



A STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR POSITIVE ATTITUDE AT WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

In this paper A Study on Understanding the Need for Positive Attitude at Workplace, I am trying to find out some important factors about positive attitude and its need in the workplace. Attitude is not simply a state of mind; it is also a reflection of what you value. Your attitude is more than just saying 'I Can'; it believes 'I Can Do'. It requires believing before seeing, because seeing is based on situations; believing is based on faith and your unwavering conviction. The difference between can and cannot are only three letters. Three letters that determine your life's direction. In this paper the need for positive attitude is to be analyzed with the help of some pre observed cases.

KEYWORDS: Positive attitude, Workplace environment, Key to success, Positive organizational behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

When looking for a definition for success, it is a good idea to take a close look at the most successful people out there. What do all of them have in common? If you look close enough, you will see that the most successful individuals in any career all have positive attitudes.

WHEN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE RIPPLES THROUGH A CREW, PROJECT OR A COMPANY, IT IS A MORE POWERFUL FORCE THAN ANY BUDGET, ANY SCHEDULE, ANY SLOGAN OR BUSINESS PLAN — AND IT HAS MUCH GREATER EFFECT ON PERFORMANCE THAN ANY KIND OF TOP-DOWN PRESSURE BECAUSE IT FLOWS FROM WITHIN EACH PERSON.

“Rick Wilkins, an American management consultant, concluded after exhaustive research that you have the full control over your thinking pattern; you have the total ownership of your attitudes. No one else on this planet has the power or authority to change your attitude without your permission. Your attitude allows you to become more empowering than money, to rise above your failures and accept others for who they are and what they say”

MEANING

A positive attitude is seeing the glass half full. It means to keep a set of ideas, values and thoughts that tend to look for the good, to advance, to overcome problems, to find the opportunities in every situation; to look, as they say, 'on the bright side of life'. "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference" - this positive thinking quote by Winston Churchill points out the importance of perception.

A positive attitude in the workplace simply refers to the fact that people you come into contact with clearly see that you are someone who cares about work and are someone who they can rely on. The most important thing is to define what kind of attitude you have where you work.



Nowhere is your positive attitude more required and appreciated by others than your workplace. There are sound reasons for this: about 30% of an employee's waking hours are spent at the workplace. Without some positive people around, this time could become troublesome. So we can conclude as:

- **The key that opens your mind and heart to better job performance**, an enriching career and life is your attitude. The most important single factor that guarantees positive results is the Positive Mental Attitude.
- **The more positive the workplace**, the higher the departmental productivity. There will be more output, higher productivity, better quality, fewer mistakes and less complaint.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1. What is the importance of positive attitude at workplace?
2. How positive attitude helps in better performance.
3. How positive attitude leads to success in work life.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study of “A Study on Understanding the Need for Positive Attitude at Workplace” has adopted the following methodology: -

The information required was collected from:-

- Secondary Sources.

SECONDARY SOURCES

This refers to that data which have been collected and analyzed by someone else.

Sources of Secondary Data

- a. Reference by books.
- b. By Internet.
- c. By Journals.

CASES OF POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Case 1-**Decisive attitude brews success:**

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By Adriaan Groenewald

Mardia van der Walt-Korsten is Businesswoman of the Year.

