

UP Skills for Work

Attitude



Founding Sponsor



STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™

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Welcome to *UP Skills for Work!*

The program helps you build your **soft skills** which include:

- motivation
- presentation
- adaptability
- attitude
- teamwork
- stress management
- accountability
- time management
- confidence

When you have these skills, you have the foundation you need to work well with others—at work, at home, and in your community. That's part of why employers are looking for people with strong soft skills!



Soft skills are ways of acting or thinking that make it easier to work well with other people. Sometimes they're called "people skills."

This workshop

Our attitude has a big impact on how we work with other people.

In this workshop, we'll explore what attitude means to us, and why it's important. We'll learn how we show our attitude through our actions, tone and body language. We'll also talk about how to work through all the challenges to having a good attitude when we're at work.

Partners in development of *UP Skills for Work:*

Futureworx



What is attitude?

Think about the word **attitude**.

We hear people say, “They’ve got a good attitude” all the time. What do you think of when you hear that? What’s that person like?

What about hearing, “They’ve got a bad attitude?” Does it change how you think about this person?



Attitude is how you show your thoughts or feelings through your words and actions.

Attitude is more complicated than "good attitude" or "bad attitude." Our attitudes change, depending on where we are, what we’re doing, and who we’re with. Our attitude can change with our mood and feelings, too! No one has the same attitude all the time.



Let’s talk about it

- What does attitude mean to you?
- Does it mean something different at home than at work, or in the community?
- What’s the best thing about a good attitude? In yourself, and in the people you know?
- Why can it be hard to have a good attitude?

A place for your notes:



Getting started

Check the statement that sounds most like you.

- My attitude is great. I always act the right way for the situation I'm in.
- My attitude is pretty good. I work hard to keep a good attitude when I'm in a bad mood.
- When I'm feeling great, my attitude is great! When I'm not in a good mood, though, everybody knows it.
- I don't think much about my attitude.
- None of the above. Here's my situation:



A place for your notes:



Why is attitude important?

Remember, your attitude isn't your mood or feelings. It's how you show your mood and feelings. It's how you react to what is happening around you.

We can't always control how we're feeling, but we can control how we speak and act with other people. That's taking control of our attitude.

Your attitude affects more than just you. It affects everyone you're with: friends, family, coworkers and clients. It affects whether people want to be around you, and how they feel about it when they are. Attitude has a big impact on our relationships.



Meet Gervais

Gervais works with elderly people at a seniors' residence. No matter what his mood is when he gets to work, Gervais smiles and laughs with the seniors. He remembers to lean in close to speak with them so that he can be heard.



Let's talk about it

- How would you describe Gervais's attitude?
- What do you think his clients think of him? What do his colleagues think? His boss?
- Would you want to work with Gervais? Why or why not?

A place for your notes:



Attitude at work

What does a good attitude look and sound like to an employer?
A coworker?

How would they know if someone has a bad attitude?

Use the table below to write down a couple of examples of good and bad attitudes at work. What do people say or do to show their attitude at work?

	Good attitude	Bad attitude
Looks like this		
Sounds like this		

A place for your notes:



Tone and body language

Attitude is about more than what we say. It is also **how** we say it. You can clearly express your attitude through your **body language**. Or, you can understand a person's attitude about something by listening to their **tone** of voice.

Understanding how your tone and body language show what you are thinking is very important. Sometimes, for example, your words may be positive, but your tone or body language is negative. If you know how to **read someone's** tone and body language, you will be able to better understand what they really feel.



Body language is showing how you feel through movements and gestures.

Tone is the way you speak to someone. It's how your emotions come through in your voice.

Reading someone is understanding their emotions through their tone or body language.



Meet Carole

Carole is looking for work. She has been to a few interviews, but has had no job offers yet. She tries to answer interviewers' questions as well as she can. She feels nervous, though, so sometimes she looks more at the floor than at the person who is interviewing her. Or she plays with her hair, or taps her foot on the floor over and over again.



Let's talk about it

- How would you describe Carole's body language during interviews?
- How do you think an interviewer might read her body language?



Reading other people

Reading other people's moods and feelings can be difficult! And so can showing our moods and feelings to others. One can look a lot like another. What's clear to you might not be clear to someone else.

Take a look at this list of feelings:

- Bored
- Excited
- Sad
- Angry
- Proud
- Frustrated
- Thoughtful
- Guilty
- Disappointed
- Friendly
- Stressed out
- Tired
- Relaxed
- Confused

Take turns picking a feeling on the list and acting it out for the group. Can everyone guess the right emotion?



Let's talk about it

- Which emotions were the easiest to act out? Which ones were the hardest?
- Which ones were the easiest to guess? The hardest?
- Which tones or body language made guessing easier?

A place for your notes:



Challenges to good attitude

The biggest challenge to a good attitude at work is when our mood really doesn't match up with how we should act. It happens a lot! No one is in a good mood all the time. We come to work angry, or frustrated, or sad, or worried. Or something happens at work to put us in a bad mood. How can we keep control of our attitudes when that happens?



Let's talk about it

Think about the situations below.

- Your boss comes into the lunchroom where you and your coworkers are eating. He says that there is an emergency and that you will all need to work late that day.
- You and a coworker have both been nominated for a customer service award. You learn that she won it.
- You get to work on time every day. Your coworker is always late, and she sometimes leaves early too. Your boss doesn't notice what is happening.

How would you feel in each of these situations? How would that make you want to act? How do you think you should act?

Have you ever been in a situation like one of these before?
What did you do?

A place for your notes:



Meet Xin

Xin was very excited when he got a job as a roofer for a construction company. He worked hard to learn everything he needed to know. He came to work every day feeling positive about his job, and about the other kinds of work he hopes to do at the company one day.

