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# Attitude is Everything

CTAE-FS-8 Leadership and Teamwork: Learners apply leadership and teamwork skills in collaborating with others to accomplish organizational goals and objectives. Used with permission of Career Solutions Publishing

## Understanding and Goals

### Unit Understandings, Themes, and Concepts:

#### Enduring Understandings:

Students will learn the importance of attitude and the impact it can have on them in the workplace. A positive attitude can be as important as the skills you bring to the job.

### Primary Learning Goals:

#### Essential Questions:

- Why do employers place so much value on a positive attitude so when hiring new employees?
- Which traits convey a positive attitude? What about a negative attitude?

### Students with disabilities:

For students with disabilities, each instructor should refer to the student's IEP to be sure that the accommodations specified in the IEP are being provided within the classroom setting. Instructors should also familiarize themselves with the provisions of Behavior Intervention Plans that may be part of a student's IEP. Frequent consultation with a student's special education instructor will be beneficial in providing appropriate differentiation within any given instructional activity or requirement.

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## CSP Mini-Lesson 4, Spring 2008

**Mini-Lesson Standards:** (1) Demonstrate appropriate social behaviors. (2) Interpret verbal and nonverbal messages correctly. (3) Assess self accurately, set personal goals, monitor progress.

**Mini-Lesson Correlations:** Employability, Interpersonal Relationships, Communication.

### Attitude is Everything

Employers say that the most important consideration during a job interview is attitude. And according to recent research, the biggest reason people lose their jobs is a poor attitude. One employer says, "Attitude is more important than how smart you are or how well you use your technical skills. If you have a chip on your shoulder, act like a know-it-all, or can't get along, you bring too much baggage to the job. I'll keep looking until I find an employee with a better attitude."

Attitude is the general feeling you communicate to other people—the signals you give off. What attitudes do you think the speakers on the next page are demonstrating? Match the phrases in Column 1 with the attitudes in Column 2.

## Attitude is Everything (Continued)

### Column 1

- \_\_\_1. It's not my fault!
- \_\_\_2. I'll keep trying until I get this right.
- \_\_\_3. I don't think they like me.
- \_\_\_4. I'll never be as good as they are.
- \_\_\_5. I'm the best!
- \_\_\_6. Things are going to be okay.
- \_\_\_7. I do the least I can to get by.
- \_\_\_8. My boss is a jerk!

### Column 2

- a. Disloyalty
- b. Perseverance
- c. Unmotivated
- d. Arrogance
- e. Defensiveness
- f. Optimism
- g. Insecurity
- h. Inferiority

## Attitudes are Contagious

Co-workers and other people around you react to your attitudes. If you display aggressive or hostile behavior, they may shrink away. Or if you're a complainer or a gossip, they may choose to be around more positive people. If you are cheerful, show optimism, and are cooperative, they will be drawn to you.

Read Janelle's story below. What effect do you think Janelle has on the people around her? Will the outcome of the picnic be influenced by her behavior? If so, how? Write your comments in the space provided.

## Attitudes are Contagious (Continued)

### Janelle's Story

Janelle is part of a team that is planning her company's spring picnic. She has set ideas on where she thinks the picnic should be held, what time everyone should get together, when the food should be served, where the games should be played, and which songs the band should perform. When her teammates offer other ideas on any of these topics, she raises her voice, appears annoyed, and tries to get her way. Finally, she makes a comment, "If all of you are so smart, you don't need me. I don't think I want to be on this team anymore."

Janelle's effect on her team:

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Picnic outcome affected? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If you believe the picnic will be affected, explain how. If you do not, explain why not.

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## Attitude and Your Career

Write the name of your dream job on the line below. Then list two positive and two negative attitudes and write a sentence describing how having that attitude would affect your relationships with your co-workers.

Dream job name	Effect on co-Workers	Effect on supervisor
Positive attitude		
1. <u>Energetic</u>	<u>My co-workers would be motivated by my energy.</u>	<u>My supervisor would like that I was trying hard to do a good job.</u>
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

## Attitude and Your Career (Continued)

Negative attitude	Effect on co-Workers	Effect on supervisor
1. <u>Pessimism</u>	<u>My co-workers wouldn't</u> <u>want to be around me.</u> _____	<u>My supervisor would think</u> <u>I was a bad influence on</u> <u>my co-workers.</u> _____
2. _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
3. _____	_____ _____	_____ _____

## Instructor's Guide

In a U.S. Census Bureau survey, interviewers said that an "A" grade average, outstanding knowledge and skills, and graduation from an exceptional school mean very little unless an employee demonstrates a positive attitude. Many students do not realize the impact that a poor attitude can have on their career. Expand the first activity by asking students to think of other comments they have heard that suggest a positive or negative attitude; then ask them to give a one- or two-word term to describe the attitude.

To further expand the lesson, ask students to identify one of their attitudes they would like to change and to write (privately and confidentially) why they think changing this behavior will improve their personality and their potential job success.

## Recommended Web Site

The following Web site will provide an additional opportunity to discuss attitude and personal behaviors with your students.

[http://www.umich.edu/~urecord/9900/May08\\_00/9.htm](http://www.umich.edu/~urecord/9900/May08_00/9.htm)

## Solutions to Activities

Column 1

Column 2

(Suggested answers. Other solutions may also be correct.)

__e__1.	It's not my fault!	a.	Disloyalty
__b__2.	I'll keep trying until I get this right.	b.	Perseverance
__g__3.	I don't think they like me.	c.	Unmotivated
__h__4.	I'll never be as good as they are.	d.	Arrogance
__d__5.	That's not my job.	e.	Defensiveness
__f__6.	Things are going to be okay.	f.	Optimism
__c__7.	I do the least I can to get by.	g.	Insecurity
__a__8.	My boss is a jerk!	h.	Inferiority

### Attitudes are Contagious

Janelle's teammates will feel uncomfortable and may be unwilling to make suggestions, especially those teammates who do not like confrontation. Other teammates may become angry, which could result in escalating the situation. Janelle may have good ideas that will be overlooked by her teammates because they find her arrogant and disrespectful of them. As a result of these responses to Janelle, the picnic may be less successful than it would be if everyone cooperated.



## Solutions to Activities (Continued)

### Attitude and Your Career

Student answers in this section will vary. Encourage discussion among your students.

Examples of positive attitudes may include: team player, confident, and friendly. Examples of negative attitudes may include: arrogant, stubborn, and uncooperative.

### Related Materials

This week's Mini-Lesson is similar to those you would find in *It's for Real Workplace Ethics* and *Competitive Advantage*, CSP's work ethics employability and job success curriculums.

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