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**MAKING THE MOST FROM YOUR "BAD ATTITUDE"**

**By Mary Anne Hahn**

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To everyone who has ever been told at work that you have a "bad attitude," I have a little story I'd like to share that might make your day.

At age seventeen, I received my first job-related disciplinary action for my "attitude," simply because I wanted to go to a football game.

By that time I'd worked at the fast food restaurant for over a year. I'd established myself as a reliable and hard worker, punctual, flexible and eager to learn new things. I never hesitated to come in when someone else called in sick, stayed late if needed, and tried my darnedest to be a model employee.

But I wanted badly to go to that football game. My high school's team would be facing its arch rival, which had soundly beaten us the year before. Well in advance, I asked to have the Saturday of the game off. My manager said he'd see, but couldn't make any promises.

He ended up scheduling me to work that day anyway. Determined not to miss something that mattered so much to me, I took it upon myself to switch schedules with a co-worker. I made it to the game (which we won, by the way), confident that I had not let my place of employment down.

My manager saw it differently. As retribution, he took me entirely off the work schedule for the following week, a terrible price to pay for a kid who was saving half of every paycheck for college. Undaunted, I used the free time to find another, better paying, part time job.

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As it turns out, this was the first in a series of work-related incidents over a span of 25 years in which I'd get singled out by bosses for having a "bad attitude." And for most of that time, I accepted that label, and felt I deserved it. Why else would it keep happening if it wasn't due to some character flaw that seemed to stymie any chance I'd have to succeed in the working world?

Still, the pattern concerned and baffled me, so I finally decided to analyze it. Had I ever been reprimanded for poor attendance or punctuality? No. Was I ever disciplined for failure to do the job for which I'd been hired? Nada—in fact, I always tried to excel at

everything I tackled. Did I rub co-workers the wrong way? Not as a rule; I've made many friends in the jobs I've held, a number of whom remain friends long after I moved onto other employment.

Had I ever done anything illegal or unethical on the job? Ever spoke ill of any of my employers? Ever performed in a way that would cost a company money or customers? Absolutely not. My work ethic was such that I always gave 110 percent, always tried to do what was best for the companies where I worked, and prided myself on seeing, suggesting and implementing improvements.

So what was my problem?

And then it finally occurred to me. It wasn't *\*my\** problem at all.

I'd figured out the pattern at last. Every time I got "sent to the principal's office," (the phrase I began to use whenever I was called in for one of those chats with the boss), it was a result of my frustration with what I felt was my company's short-sightedness. I'd rebel against silly rules, get discouraged when people whose greatest talent involved kissing butt were promoted, and yearn for compensation and perks commensurate with my contributions.

If I was willing to give 110 percent to my employer, it seemed reasonable to want 110 percent in return. Time and time again, I met with disappointment. And time and time again, my frustration with the status quo would get me into hot water with the boss.

What I failed to realize all along was that I was in fact Don Quixote, tilting at windmills. My initiative, my enthusiasm and my dedication weren't character flaws at all. They were merely misplaced.

The day I realized this was the day I decided, once and for all,

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to redirect my focus into starting and building my own business.

On that day, my frustration disappeared. I stopped wasting my time and talent butting my head against brick walls, and began to use them to build the foundation of my own dreams instead.

You see, I never had a "bad attitude" at all—simply a "right attitude" in a wrong work environment.

So, you've been told you have a bad attitude? Terrific!  
Use it to determine your own future and fuel your success.

Mary Anne Hahn is a freelance writer who wants to encourage others to follow their dreams. She is

also editor and publisher of WriteSuccess, the ezine of ideas, information and inspiration for people who want SUCCESSFUL writing careers. To subscribe, <mailto:writesuccess-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>

### **Give Your Attitude A Little Altitude**

**By Michael Dixon**

Need a way to make your life a better place to live?

Life is our perception of what it is, not necessarily the reality of what it is.

Let's see if I can explain that. Life can sometimes be great, and at other times, not so great. It all depends on how we are feeling at the time. If we feel good, life is good. If we feel bad, life is a bummer.

The reality is life hasn't changed at all, only our attitude. If we want to improve life we must first improve our attitude about life.

Put a smile on your face and keep it there. It is impossible to feel bad when you are smiling.

Smile every time you look in a mirror.

Smile at people when they enter your office, home, or wherever. Smile at those you meet on the street.

Smile when you answer the phone and throughout the conversation.

Smile NOW!

Feel your attitude gaining altitude?

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When someone ask "How are you?", smile and say "I feel great, and you?" This is very important, especially when you are feeling bad. The more often you say it, the easier it is for you to believe it yourself.

Think about the things that make you feel good and make a list. Now, try to do as many of the things on the list as possible every single day. You won't have time for the things that make you feel bad.

Take time to help someone out. Kindness is its own reward. When you are kind to others, they are kind to you. Smile and they will smile. Spread the smile virus.

Remove "No" from your vocabulary, right along with "can't, won't, shouldn't, wouldn't, etc. Get the picture? Now you have to say yes.

Still feel bad?

Go for a long walk, smiling and greeting everyone you meet. I guarantee you that by the time you return, you won't feel bad any longer.

I'm smiling as I say, "Have a great day!" :-)

Michael Dixon is the owner and webmaster of Partner-n-Profit.com,

and

several other sites. He publishes a weekly newsletter dedicated to helping the beginning online entrepreneur.

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