

Glimpses of Personal Effectiveness: The Significance of Attitude and Attainment

Vipinkumar.V.P*, Ann Mary Jephi, Athira.P.V. and Jeethumol.T.J.

*Principal Scientist, SEETTD, CMFRI

Email*: vipincmfri@gmail.com

Relevance

Speaking the relevance of the topic, the major aim of the session is to highlight the most essential quality of positive attitude development among the trainees and thereby bringing about attainment of personal effectiveness to lead a successful and meaningful life.

Key concepts dealt: Attitude, Attainment, Behaviour and Effectiveness.

Effectiveness The word 'effectiveness' differs significantly from the word 'efficiency'. Effectiveness means 'doing the right thing' and efficiency refers to 'doing things rightly'. Both are almost appearing to be synonymous, but indeed there are a couple of differences. Any way for human beings, we normally use the terminology of effectiveness. Efficiency is a terminology generally used for machines. Here are some glimpses of personal effectiveness. Have a glance of the following remarks and the corresponding persons who really created a difference and made their presence remarkable due to their personal effectiveness.

- *A small boy-the fifth amongst the seven siblings of a poor father, as selling newspapers in a small village to earn his living. He was not exceptionally smart at school but was fascinated by religion and rockets. The first rocket he built crashed. A missile built crashed multiple times and he was made a butt of ridicule. He was the person to have scripted the space Odyssey of India single-handedly and later who became the honourable Indian President..... He was **Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam**.*
- *A man failed in business at age 21; was defeated legislative race at 22; failed again in business at 24; Overcame the death of his sweetheart at 26; Met with a nervous breakdown at 27; Lost congressional race at 34; Lost senatorial race at 45; failed in vice-president contestation at 47; Lost senatorial race at 49; finally won to be President of United States at 52and he was**Abraham Lincoln***
- *A candidate for a news broadcasters post was rejected because of his voice. He was also told that with his obnoxiously long name, he would never be famous.....He is **Amitabh Bachan***
- *When a gentleman invented a communications machine in 1876, it did not ring off the hook with calls from potential backers. After making a demonstration call, President Rutherford Hayes said, "That's an amazing invention, but who would ever want to see one of them? He*



said this to a person who made maximum inventions in the world and was none other than.....**Alexander Graham Bell**

- An ordinary man took up a number of odd jobs including being a carpenter and a coolie. He was later employed as a bus conductor. He then began to take part in stage plays. A famous Tamil film director accidentally noticed him and gave a chance in a Tamil cinema where he played a supporting role. The movie was well received and went on to win three National Awards. Later he became the evergreen superstar in Tamil.....**Rajinikanth**

- A 4 year old girl, the 20th of 22 children, contracted double pneumonia and scarlet fever at a very early age, which paralysed her left leg. Thereafter at 9 years of age she removed her leg braces and started walking without them. At 13, she decided to become a runner but kept failing miserably in all races that she entered in. She kept trying in spite of several detractors and finally started winning every race she entered and became the winner of 3 Olympic gold medals. She is**Wilma Rudolph**

- Born in India. His father was a teacher and his family didn't have money. He travelled with his family to Yemen at the age of 16 where he started his first job. After some time, he returned to India and founded his first company but things didn't go well. He was above thirty when he started his second company. Shortly his new brand became popular and within years he became a billionaire chosen to be among the top business men in Asia and his financial empire today is worth more than 60 billion dollars.....**Dhirubhai Ambani**

- A school teacher scolded a boy for not paying attention to his mathematics and for not being able to solve simple problems. She told him that he would not become anybody in life. His mother however believed in him and coached him Maths. The boy went on to become**Albert Einstein**

The above motioned magnificent personalities were the ones who never failed, but who never quitted and proved themselves to be personally effective. The average life span of a human being is 70 years i.e. 26, 500 days and in this period he consumes 60 tons of food and he breaths 23,800 times a day on an average. After finishing every breath we have to realize we are approaching graveyard. So can't we think of something productive to be done by creating a difference to improve our personal effectiveness? The most important prerequisite for improving personal effectiveness is the necessity for a self-change.

Let's quickly have the essence of education. Education is a social process or growth in the sense of producing desirable changes in the behavioural components of human behaviour, the behavioural components include knowledge, skill and attitude. There are three things to be changed for a self-change, inevitably and they are our attitude, thinking and behaviour. Components of education are teaching and learning. How we are learning? We know it is by sensory techniques. It has been proved that the comprehension through learning is like this. Reading 10 %, Hearing 20 %, Seeing 30 %, Seeing and Hearing 50 % and Doing 90 %.



