

Maintaining a Positive Attitude in the Workplace



With the current American economy in a recession, it can be difficult to maintain a positive attitude in the workplace. In fact, sometimes it can seem like Mission Impossible. Instead of falling victim to the negative work attitudes that surround you, make an effort to buck the trend. Look for the good in your coworkers and your workplace. By learning how to communicate with coworkers effectively, you will gain recognition as a force of positive attitude in the workplace.

By following the specific strategies below, you'll learn how to communicate with coworkers effectively, and lend to a positive attitude in the workplace.

Be Appreciative

It is always nicer to get a pat on the back rather than to get stabbed in the back. If you're wondering "how do I change my negative attitude," start by observing how you communicate with coworkers. If you practice asking useful questions, giving accolades and being gracious at work for two weeks, you'll notice a difference in the people you work with and in your own feelings about work.

Stay Positive Checkup Questions:

- **How often do you show appreciation at work?**
- **Are there opportunities to energize your coworkers?**
- **What is the key to increasing a positive attitude in the workplace?**

It's easier than you think to create a positive attitude in the workplace - simply, show appreciation for your coworkers.

How to Communicate With Coworkers Effectively:

1. **Give thanks.** Thank coworkers for the work they do that makes your job easier - including the peers, managers and office assistants. Even thank the security guard for making you feel safe at work. Cultivate a thankful, positive attitude in the workplace, and in return you'll notice a change in how coworkers treat you.
2. **Acknowledge a job well done.** One of our favorite ways to create positive energy at work is to give a "Most Valuable Player" award. Once a month, stage a vote for the office MVP - asking each voter to include why their nominee should get the award. You can even have employees vote on what the award will be, from premium parking to a tiara or crown.
3. **Celebrate.** Take the time to celebrate birthdays, holidays, life changes and achievements. Not sure how to celebrate? Bring in a Nerf football; bake cookies and bring them to work; or put up a graffiti poster where people can leave positive comments.



Recharge Yourself

A favorite quote of ours is "A dead battery can't charge a dead battery." Stop complaining about negative work attitudes and lend your own energy to creating a more positive attitude in the workplace. Be the office live wire!

Stay Positive Checkup Questions:

- **How can one person increase the positive attitude in the workplace?**
- **What specific things can someone do to tap into the energy of others?**
- **How can you maintain a more energetic and positive attitude in the workplace?**

How to Communicate with Coworkers Effectively:

1. **Be enthusiastic.** Enthusiasm is infectious. If you're going to spend eight hours a day at work, why not make it more than just tolerable. Make an effort to smile, laugh, and enjoy your job. If you work to create a more positive attitude in the workplace, others will follow.

2. **Practice random acts of kindness.** Each day try to do something kind and helpful. Offer to cover for a coworker so they can attend their kid's soccer game, bring a busy colleague a cup of coffee, or volunteer for a project. You don't have to create elaborate situations, just keep your eyes out for opportunities to do a good deed.
3. **Look for opportunities to have fun.** We all know someone who can make anything fun--and make time fly. Be that person. It's amazing how a joke here and a silly celebration there can breathe life into a stale office. Before you know it, other people will start coming to work with more bounce in their step.

Volunteer Your Time

Now is the perfect time to find a way to contribute to the greater good in your workplace. No matter how busy you are, look for five minutes that you can give every day. Others are sure to appreciate your efforts and you might even enjoy it.

Stay Positive Checkup Questions:

- **How do you find opportunities to volunteer?**
- **What are the best places to volunteer?**
- **Isn't it best to volunteer outside of your organization?**



Try these strategies for effective volunteering:

How to communicate with Coworkers Effectively:

1. **Pitch in.** If your office coffee pot or refrigerator seem to become a science project, break the cycle by pitching in to clean it out once a week. Then encourage others to help out. Even relatively small things (like a clean place to store your lunch) can dramatically improve the positive attitude in the workplace.
2. **Contribute to the community.** Instead of getting sucked into office drama, create positive energy by volunteering outside of the office. Explore topics that are interesting to you such as homelessness, drama or adult literacy then find an existing program that needs volunteers. We've done all of the above and we were paid back a hundredfold.
3. **Don't overlook the need within.** Recently we were in a grocery store that was holding a fundraiser for another employee who had medical problems. They talked at length about how this brought everyone closer. When looking for a project, don't overlook the needs and concerns of your coworkers.

Avoid Negative Work Attitudes

Negative work attitudes create a vicious cycle that can rob energy from an organization. If you're famous for your awful moods and stinging commentary, try something new. Avoiding negative work attitudes is easier than it might seem.

Stay Positive Checkup Questions:

- **Can you resist sarcasm?**
- **Do you look for the good in people?**
- **Do you avoid stabbing people in the back?**

How to communicate with Coworkers Effectively:

1. **Resist sarcasm.** One of us grew up on the East Coast where sarcasm seems to be as natural as breathing. It's tough to break the cycle of sarcasm, but it's worth the trouble. If you're feeling sarcastic, challenge yourself to come up with something clever to say that energizes the positive attitude in the workplace, rather than depleting your coworker's energy.
2. **Look for the good.** It's easy to get caught in an office drama trap. Instead of blaming and gossiping, focus on the good qualities of your coworkers. You'll be surprised by how much of a positive attitude in the workplace this will create and how much more productive you and your coworkers will be.
3. **Stab 'em in the front.** This came from one of our uncles. He was fond of saying, "Friends stab friends in the front." Again, resist the temptation to stab coworkers in the back. Instead, challenge yourself to be honest with coworkers without being mean.

