

# Work / Life

## The Powerful Impact of a Leader's Attitude

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- Eight Buddhist Principles for Relationships
- Six Steps to an Effective Performance Appraisal
- More Flight Announcements
- Books Online
- Things To Think About if You Want To Change the World
- Unhindered Movement
- Curry Against Disease
- Gardens for Stress Relief
- Milking Cash Cows

NAVIGATOR

A manager's attitude toward employees has a strong impact on performance. Douglas McGregor, an industrial psychologist, identified two common sets of assumptions that managers hold about employees. He labeled these assumptions Theory X (negative assumptions) and Theory Y (positive assumptions). As it is more likely that most managers' attitudes are not this black and white, a continuum of the X-Y theories provides a broader range of assumptions:

### YY Assumptions

The leader assumes that others take responsibility and gain substantial satisfaction from their work. He or she behaves as if others automatically impose upon themselves high standards of performance without specific instructions or opportunities provided by their leaders. This leader tends to be very "hands off" yet supportive, as necessary.

### Y Assumptions

The leader assumes that others will do their best work in a situation and behaves in ways that provide opportunities for freedom, participation, and creativity. He or she tends to structure tasks so that others monitor and control their own work, checking in at pre-arranged times for updates.

### XY Assumptions

The leader is on the fence about human nature at work. He or she gives some

freedom to others but restricts it in case he or she is wrong. This leader acts positively toward others but protects him- or herself in the event of their failure. Behavior is driven by a mixture of motives.

### X Assumptions

The leader assumes that others will not behave responsibly at work and structures tasks so that he or she can monitor and control their work.

### XX Assumptions

The leader assumes the worst about human nature and seeks to make sure that he or she isn't taken advantage of by others. This leader's behavior tends to be highly restrictive and punitive toward others.

Because employees tend to live up or down to a manager's expectations, Theory Y or YY is the ideal. If managers have a positive view of their employees' capabilities, they're more likely to perform at the level of the manager's expectations. If managers have a negative view and see their employees as lazy and untrustworthy, the employees are more likely to behave in a half-hearted, uninterested manner. This concept is known as the "self-fulfilling prophecy," and it has been tested in research and proven to be a major factor in employee performance.

(Source: LeadingSuccess at <http://www.hrdq.com>)

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### Eight Buddhist Principles for Relationships

Adapted from *How to Be an Adult in Relationships*, by David Richo (Shambhala, 2002).

The great Tibetan Buddhist teacher Geshe Langri Tangpa designed these teachings in the 12th century, but they are still potent and helpful today as guides for human behavior and for learning to relate to and love others unconditionally.

May I consider all beings precious.

May I always respect others as superior while attaining self-esteem.

May I face my inner darkness and turn it to good.

May I be moved with compassion for the pain behind the spite others may show me.

When I am hurt by others, may I forego retaliation while always fighting injustice.

May I reckon those who betray me as sacred teachers.

May I offer joy to all beings and secretly take on their suffering.

May all beings and I be free from ego concerns of loss and gain.

(Source: <http://www.Care2.com>)

## TRAINING TIP

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### Six Steps to an Effective Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal often serves as the foundation for most other human resource systems, such as salary administration, career development, and selection programs. In addition, some organizations use performance appraisal as the vehicle that carries the organizational planning process to the individual level. With all these uses for performance appraisal, it is no wonder that there is a major U.S. trend to develop more effective performance appraisal systems.

By using a six-step meeting model that covers all the key areas, a manager can get the guidance needed to inspire employee improvement. The steps include:

- 1. Building a Relationship of Mutual Trust:** Relates directly to the day-to-day relationship between manager and employee. Two skills useful in accomplishing this step: Support and self-disclosure.
- 2. Opening the Meeting:** Briefly restate the meeting's purpose and agenda and pose a broad question to help the employee start talking.
- 3. Identifying and Exploring Accomplishments and Concerns:** Probe to gain information from the employee about his or her performance successes and shortcomings. Paraphrase to test for understanding. Summarize to consolidate important points.
- 4. Developing an Improvement Plan:** Discuss how the problems or concerns might be overcome or eliminated. Acknowledge the employee's improvement suggestion. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each. Ask for additional suggestions. Expand when necessary by offering and discussing improvement suggestions of your own.
- 5. Overcoming Defensiveness:** Recognize and handle defensiveness when it arises. Check perception in a nonaccusatory way. Rephrase the point to encourage the employee to examine his or her own behavior. Respond empathetically. Cut off or change topics if employee remains defensive.
- 6. Evaluating and Rating Employee Performance:** The goal is mutual agreement on an overall assessment of the employee's performance. Present your overall rating, offer a supportive rationale, explain the benefits of the meeting, and thank the employee for sharing information and participating fully.