Being positive in a tough work environment

We have to be aware of a couple of bullets in the surrounding environment. They are Negative work environment, other people's behaviour, Negative world view, changing environment, past experience and Determination theory. Let's look into each of these bullets.

A Totally Negative work environment

In a negative work environment, we can encounter these sorts of experiences.

- Dog eats dog . . . everyone fighting to get ahead
- No one appreciates your contributions
- Too much work . . . not enough help
- Deadlines are unrealistic
- Longer hours . . . additional work
- Budget Constraints
- Competition is eating us alive
- Poor management / direction
- Job insecurity
- Donkey Works

Behaviour of other People

We can observe these types of personalities around us. Bulldozers, Complainers, Gossipers, Patronizes, Whiners, Snipers, Backstabbers, Controllers, Snuffers, Exploders, Hypocrites etc. who make out daily routine miserable.

Changing environment

There is a widely accepted quotation that "*The only person who always likes change is a wet baby*". This is essentially because of the following aspects concerned with change. The change challenges our paradigms. It alters the way we think. It makes life more difficult for a while. It causes Stress. But we have to realize and accept an inevitable truth that Change is an ongoing fact of life.

Past experience

The past experience also might have created a story in our mind. This story will lead to another story and that will lead to another one which in turn makes everything a confusing mesh, which won't make realize the difference between fact and interpretation. Past is only to be refereed for future prospects and never live in the past.

Negative world view

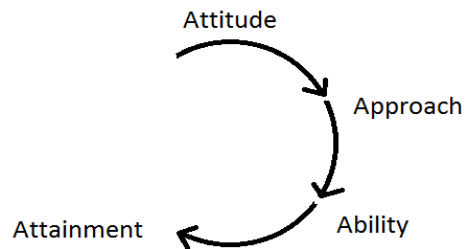
Speaking the context of negative world view, a recent Statistic says crime down 20% in America is being reported up to 600%. Because the trend is to create sensationalisation.



Look at what you are looking at! People are bothered on sensational news as the general view of the world itself has become negative. The front page of the newspapers gives the indication that to what extent people are bothered on sensational items.

Determination theory

The determinism theory makes us conclude certain items that it is none of our faults and we find excuses of our own mistakes with justification that those are due to these genetic, psychic or environmental aspects.



GENETIC: My Grandparents did it to me. (Inherited traits)

PSYCHIC: My Parents did it to me. (Upbringing)

ENVIRONMENTAL: My Teacher, My Spouse, My Boss, the Company, the Economy, etc., is doing this to me. (Surroundings)

Here is a relevant question arising concerned to Life:

“Are some people just born positive thinkers.....or is it their CHOICE?” We have two luggage here. Our task is to choose the Choose the Right Luggage: We have to either dodge bullets or wear the bullet proof armour. The problem with dodging bullets is ‘You’re definitely going to get hit! Choice 2 is wearing a bulletproof armour. Wearing the bulletproof armour comes from ‘SELF CHANGE’. So while putting on the armour. We have to change 3 Things! Attitude, Behaviour and Thinking.

Change Your Attitude.....How?

Now comes the relevance of the major crux of the topic: the ‘Attitude.’ Attitude is the positive or negative affect towards a psychological object. Attitude change happens personally from the inside out. So we have to accept our responsibility that I am responsible for who I am, for what I have and for what I do. Second step is to take control over our ownerships, values, mission and discipline.

Change Your Thinking.....How?

Changes in thinking come from observing logically in every situation. For that we have to observe our thinking and manage our self-talk. Henry Ford’s quotation is ‘If you think you can, or you think you can’t...you’re right’. When you get up in the morning, just feed your sub-conscious mind that, this is going to be a wonderful day! Automatically it can be ensured that entire activities will lead to a positive mental stage bringing about a fruitful day. Instead, when you get up and feed your sub-conscious mind that this is going to be a crappy day!, entire activities will become negative leading to a totally embarrassing situation.



Change Your Behaviour.....How?

This is a million dollar question. Telling how to change is easy, but very difficult to practice. Behaviour changes take true assessment, determination & discipline. For this we have to go for a paradigm shift from the normal reactive behaviour to a proactive/responsible behaviour. Reactive behaviour is just the normal stimulus-response behaviour. But in Proactive behaviour, in between the stimulus and response, there is 'our choice'. Untiring perseverance is required to change our habits and behaviour. Four unique human endowments are Self-Awareness, Imagination, Conscience and Independent Will.

Steps towards Changing Behaviour

This can be explained with an example of learning Car Driving.