Taking over the reins in an unfamiliar environment shows you can't keep a good woman down. This clinical psychologist and woman with no direct operational experience in the IT sector, still managed to become the CEO of German based T Systems SA. How on earth did she do this? I am sure you have heard the saying: "You can't keep a good man down." Well, in this instance you can't keep a good woman down. Her accolades did not come easily, as one mostly finds with successful people. Several times in her life and career, she had to act in positions for some time before being formally appointed. It almost seems like a trend. The last time it happened was when she acted as CEO for almost a year. Before being formally appointed. I guess the Germans wanted to make very sure? On another occasion the general manager for HR at M-Net left and once again she was asked to act in that position for about a year, before being appointed. This time, however, the formal appointment happened after Van der Walt-Korsten, as a courageous 27 year-old, confronted her CEO by announcing that she would no longer act in the position. He then explained that they had decided to give her the job. She retaliated by questioning their certainty that she would in fact accept the job and then inquired about back pay for the months she had acted as GM, should she in fact accept the appointment. Today, looking back, she believes that episode was part of her personal training as a leader – learning to confront issues that stand in one's way of progressing and asking for what one deserves. She received everything she asked for. She found herself in an environment where she had little technical skill and knowledge about the industry. In the beginning she kept quiet, listened and learned. Also, some of the leaders around her did not exactly embrace training, people development, organizational development as equal contribution to the business. Despite this resistance, she and her team managed to take the division into "trend setting" territory. Unknowingly, this period was excellent preparation for what lay ahead. After about seven years, Van der Walt-Korsten decided to spread her wings and was headhunted to join an IT outsourcing firm, which later became known T-Systems, as HR executive and CEO of a small labour broking company. A sequence of events over a few years led to her appointment as the head of sales and deputy CEO, which was really a chief operating officer's CO-position. This was a major leap. Her time had come!

Before her appointment, about three sales directors had been fired. The organization was in crisis. It they had not won any new deals for more than three years. One can imagine the reaction of other members on the team, especially those who coveted the CO-position. Van der Walt-Korsten admits it was very challenging. During the first exco meeting a week later she decided to say nothing. Her view was that, although she had already started her fact-finding mission of where things had gone wrong, she did not know enough yet to make judgments. Certain individuals were not impressed, but she stood her ground. Overall she was shocked by the reactions from colleagues with whom she had worked with for several years. A month into the position she confronted the CEO for clarification of her mandate – was he going to let her run the business? She wanted to make some dramatic changes, including inside the leadership team where she had to be sure she could trust every one of them. The CEO backed her and over time she made the necessary changes. Once again, as in the M-Net days, one of the challenges she faced was her lack of technical skills and experience. When she questioned the technical experts it was easy for them to pull the wool over her eyes. She discovered how essential it was to depend more on her intuition during those challenging times. Courageous decisions had to be made, such as changing the business model from outsourcing most functions, to developing internal competence – a major change. She made this call while in the process of trying to win a large deal, and she was willing to lose the deal in exchange for sending a clear message that the business had reached a turning point. They did lose the deal, but staff regained their sense of meaning and self-worth. They were now stretched and challenged to develop their skills. Such bold and risky moves placed the company on the success path. Last year T-Systems won three key SAP awards and now they have some of the most qualified people skills in the market. It took about 18 months to two years of refocusing and defining clearly where they were heading. Van der Walt-Korsten cited some key reasons for the success, such as listening; dealing with politics, which can kill a company; and surrounding her with the right people, some of them being good "sparring partners". About 16 months after being appointed as CEO of the business, the CEO fell out with the Germans and left. As mentioned, Van der Walt-Korsten acted in this position for a while. At the time the Germans also initiated a direction that she did not agree with as she believed it would bleed the company to death. She and her team were quick off the mark in pushing back and stating a compelling case for the effect it would have on the South African market and business. They also decided that, while they would adopt the head office framework, they would also define themselves, rather than be defined from somewhere in Germany. One of their mottos was "T-Systems SA first". They decided on this to combat the negative effects that global structures and reporting lines often have on team morale and loyalty in local businesses. This, together with their successful and persuasive pushback to Germany's proposed strategy, united the team more. Towards the end of 2008, T-Systems SA was way over it's their targets set for the year. This year 2009 will of course be the real test. But, with her

positive attitude, which at a fundamental level is one of looking at what she receives in life, rather than looking at what she does not receive, I will place my bet on the T-Systems tea.