One day, at a new job site, five new roofers join his crew. Two of them have more experience than Xin, and they have also worked on more kinds of projects than he has. Over the next couple of weeks, these two coworkers are given more responsibility than Xin, and their boss tells them that they can learn about other kinds of construction work soon, too. Xin begins to feel like he's being left out of new opportunities at work, and that he might not get a chance to do the other kinds of work he wants to do. He feels discouraged and frustrated.



Let's talk about it

- What could Xin's behaviour look like if he had a bad attitude? What could that look like to his coworkers, or to his boss?
- What if Xin keeps his good attitude, even in this challenging situation? What could that look like to his coworkers? To his boss?
- How can Xin balance being honest about how he's feeling, and also keep a good attitude at work?

A place for your notes:



Working with emotional triggers

Our feelings aren't always logical. Sometimes, something happens and we feel a strong emotion right away. It could have nothing to do with what's actually going on, or who's in the room with us. It might be one of our **triggers**.



A **trigger** is something that makes you feel the same strong emotion every time it comes up. A trigger can be an event, or a tone of voice, or even a gesture or movement.

Why care about triggers?

If we act on a strong negative feeling that doesn't have anything to do with the people around us, it can hurt our relationships. It can also hurt how well we do our jobs, or even how we feel about ourselves.

Knowing what our triggers are can be a big help in managing our attitudes. We can:

- Identify the trigger
- Take a step back
- Think about what's happening
- Pick the right attitude for this moment

A place for your notes:



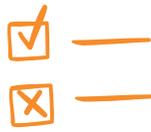
Use the table below to think about a few triggers. How can you tell when your feelings are being triggered? How can you make sure your actions match the situation?

Trigger	Warning sign	Reaction I normally have	Reaction I should have



Let's talk about it

Let's say there's a trigger that you're trying to manage, because it's affecting your work. Could you talk about it with your coworkers, or your boss? How could you start that conversation? Do you think having that conversation would help how your boss and coworkers see your attitude?



Attitude setbacks

So you've had a bad attitude at work. Maybe it's been a long time, or maybe it was just for a day or even a moment. It's okay. **Setbacks** happen to everyone when it comes to having a good attitude. What's important is getting back on track.



Setback: A problem that slows down or stops progress toward a goal.



Meet Laila

Laila works at a banquet hall as a cook. Her job can be very stressful when the hall has big weddings or meetings. During a few very busy shifts last week, she felt frustrated, and was rude to her coworkers. She didn't think much about it at the time, but they were offended. Now, even when the hall is quiet, they aren't friendly with her. She's worried. She likes her coworkers, and she needs their help to do her job well.



Let's talk about it

- What do you think about Laila's reaction to being frustrated?
- What about her coworkers' reaction to her rudeness?
- Let's say Laila doesn't change anything about her attitude at work. How do you think things will go with her coworkers? Her boss?
- Let's say Laila wants to fix things with her coworkers. What advice would you give her?



Strategies for setbacks

These strategies might help you get back on track to a good attitude.

- **Remember why a good attitude is important to you.**
Think about your goals at work, at home, and in your community. Remind yourself why you want good relationships with the people in your life.
- **Recognize your triggers.**
Plan out ahead of time how you want to react to your triggers. When you run into one, try to remember that plan. Take control of your attitude, and react to the situation that's happening right now.
- **Remember that how you feel doesn't have to be how you act.**
It's important to be true to how we're feeling. It's also important not to take our feelings out on people who have nothing to do with them.
- **Think about your role models.**
Remember the actions, tones of voice, and body language of the people you look up to. Focus on one or two that you think would make the biggest difference in your attitude.
- **Recognize every small success.**
So you've had a setback. Everyone has, at one time or another. Think about the times you've managed your attitude well, and be proud of yourself for them.
- **Attitude is a lifelong project.**
We can get better at managing our attitude, but we're never perfect at it all the time. Remember that it's a long project and there's a lot to learn about ourselves and the people in our lives. Be patient with yourself.



What's the right attitude at work?

A good attitude at work can sometimes be pretty different from a good attitude at home or in our communities. Maybe it's important to be polite at your dinner table, but your coworkers don't care about pleases or thank yous. Or it could be the opposite! And the best attitude at one workplace could be the worst attitude at another.

A good attitude depends not just on how we act, but on how other people expect us to act.

Changing situations are part of what makes attitude so complicated. Here are some tips to help figure out what attitude you need to succeed at work.

1. Think about the most important parts of your job, or the job you want.

Is it working with customers, fixing problems with your coworkers, or getting a project done on your own? Make a list.

2. Think about the actions your boss and coworkers want from a worker who's great at those important parts.

Maybe it's being patient and friendly with customers. Maybe it's being a good listener and optimistic thinker with your coworkers. Maybe it's being focused and not distracted. How can you act so that your boss sees you have the right attitude for the job?

3. Practice, practice, practice!

Try to focus on these actions when you're at work. Think about your tone of voice and body language, too. Practice keeping up a good attitude even when your mood doesn't match.

4. Take time to reflect.

As you work on changing your attitude, write down your thoughts and experiences, or talk them out with a friend or role model. Has it been hard? What successes can you celebrate? What's changed, or surprised you?



Congratulations!

You've completed the *UP Skills for Work* Attitude workbook, and taken the next step in building your soft skills. For the last activity, we hope you'll make a pledge. The **pledge** can be personal, or you can share it with others.



A **pledge** is a serious promise to yourself or to others.

My pledge

I pledge to work on my attitude by:

Sometimes a pledge needs an **action plan**.



An **action plan** is a list of steps you'll take to make your pledge happen.

My action plan

Goal	
When I will reach it	
How I will reach it	
What I need to do first	
Who will support me	
Strategies for setbacks	