Attitude 101

John Maxwell

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How Does Attitude Impact Leadership?

- Talent is not enough to bring success to a team
- It takes more than talented people to win
- Good attitudes among players do not guarantee a team’s success, but bad attitudes guarantee its failure

Five truths about leadership clarify how they affect a leader’s team

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1. Attitudes have the power to lift up or tear down a team:

- The winner’s edge is in the attitude, not aptitude

Abilities + Attitudes = Result

Great talent + Rotten attitudes = Bad team
Great talent + Bad attitudes = Average team
Great talent + Average attitudes = Good team
Great talent + Good attitudes = Great team

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2. An attitude compounds when exposed to others
   □ People become inspired by their peers

3. Bad attitudes compound faster than good ones
   □ Negative attitude hurts rather than helps

4. Attitudes are subjective
   □ Really how a person is
   □ Overflows into how he or she acts

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5. Rotten attitudes left alone, ruin everything

- Cause dissension, resentment, combativeness

President Thomas Jefferson remarked, “Nothing can stop the man with the right attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude”
How Does Attitude Impact An Individual?

- Attitude determines success or failure
  - For some, attitude presents a difficulty in every opportunity; for others it presents an opportunity in every difficulty

- Six axioms about attitude – impact on a person’s life:
  1. Our attitude determines our approach to life
  2. Our attitude determines our people relationships
  3. Our attitude - difference between success and failure
  4. Our attitude affects the outcome more than anything

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5. Our attitude can turn our problems into blessings
6. Our attitude can give us a positive perspective
What Shapes A Person’s Attitude?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-birth</td>
<td>Inherent personality / temperament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birth:</td>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Ages 1 to 6:</td>
<td>Word expression / adult affirmation</td>
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<td>Ages 7 to 10:</td>
<td>Self-image / exposure to new experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ages 11 to 21:</td>
<td>Peers, physical appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages 22 to 61:</td>
<td>Family, job, success / assessment of life</td>
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Personality – who I am?
- All people are born as distinct individuals
- Develop specific attitudes common to their temperament

Environment – what’s around me?
- May be more significant than our personality
- Develops a person’s “belief system”

Word expression – what I hear
- The inward pain of hurtful words remains with us
▪ Adult acceptance / affirmation – what I feel
  □ People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care
  □ Think back – who was your favorite teacher?
▪ Self-image – how I see my self
  □ We usually act in direct response to our self-image
  □ If we like ourselves, it increases odds others will
▪ Exposure to new experiences - opportunities for growth
  □ Prepare for positive encounters – build confidence

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Association with peers – who influences me
  □ What you become in ten years will be determined by what you read and who you associate with

Physical appearance – how we look to others
  □ Physical attractiveness – helps determine our income
  □ Physical appearance impacts a person’s attitude

Marriage, family, job – our security and status
  □ Surround yourself with positive people

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Can an Attitude Be Changed?

- Who we are today is the result of choices we made yesterday
- Tomorrow we will become what we choose today

Choice #1:
- Evaluate your present attitude
  - Identify problem feelings
  - Identify problem behavior
  - Identify problem thinking
  - Clarify truth
  - Secure commitment
  - Plan and carry out your choice

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Choice #2:

- Realize that faith is stronger than fear
  - Believe that you can change

Choice #3:

- Write a statement of purpose
  - What do you desire to accomplish each day
  - Reach out to an encouraging friend

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Eliminate these words completely
I can’t
If
Doubt
I don’t think
I don’t have the time
Maybe
I’m afraid of

Make these words part of your vocabulary
I can
I will
Expect the best
I know
I will make the time
Positively
I am confident

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Eliminate these words completely
I don’t believe
(minimize) I
It’s impossible

Make these words part of your vocabulary
I do believe
(promote) you
All things are possible

A wise person follows up on what he or she hears while a foolish person knows but does not act

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Choice #4:
- □ Have the desire to change
  - Fall in love with the challenge of change

Choice #5:
- □ Live one day at a time
  - It is not the experiences of today that drive people to distraction;
  - It is the remorse or bitterness for something that happened yesterday and the dread of what tomorrow may bring

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Choice #6:

- Change your thought patterns
  - Our thought life, not our circumstances, determine our happiness

Choice #7:

- Develop your habits
  - An attitude is nothing more than a habit of thought
  - Once original cause of a habit is determined – it’s within your power to accept or reject it
Choice #8:

- Continually choose to have a right attitude
  - Old habits are hard to break
  - Develop a life that continually focuses on growing and maintaining the right outlook

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Can Obstacles Actually Enhance an Attitude?

- The greatest battle you wage against failure occurs on the inside, not the outside.
- In order to achieve your dreams, you must embrace adversity and make failure a regular part of your life. If you’re failing, you’re probably not really moving forward.
- The process of achievement comes through repeated and the constant struggle to climb to a higher level.

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The benefits of adversity:

- **Adversity creates resilience**
  - Experiencing failure at an early age better prepares someone to deal with failures later on in life

- **Adversity develops maturity**
  - Don’t let adversity make you bitter
  - The problems we face and overcome prepare us for future difficulties
  - Maturity with flexibility becomes important

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Adversity pushes the envelope of accepted performance

- Each failure makes you able to risk more
- Once we understand we can live through adversity we then can challenge ourselves to press the limits

Adversity provides greater opportunities

- Every entrepreneur I’ve met has numerous stories of adversity and setbacks that opened doors to greater opportunity
Adversity prompts innovation

- If you want to succeed, you have to learn to make adjustments to the way you do things and try again

Adversity brings unexpected benefits

- Some of the greatest stories of success can be found in the unexpected benefits of mistakes
- “In science, mistakes always precede the truth”
  Horace Walpole

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Adversity motivates

- If you try something daring and survive, think about what you learned about yourself – and how it will help you take on new challenge

- Always measure an obstacle next to the size of the dream you’re pursuing
What is Failure?
Every successful person is someone who failed, yet never regarded himself or herself as a failure - you have to meet failure with the right attitude

Thomas Edison, the most prolific inventor in history, was considered unteachable as a youngster

Albert Einstein, a genius, was told by a teacher that he would “never amount to much”

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Seven Abilities Needed To Fail Forward

1. Reject rejection
   □ To keep the right perspective, take responsibility for your actions, but don’t take failure personally

2. See failure as temporary
   □ In 1922 he was 38 years old, in debt, and out of work – in 1945 Harry Truman became president of the USA

3. See failures as isolated incidents
   □ When achievers fail, they see it as a momentary event, not a lifelong epidemic – it’s not personal

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4. Keep expectations realistic
   □ If you intend to climb Mt. Everest you will face many setbacks

5. Focus on strengths
   □ “What distinguishes winners from losers is that winners concentrate at all times on what they can do, not on what they can’t do

6. Vary approaches to achievement
   □ Trying and changing until something works

7. Bounce back
   □ Learn from your mistakes – don’t take it personally

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What is Success?
“Attitude determines how far you can go on the success journey”

- The most common misconceptions about success:
  - Wealth
    - Does not bring contentment or success
  - A special feeling
    - If you make happiness your goal, you are destined to fail

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Specific and worthwhile possessions

- Possessions are at best a temporary fix

Power

- Neither positive or negative
- Not the source of security or success

Achievement

- It’s not reaching a destination
- Success is a journey

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The Right Attitude About Success

- Two things are required to be successful:
  - The right attitude
  - The right principles for getting there

- The definition of success:
  - Knowing your purpose in life
  - Growing to reach your maximum potential
  - Sowing seeds that benefit others

You see success as a journey, you’ll never have the prob. of trying to arrive at an elusive destination

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