Case2-Positive attitude brings success

Allan, Job application in a company

Allan applied for a new job, but as his self-esteem was low, and he considered himself as a failure and unworthy of success, he was sure that he was not going to get the job. He had a negative attitude towards himself, and believed that the other applicants were better and more qualified than him. Allan manifested this attitude, due to his negative past experiences with job interviews. His mind was filled with negative thoughts and fears concerning the job for the whole week before the job interview. He was sure he would be rejected. On the day of the interview he got up late, and to his horror he discovered that the shirt he had planned to wear was dirty, and the other one needed ironing. As it was already too late, he went out wearing a shirt full of wrinkles. During the interview he was tense, displayed a negative attitude, worried about his shirt, and felt hungry because he did not have enough time to eat breakfast. All this distracted his mind and made it difficult for him to focus on the interview. His overall behavior made a bad impression, and consequently he materialized his fear and did not get the job. Jim applied for the same job too, but approached the matter in a different way. He was sure that he was going to get the job. During the week preceding the interview he often visualized himself making a good impression and getting the job. In the evening before the interview he prepared the clothes he was going to wear, and went to sleep a little earlier. On day of the interview he woke up earlier than usual, and had ample time to eat breakfast, and then to arrive to the interview before the scheduled time. He got the job because he made a good impression. He had also of course, the proper qualifications for the job, but so had Allan. What do we learn from these two stories? Is there any magic employed here? No, it is all natural. When the attitude is positive we entertain pleasant feelings and constructive images, and see in our mind's eye what we really want to happen. This brings brightness to the eyes, more energy and happiness. The whole being broadcasts good will, happiness and success. Even the health is affected in a beneficial way. We walk tall and the voice is more powerful. Our body language shows the way you feel inside.

Case3-Positive Organizational Behavior

Mr. Deming, collaborative management theory.

Mr. Deming had a theory of management based on optimism, hope, motivation and positive way of thinking. During the 50's, he went to the top three U.S. automakers with a plan for changing their manner of doing business. Instead of maintaining an archaic hierarchical system of management, Deming developed a system of management basing on collaboration, team-building, positive encouragement and reinforcement of employees. He felt that a shift in the management style would give the American automakers a needed edge in dealing with foreign competition from Europe and Japan. The CEO's of

American automakers could not understand the vision and the implications of Deming's theory on the strategy and performance of their firms. On the other hand, competitors from Japan used William Deming's "collaborative management" style and began producing vehicles that were significantly superior in quality to American counterparts. Because the workers were granted a vested interest in corporate goals and were positively reinforced for their efforts, they were motivated to produce quality products. Most of the managers that adopted Deming's theory were able to transfer to their employees a number of "capacities", such as hope, Positive thinking, optimism, self-efficacy and resiliency. In turn employees' new way of perceiving firm goals positively influenced firm strategic behavior and performance.

What is Positive Organizational Behavior (POB)?

POB is defined by Luthans (2002) as "the study and application of positively-oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace". Luthans and Youssef (2007), define **Self-efficacy**, **Hope**, **Optimism**, and **Resiliency** as four key psychological resource capacities that best meet the inclusion criteria for POB, which enhances managing effectiveness and organizational performance.

The four POB psychological resource capacities

- **Self-efficacy**, the belief that one has the capabilities to "execute the courses of actions required to manage prospective situations", represents the best fit with all the criteria of POB among all the four capacities. Self-efficacy belief is suggested to be related to workplace performance as it determines how much effort people will spend on a task and how long they will persist with it.
- **Hope** is defined by Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991) as "a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency (goal-directed energy) and (2) pathways (planning to meet goals)". With the hope to achieve certain goals, employees have the sense of agency or internalized control that creates the determination and motivation (willpower) to accomplish their goals. They would also be able to create and use alternative pathways and contingency plans to achieve their goals and overcome obstacles (way power).
- **Optimism** is defined by positive psychologists as a cognitive characteristic in terms of an expectancy of positive outcome and/or a positive causal attribution. "Optimism is not simply cold cognition, and if we forget the emotional flavor that pervades optimism, we can make little sense of the fact that optimism is both motivated and motivating."
- **Resiliency** is defined by Luthans (2002) as "the capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility". Unlike traditional conceptualizations of resiliency as an extraordinary capacity that can only be observed and admired in highly unique individuals, the positive psychology perspective in management on resilience is that it is a learnable capacity that can be developed in the most

ordinary of people (Masten, 2001) and measured as state like. Luthans and Youssef (2007) proposed that resiliency in workplace embraces a proactive dimension that promotes discrepancy creation even in the absence of external threats.