Grounded in behavioral science research, the steps and skills comprising this model have been found to distinguish managers who are effective at conducting performance appraisal meetings from those who are less effective.

(Source: *Performance Appraisal Skills Inventory* at HRDQ <http://www.hrdq.com>)

## HUMOR

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### More Flight Announcements (Real examples that have been heard or reported)



1. "Your seat cushions can be used for flotation; and, in the event of an emergency water landing, please paddle to shore and take them with our compliments."
2. "As you exit the plane, make sure to gather all of your belongings. Anything left behind will be distributed evenly among the flight attendants. Please do not leave children or spouses."
3. And from the pilot during his welcome message: "Delta Airlines is pleased to have some of the best flight attendants in the industry. Unfortunately, none of them are on this flight!"
4. Heard on Southwest Airlines just after a very hard landing in Salt Lake City. The flight attendant came on the intercom and said, "That was quite a bump, and I know what y'all are thinking. I'm here to tell you it wasn't the airline's fault, it wasn't the pilot's fault, it wasn't the flight attendant's fault, it was the asphalt."
5. Overheard on an American Airlines flight into Amarillo, Texas, on a particularly windy and bumpy day. During the final approach, the captain was really having to fight it. After an extremely hard landing, the flight attendant said, "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Amarillo. Please remain in your seats with your seat belts fastened while the captain taxis what's left of our airplane to the gate!"
6. Another flight attendant's comment on a less-than-perfect landing: "We ask you to please remain seated as Captain Kangaroo bounces us to the terminal."
7. An airline pilot wrote that on this particular flight he had hammered his ship into the runway really hard. The airline had a policy that required the first officer to stand at the door while the passengers exited, smile, and give them a "Thanks for flying our airline." He said that in light of his bad landing, he had a hard time looking the passengers

in the eye, thinking that someone would have a smart comment. Finally everyone had gotten off except for a little old lady walking with a cane. She said, "Sir do you mind if I ask you a question?" "Why, no, Ma'am," said the pilot. "What is it?" The little old lady said, "Did we land, or were we shot down?"

8. After a real crusher of a landing in Phoenix, the attendant came on with, "Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain in your seats until Captain Crash and the crew have brought the aircraft to a screeching halt against the gate and, once the tire smoke has cleared and the warning bells are silenced, we'll open the door and you can pick your way through the wreckage to the terminal."
9. Part of a flight attendant's arrival announcement: "We'd like to thank you folks for flying with us today. And, the next time you get the insane urge to go blasting through the skies in a pressurized metal tube, we hope you'll think of US Airways."
10. Heard on a Southwest Airline flight: "Ladies and gentlemen, if you wish to smoke, the smoking section on this airplane is on the wing and if you can light 'em, you can smoke 'em."

(Courtesy of <http://www.homeholidaysfamilyandfun.com>)

## WEB SITE PICKS

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## FOR REFLECTION

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### Top Ten Things To Think About if You Want To Change the World

Mahatma Gandhi believed that we must be the change we want to see in the world. This was well demonstrated when he helped India gain its independence. Gandhi was a revolutionary man, but he accomplished India's emergence as a nation without starting a revolution. In fact, he advocated no violence. One of the most powerful countries in the world yielded to the commitment of one man and the dream of millions.

What change can we effect? What's the difference we want to make in the world?

Gandhi said, "In a gentle way you can shake the world." Here are some things to think about how to do just that.

1. Know that all significant change throughout history has occurred not because of nations, armies, governments, and certainly not committees. They happened as a result of the courage and commitment of individuals. People like Joan of Ark, Albert Einstein, Clara Barton, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, and Rosa Parks. They might not have done it alone, but they were, without question, the change-makers.

2. Believe that you have a unique purpose and potential in the world. It's not so much something to create as to be discovered. And it's up to you to discover it. Believe that you can and will make a difference.

3. Recognize that everything you do, every step you take, every sentence you write, every word you speak—or DON'T speak—counts. Nothing is trivial. The world may be big, but there are no small things. Everything matters.

4. To be the change you want to see in the world, you don't have to be loud. You don't have to be eloquent. You don't have to be elected. You don't even have to be particularly smart or well-educated. You do, however, have to be committed.

