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## Change Your Attitude to Accomplish More



When things go wrong, it doesn't have to ruin your day. In fact, with the right outlook, you can prevent many problems from ever happening.

When mistakes occur or something goes wrong, "remember that you're the person who controls your reactions," says Ed Foreman, a motivational speaker and president of Executive Development Systems in Dallas. "Don't let the weather, your spouse or your boss take that control away from you."

Choose to maintain a positive attitude. "Bring a proactive approach to situations, don't just react to things after they've happened," he says. "Decide how you would like them to turn out."

Set high expectations up front. "Instead of wondering what might go wrong, start looking for things to go right. Our thoughts are self-fulfilling, so chances are you will get the result you expect," says Mr. Foreman.

A positive outlook contributes to a less stressful, more healthful lifestyle, he says. Anger, fear and other stressful emotions are associated with many health problems, from depression to high blood pressure, heart disease and the common cold. But feeling good about yourself and others helps prevent mental anguish and physical problems.

Being upbeat also contributes to more pleasant personal relationships. "Take an honest look at your attitude, then ask yourself, 'Would I like to work with this person? Would I like being married to me?' If you answer no, it's time to change your attitude and behavior," says Mr. Foreman.

### Start with a smile

Start building a positive attitude as soon as you open your eyes each morning. "Instead of dragging yourself out of bed and off to work in a big rush, start each day with a positive, healthful routine," Mr. Foreman says.

To do that, he suggests you:

- Get up early so you don't have to rush.
- Tune into positive messages. If the morning news depresses you, listen to a motivational cassette or read an upbeat, fun book.
- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Exercise. Refresh your body and spirit with a brisk walk or other aerobic activity.
- Leave home early. Allow enough time for your commute -- and then some.

## Put yourself in charge

"On the job, an individual with a positive attitude is more likely to achieve good results. The next time there is an important assignment or a promotion, that person is likely to get it," Mr. Foreman says.

Here are his strategies for achieving a positive attitude at work:

- Plan your day and your future. Work to achieve real goals, not just finish tasks.
- Greet people with a smile. Studies have found that smiling makes you feel better.
- Avoid excuses; they just make the other person angrier. But "I'm sorry" and "I'll take care of it" work wonders.
- Give sincere appreciation. Your co-workers deserve to know when they've done something well -- and they will return the compliment.
- Listen more and talk less. Listening to another person is one of the best compliments you can give.
- Alternate work and rest periods. Take time out to refresh yourself with a walk, stretches or other moderate exercise.
- Don't complain. Grumbling focuses attention on what's wrong, not what's right, and creates a negative atmosphere.
- Learn from your mistakes. Instead of getting upset, ask, "How can I correct the situation?"
- Make room for humor. Make it cheerful, not offensive.
- Review your accomplishments at the end of the day. Even small contributions make a difference.
- Go home early enough to spend time with family or friends. Relax and get a good night's sleep.