Practicing POBs in workplace

With such promising impact on work performance and employee well-being, how is POB actually practiced in the workplace? Examples include:

- Empowering employees and encouraging them to express their opinions on the firm’s issues. Companies like Starbucks and Virgin are among the best examples of employee empowerment.
- Developing and maintaining optimism in workplace, especially during adverse times. American Express Financial Advisors once used optimism in developing its associates. Such optimism training follows specific guidelines leading to significant enhancements of work outcomes (Luthans, 2002).
- Developing a more comprehensive recruitment or appraisal system, analyzing strengths rather than weaknesses. Bandura’s work suggests strength-based systems would enhance employees’ self-efficacy. The experience of Norwich Union might offer you some insights.

Case4- It’s all about attitude and leadership

Russ Withers, Broadcasters, NAB Radio Show in Austin.

Russ Withers has been a station owner for a long time and while he’s facing the same challenges as other broadcasters at his radio and television stations, he’s not worried that the sky is falling. When RBR/TVBR spoke with him at the NAB Radio Show in Austin, Withers said he was keeping a positive attitude. After all, how can you lead if the people who are supposed to follow you think that you’ve given up? “There are sales people that aren’t successful because they sit there and say nobody’s buying anything. I’ve always felt that if we have 6% unemployment, 94% of the people are employed and are still customers,” Withers said. He’d rather focus on helping his advertisers stay in business and make money. “We have car dealers on the air who believe in what we do and what they are doing – because they have the same

problems and the same crisis that we all have – and they’re being very successful because they haven’t cut back any of the media, that’s television and radio both,” said the owner of Withers Broadcasting. The veteran broadcaster noted that one dealer who is a good friend (“all of my clients become good friends”) announced proudly after five years of prodding by Withers that he had cancelled his newspaper ad buying. “Five weeks had gone by and he’d noticed no diminution in sales. Sales were just like they were before he cancelled, so he realized that the \$15,000 a month that he had peed away on newspaper was exactly that.” So, did Withers come up with an additional \$15,000 broadcast schedule? Nope. He told the advertiser to stick that money in his pocket to help get through this tight time. The dealer was already running the right broadcast advertising schedule to drive business. To be sure, Withers Broadcasting is not in any major metropolitan markets, unless you want to count Metropolis, IL. His stations are deeply involved in their communities and deal primarily in direct, retail ad sales. “It’s all attitudinal. The small and medium-sized markets will and can do better because they are not as dependent upon the national buys,” Withers said, adding that they also don’t have to wait for a decision by a young kid who’s a time buyer – “who has no life experience and doesn’t understand that this is a cycle and we bicycle through them”.

RBR/TVBR observation:

Even if you are in a large market, the lesson is the same. You can’t change what national advertisers do. Maybe your rep can. Maybe your corporate CEO can. But you can’t. So focus on what you can do. Find creative ways to drive business to local advertisers with your broadcast signal, Internet site and whatever other tools you have. If you’re a GM or GSM, get out of your corner office and go talk to advertisers. Have air talent go along on sales calls to brainstorm on how to make an advertiser’s message stand out and deliver customers. Find needs and fill them. Cast a wider net to find new clients who don’t think they can afford broadcast advertising. After all, they’ve heard that Super Bowl spots cost millions of dollars. It’s all about getting back to basics and investing in shoe leather.

KEY POINTS OF CASES

Cases of positive attitude	Key points of cases
<p>Case 1- Decisive attitude brews success January 28, 2009 By Adriaan Groenewald Mardia van der Walt-Korsten is Businesswoman of the Year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In adverse situations positive attitude gives strengths. ➤ Positive attitude gives the way of looking at the things which we receive in life, rather than looking what we do not receive.
<p>Case2- Positive attitude brings success Allan, Job application in a company</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When nobody has faith in us positive attitude gives the strength to be successful. ➤ Negative attitude itself brings failure. ➤ Negative feeling brings down moral. ➤ Positive attitude helps to get good impression on others. ➤ When the attitude is positive we entertain pleasant feelings and constructive images. ➤ Positive attitude brings good will happiness and success.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Our body language shows the way we feel inside.