5. Take personal responsibility. Never think that "it's not my job." It's a cop-out to say, "What can I do, I'm only one person." You don't need everyone's cooperation or anyone's permission to make changes. Remember this little gem, "If it's to be, it's up to me."

6. Don't get caught up in the how of things. If you're clear on what you want to change and why you want to change it, the how will come. Many significant things have been left undone because someone let the problem-solving interfere with the decision-making.

7. Don't wait for things to be right in order to begin. Change is messy. Things will never be just right. Follow Teddy Roosevelt's timeless advice, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

8. The genesis for change is awareness. We cannot change what we don't acknowledge. Most of the time we aren't aware of what's wrong or what's not working. We don't see what could be. By becoming more aware, we begin the process of change.

9. Take to heart these words from Albert Einstein—arguably one of the smartest change masters who ever lived: "All meaningful and lasting change starts first in your imagination and then works its way out. Imagination is more important than knowledge."

10. In order for things to change, YOU have to change. We can't change others; we can only change ourselves. However, when WE change, it changes everything. And in doing so, we truly can be the change we want to see in the world.

Inscribed on the tomb of an Anglican Bishop in Westminster Abby (1100 A.D.) "When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country.

But it, too, seemed immovable.

As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest to me, but alas, they would have none of it.

And now, as I lie on my deathbed, I suddenly realize: If I had only changed myself first, then by example I would have changed my family.

From their inspiration and encouragement, I would then have been able to better my country, and who knows, I may have even changed the world."

Since this list was inspired by Gandhi's belief, it seems appropriate to end with another of his quotes: "Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and we will make not only our own happiness, but that of the world at large."

(Source: Michael Angier & Success Networks International <http://www.SuccessNet.org>)

## WORDS OF WISDOM

### Unhindered Movement

#### *Getting Out of Your Own Way*

When you find yourself facing obstacles that appear to be blocking you from your goals, it is important to try not to get discouraged. It can be easy to feel "stuck" or that "life" is creating circumstances preventing you from getting what you want. And while it is easy to look at everyone and everything outside of ourselves for the problem, perhaps even wanting to "get rid" of the person, object, or circumstance we may feel is blocking us, sometimes the best course of action to take may be to look inside ourselves first.

It is amazing how often we can get in our own way without even being aware that we are doing so. Even though we truly want to succeed, there are many reasons why we

may sometimes block our own efforts. It may be that we are afraid to succeed, so we subconsciously create circumstances to keep ourselves stuck. Or it may even be that we are afraid that we will succeed, so we block ourselves by making the achievement of our goals more difficult than they really are. We may even approach our goals in a way that keeps creating the same unsuccessful results.

If you believe that you've been standing in your own way, you may want to take a piece of paper and record how you've done so. Write down the choices you've made that have hindered your efforts and the fears that may have prompted you to make these decisions. Take note of any thoughts and feelings that arise. It is important to be gentle and compassionate during this process. Try not to blame yourself for getting in your own way. Remember, the choices we make are always there to serve us, until it is time to let them go. When you are finished, throw the paper away while setting an intention that you are getting rid of any obstacles you've created to block yourself. You can then let yourself start again with a clean slate. Doubts and fears are going to be natural, but with this new awareness, you should be able to prevent yourself from subconsciously creating obstacles. Besides, now that you've decided to get out of your own way, the part of you that has always wanted to succeed can now do so.

(Source: <http://www.dailyom.com>)

## HEALTH TIP

### Curry Against Disease

Curcumin, the spice that gives curry its yellow color, may activate a key enzyme that protects the brain against oxidation, thought to be a major factor in aging and responsible for disorders like Alzheimer's disease.

The spice helps to protect brain cells exposed to an oxidant challenge and has already been shown to fight some cancers and autoimmune diseases, such as multiple sclerosis.

The number of people with dementia is steadily increasing and there are nearly 18 million people with the disease in the world. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, making up 55 percent of all cases.

One of the most prominent current theories of aging, the "free radical theory," is based on the thought that damage by free radical molecules is the key to intracellular targets and a major cause of the degenerative diseases related to aging.

Mammalian cells have developed highly protective systems against oxidative challenges that when properly activated can restore cells' resistance to oxidation. Activation of antioxidant pathways is particularly important for tissue with relatively weak antioxidant defenses, such as the brain.

Curcumin helps cells perform a variety of functions in the central nervous system, including support to neurons and cleaning up of debris within the brain.

