



# COATS

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## Attitude matters: Part 3 of 3

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Find meaning in your goals to turn y

LAST Friday, in Part 2 of this series, we looked at why having the right attitude matters.

Today's article discusses how to change your negative attitude into a positive one.

Imagine working in a call centre and calling the alumni of a university for donations and getting rejected 99 per cent of the time. Who can have a positive attitude in such a situation?

No wonder the turnover rate at the call centre in an American university was exceeding 400 per cent.

Unable to contain the problem, the management decided to call Dr Adam Grant, a professor at Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr Grant did something that dramatically changed the attitudes of the staff.

He invited Emily, a former student and a beneficiary of the funds collected by the call centre staff, to the centre. She gave a five-minute speech, thanking the centre staff and telling them how much their work had made a difference to her career and life.

The impact was amazing – employees who listened to Emily's speech made more calls per hour and garnered a 400 per cent increase in the money raised.

What had happened?

The same work that appeared to be a thankless, dull chore (negative attitude) had turned into a meaningful endeavour (positive attitude). Like a switch, the attitudes had flipped, leading to a boost in actions, productivity and results.

What about your attitudes in situations where you are not happy with the results?

### Three keys to changing attitudes

#### 1 Uncover the roots

When you walk in a garden, you see plants all around you, but not the roots feeding those plants.

Similarly, when you are stuck in a rut, all you can see is the unwanted situation and the failure, but not what lies at the root of it: behaviour, attitude and beliefs.

Answering a few pertinent questions is enough to uncover the roots of any situation as well as the chain of causes leading to it.

Here is an example:

#### Situation: What's happening?

*I am not happy with my job. I feel stuck.*

#### Behaviour: What physical actions are you taking?

*I am applying for new jobs, but in a half-hearted way because I lack confidence.*

#### Attitude: What's your overall attitude? How do you feel about the current situation?

*I feel negative.*

#### Beliefs and underlying reasons: What are your beliefs about the situation and the underlying reasons?

■ *There are no suitable jobs. (Reason: Because I can't see any openings.)*

■ *I don't have the right experience. (Reason: Because I was rejected in one interview.)*

■ *I am unlucky. (Reason: Because I can't get a new job.)*

Sometimes, simply taking a hard look at your shaky beliefs and negative attitude is enough to regain the power to change the attitude and situation itself.

#### 2 Disable faulty beliefs

Self-limiting beliefs are often based on

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## You can do it

Find meaning in your goals to turn your attitude around and help you move forward

### Attitude: What's your overall attitude? How do you feel about the current situation?

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- *There are no suitable jobs. (Reason: Because I can't see any openings.)*
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### 2 Disable faulty beliefs

Self-limiting beliefs are often based on

poor reasoning, which, unless challenged, will continue to feed a negative attitude.

Just as a table would collapse if its legs were broken, your unfavourable beliefs will collapse if you challenge the underlying reasons propping up those beliefs.

For example, you may believe that there are no jobs available, but this reason is highly disputable, especially if you understand that over 60 to 70 per cent of job openings are filled through word of mouth (references). Your real problem may be that you do not network enough.

How can you conclude that your work experience is not enough based on one interview? What do you mean by being unlucky?

Go on questioning and cut the legs off each faulty belief.

### 3 Feed on the right attitude

How does it feel to interact with a cheerful, positive and reassuring doctor versus a

serious, negative and uncaring one?

Doesn't it affect your own mood and attitude towards your illness?

Similarly, what's the impact of working with a colleague who is energised, motivated and committed? Wouldn't you feel the same way?

Attitudes are contagious. If you keep company with people who have positive, upbeat and optimistic attitudes towards life, your own attitude will slowly align with theirs.

Next time, if you face a situation that you don't like and would like to bring about change, remember the situation and your attitude are not separate.

Changing your attitude can make a world of difference.

Article by Atul Mathur, an engineer and an ACTA-certified trainer. He will be conducting a workshop "Attitude: Your Ultimate Qualification" on May 3. For details, visit [www.atulmathur.com](http://www.atulmathur.com) or e-mail [atul@atulmathur.com](mailto:atul@atulmathur.com)

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