Case3-Positive Organizational Behavior Mr. Deming, collaborative management theory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Positive attitude helps in fighting with adverse organizational conditions. ➤ Employees produce more quality products when they have positive attitude towards their work. ➤ Positive attitude gives a new way of perceiving things. ➤ Positive attitude increases strategic behavior and performance. ➤ Positive attitude increases, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self efficacy Hope Optimism Resiliency
Case4- It's all about attitude and leadership Russ Withers, Broadcasters, NAB Radio Show in Austin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It empowers employees and encourages them. ➤ It maintains optimism in adverse time. ➤ Positive attitude makes a person calm at the time of problems. ➤ Positive attitude makes a person to look at the bright side of any situation. ➤ It gives a person self confidence. ➤ It helps to be aware about a person's own strengths. ➤ It makes an employee more productive.

FINDINGS

Thus with the help of above table I came out with the following findings key attributes of positive attitude at workplace.

Importance of positive attitude at workplace:-

- It maintains optimism in adverse time.
- Positive attitude brings good will, happiness and success.
- Positive attitude gives a new way of perceiving things.
- Positive attitude makes a person calm at the time of problems.
- It increases the satisfaction of employees at family level and in personal life
- Positive attitude makes a person to look at the bright side of any situation.
- Positive attitude reduces stress and tension.
- It helps to be aware about a person's own strengths.
- Positive attitude at workplace brings personal life also peaceful.
- Positive attitude helps in fighting with adverse organizational conditions.
- Positive attitude increases strategic behavior and performance.
- It empowers employees and encourages them.
- It makes an employee more productive.
- Employees are more productive and motivated when they have positive attitude toward the organization.
- If employees are satisfied and have positive attitude towards organization then there is less employee's turnover.
- An organization gets profit when its employees are satisfied and have positive attitude.
- When employees are given opportunity to manage their life at work they become better workers and put better pride and effort into their work.
- Improve customer relations and improve sales.

- If employees are allowed to participate in arrangement of their work schedule they are more productive because they have a positive attitude towards their organization.
- Positive attitude of employees gives profit to the organization in the following terms
 1. Reduction in employee turnover.
 2. Increased productivity.
 3. Employee satisfaction.
 4. Peaceful work environment.
- In adverse situations positive attitude gives strengths.
- Positive attitude gives the way of looking at the things which we receive in life, rather than looking what we do not receive.
- When nobody has faith in us positive attitude gives the strength to be successful.
- Negative attitude itself brings failure.
- Negative feeling brings down moral on the other hand positive attitude brings it up.
- Positive attitude helps to get good impression on others.
- When the attitude is positive we entertain pleasant feelings and constructive images.
- Improve decision-making and overcome challenges.
- Improve Interpersonal Relations.
- Our body language shows the way we feel inside.

CONCLUSION

As the conclusion part I can say that there is a big need of positive attitude in the workplace as well as in the personal life of the individual. If employees have positive attitude towards their work and organization they become more productive, positive attitude brings the moral of an employee high due to which the employee feel become more productive, satisfied and due to which employee turnover rate decreases. Positive attitude is the result of new thinking. Believing in yourself, focusing on successes, learning from failures and surrounding yourself

with people who share your values, principles and thinking. Positive attitude won't let you do anything but it will let you do everything better than negative thinking. It will let you use your abilities and capabilities. When a person has positive attitude in his life then he finds many ways of getting success in his life, and he also realizes his strengths and opportunities which he can get in the adverse situations. With the help of positive attitude a peaceful work environment is maintained in the organization. If an employer increases the positive attitude of an employee then it increases the working capacity and positive behavior of the employees toward different situations of the organizational culture. Thus it can be said that positive attitude is very important for any employee, person and organization. Because positive attitude gives a person to fight against the adverse situations of life, which lead him/her to get success in life.

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