(Source: American Physiological Society Annual Scientific Conference, April 21, 2004, Washington, DC)

## THOUGHT DU JOUR

### Gardens for Stress Relief

It seems like we are always living on high stress alert, whether triggered by environmental or self-induced pressures. By now we have read enough articles to know that stress is the root of all evil. It saps the joy right out of our lives. However, we possess the ability to restore our natural biorhythms. Gardening or strolling in a garden can be great natural stress relievers. While stress plays havoc physiologically, even depleting our bones, research shows that gardeners suffer less from osteoporosis because of weight-bearing activities like digging, raking, squatting to plant shrubs, lifting bags of soil, or pushing a lawnmower. Because gardening is a beloved hobby, gardeners lose track of time and therefore do not age while immersed in their passion! In addition, gardening lowers blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke.



Here are seven tips for detoxifying in the garden.

A visit to a garden, your own, your friend's, or a formal botanical park, will infuse your spirit and your body with serenity.

*A garden is a place where great changes occur.* Plant life does not seem to move in a garden, but there is constant movement and renewal. Similarly, we can make small changes, one step at a time. We can do so without the pressure of time, at a slower, more natural pace. Plant life knows how to let go of the past. A plant dies in the winter and regenerates in the spring with no past consciousness—just a fresh, new life growing towards the sun. If we learn to let go of resentment, anger, and negativity, we make room for abundance in our lives. Like a tree, we grow towards the light.

*A garden provides a wonderful setting for meditation.* Hard work and dreams combine to teach us to bring out the best in ourselves. The universe's handwriting is found in every garden: it is up to us to read the messages. Meditation helps us to get in touch with the still point within. When we meditate, we watch our worries float by without judgment. We become receptive to inspiration as nature permeates our senses.

*Everything growing in the earth began at the seed level.* We heal from the seed level as well—from the inside out. If our thinking and spirit are balanced and positive, we stay healthy or heal quickly. In order to heal disease, we need to approach it from underground, the internal spiritual and emotional causes for stress-induced illnesses. Gardening complements a comprehensive fitness program.

*Exercise sheds harmful stress hormones, raises endorphins, and helps us think more clearly.* Walking, stretching, finger dexterity, balance, strength, isometric positions, and core stability are experienced in gardening. In other words, contraction, expansion, elongation, and rest, all necessary building blocks for a sound mind in a sound body, parallel the components of plant life.

*Simplify your existence and clean out the clutter.* Zen philosophy teaches that all of nature is housed in a flower. When you appreciate a flower with your five senses, being fully present in your awareness—not worrying about children, parents, or coworkers—then you are fully in the moment and stress-free. Appreciating the little things in life provides the key to happiness.

*Adjust your biorhythms to nature to release stress.* Technology has enabled us to work all hours of the night in unnatural light. However, if we let nature be our guide, the way gardeners do, we would honor the darkness and rest. In fall and winter, the days are shorter, so we wind down at night and get more sleep. The trees lose their leaves, telling us to simplify and organize. In winter we contract and take stock of ourselves. In spring there is a different vibrational energy as we spring into action, teeming with activity, enjoying increased daylight. Summer makes us hot and lazy and we wind down to take those long weekends away from work. When we visit a garden during the four seasons, we appreciate the changes and absorb the corresponding mindsets. Remember, human nature got its start in a garden.

(Source: Debbie Mandel, author of *Turn On Your Inner Light: Fitness for Body, Mind and Soul*, is a stress-reduction specialist, motivational speaker, personal trainer, mind/body lecturer and radio talk show host. <http://www.turnonyourinnerlight.com>)

## FINANCES

### Milking Cash Cows

If your cash account at your investment firm has a current yield around 2 percent, you're getting only \$2,000 a year on \$100,000. Push that up to 3 percent and you'll pocket an extra \$1,000.

Here are some strategies for cashing in:

- Get the pick of the pack. Many mutual fund companies have several money market accounts. Go for the one with the highest yield.
- Mass your money. You may discover that the sum of your accounts meets the higher minimums that entitle you to a higher yield at many financial institutions. Consolidating accounts with one broker or fund company also will make it easier to manage the paperwork.
- Think about tax-exempts. Depending on your tax bracket, you might wind up with more cash after tax by investing in municipal money market accounts.
- Ratchet up your risk. An ultra-short bond fund, for example, might boost your return by about one percentage point, versus a pure cash holding one. Ultra-short funds have some principal risk but they tend to be fairly stable.

(Source: <http://www.fedweek.com>)



### Questions/comments to:

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