to be around a moody, angry or pessimistic person. We all like and admire those who have a positive, optimistic outlook on life. Optimism and a positive attitude develop magnetic influence over others. If you are an optimist, you will attract people to your cause and everyone will want to follow you. Countless studies have shown that optimists do better in school, perform better in their careers and live longer than pessimists. Pessimists, on the other hand, battle depression and give up more easily.

When you master optimism, you will have the ability to recover from any setback or failure with an easygoing nature. True optimism is a rare quality that will take time to

develop. Not only does optimism help you influence others, but when you are armed with it, you also won't fall into a state of apathy or hopelessness. You have to learn to control your pessimistic voice. We all have both an optimistic and a pessimistic voice inside of us. Which one do you listen to?

An experiment was conducted that measured people's capacity to endure pain. To that end, the subjects were asked to put their bare feet into a bucket of ice water. The experimenters found that the only factor that made a difference in the subjects' reactions to the icy pain was encouragement. When you can encourage others to create an optimistic outlook of the situation, you can also influence them. The study further revealed that when someone was present to give them encouragement and support, the sufferers were able to last longer and endure more pain.

### *Attitude*

Attitude is a subset of optimism that is a reflection of what is happening inside a person. Our attitude reveals to the world what we expect in return. Our attitude is also one persuasive concept that is completely under our own control.

Most people don't spend time thinking about their attitudes, yet they allow their attitudes to control them throughout the day. Rather than attending to their own attitudes, they absorb the attitudes of others, soaking them up like a sponge. Reaction is their primary mode of operation. If we understand that most of our attitudes start in neutral gear and are then changed depending upon what we decide to think and feel, then we are well on our way to controlling our attitude.

Attitude is a habit that arises from our expectations—what we expect of ourselves and of others. Frustration is normally just the result of an unmet expectation or a contradiction between reality and attitude.

You can change your life and influence others with the right attitude. The expectations we create from our beliefs and from the world around us are rooted in our thoughts and

experiences. When we master influence, we know that our attitude and our expectations are critical in getting others to take action. Keep in mind that whatever your attitude or expectation is will be reflected back to you by the person you are attempting to influence.

Attitude in general can greatly affect our success in life. In one study, Harvard University talked to executive recruiters to poll their opinions of success. The researchers found that 85 percent of success (including money, status and prestige) is based on attitude while only 15 percent is contingent upon ability. What's more, there was no correlation between grade level in college and lifetime earnings.

© 2009 Kurt Mortensen