1. Unconscious Incompetence: A boy in his childhood doesn't not what a car is and what driving is. He is unconscious and incompetent to drive a car.
2. Conscience Incompetence: As the boy grows, he knows what a car is. But not competent to drive.
3. Conscious Competence: Slowly when he learns driving skill, he is conscious about car driving and is very careful in driving without any distraction as he is consciously competent.
4. Unconscious Competence: In the final stage after expertise in car driving, he drives systematically while he talks or wave as if he is unconsciously competent in car driving. Out entire deeds and activities should reach to this stage for personal effectiveness to emerge as a new personality.

So influence your environment by adding positive behaviour

- Replace the bad habits!
- Spread a SMILE around
- Sprinkle some "positive" on the "negatives"
- Focus on the good of each day
- Stay out of the "feeding frenzies"
- Say "please" and "thank you"
- Practice *EMPATHY*
- Evaluate *YOUR* behaviour
- Never miss an opportunity to complement
- Before you say anything to anyone, ask yourself three things: Is it true? 2. Is it harmful? 3. Is it necessary?
- Keep promises
- Have a forgiving view of people
- Keep an open mind with changes
- Count to 100 if necessary
- See criticism as opportunity to improve
- Cultivate your sense of humour



Relationship between Attitude and Behaviour

The effect of attitudes on behavior is a growing research enterprise within Psychology. Icek Ajzen has led research and helped develop two prominent theoretical approaches within this field: the theory of reasoned action and, its theoretical descendant, the theory of planned behavior. Both theories help explain the link between attitude and behavior as a controlled and deliberative process.

Theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) is a model for the prediction of behavioral intention, spanning predictions of attitude and predictions of behavior. The subsequent separation of behavioral intention from behavior allows for explanation of limiting factors on attitudinal influence. The theory derived from previous research that started out as the theory of attitude, which led to the study of attitude and behavior. The theory was "born largely out of frustration with traditional attitude-behavior research, much of which found weak correlations between attitude measures and performance of volitional behaviors".

Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior was proposed by Icek Ajzen in 1985 through his article "From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior." The theory was developed from the theory of reasoned action, which was proposed by Martin Fishbein together with Icek Ajzen in 1975. The theory of reasoned action was in turn grounded in various theories of attitude such as learning theories, expectancy-value theories, consistency theories, and attribution theory. According to the theory of reasoned action, if people evaluate the suggested behavior as positive (attitude), and if they think their significant others want them to perform the behavior (subjective norm), this results in a higher intention (motivation) and they are more likely to do so. A high correlation of attitudes and subjective norms to behavioral intention, and subsequently to behavior, has been confirmed in many studies. The theory of planned behavior contains the same component as the theory of reasoned action, but adds the component of perceived behavioral control to account for barriers outside one's own control.

Have a look at a very interesting quotation '*Watch your definitions.....they become thoughts, Watch your thoughts..... They become words, Watch your words they become actions, Watch your actions.....they become your destiny.*'

The choice is yours, i.e., with a bad attitude, we can never have a positive day and with a positive attitude, we can never have a bad day.

Choose POSITIVE Living.

When you have two choices in a natural motivator's case study, the choice you opt will decide your behaviour.



"Each morning I wake up and say to myself, I have two choices today. I can choose to be in a good mood or I can choose to be in a bad mood."

"I always choose to be in a good mood."

"Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be victim or I can choose to learn from it".

"I always choose to learn from it."

'Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life'.

'I always choose the positive side of life'.

So 'Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk every situation is a choice".

- You choose how you react to situations.
- You choose how people will affect your mood.
- You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood.
- It's your choice how you live your life.

I chose it, because I chose itBe happy.....

These positive changes in thinking, attitude and behaviour are inevitable for leadership. Leadership is to be observed in a broader perspective compared to management. Because management consists of planning, organizing, leading and controlling and is obvious that leadership is one of the functions of management. It is the degree to which a person can influence other people's behaviour in a desirable way. Inculcating this leadership quality is of paramount significance for personal effectiveness. For that a paradigm shift to a proactive behaviour is mandatory. In the proactive model, our choice is there between the stimulus and response and this freedom to choose is based on our self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent will.

Here are some of the habits of highly effective people.

- **Being Proactive:** Proactive people take responsibility for their own lives. They determine the agendas they will follow and choose their response to what happens around them. On the contrary, Reactive people don't take responsibility for their own lives. They feel victimized, a product of circumstances, their past, and other people. They do not see as the creative force of their lives.
- **Beginning with the End in Mind:** These people use personal vision, correct principles, and their deep sense of personal meaning to accomplish tasks in a positive and effective way. They live based on self-chosen values and are guided by their personal mission statement. But those beginning with no end in mind, lack personal vision and have not developed a deep sense of personal meaning and purpose. They have not paid the price to develop a mission statement and thus live life based on society's values instead of self-chosen values.



- **Putting First Things First:** These people exercise discipline, and they plan and execute according to priorities. They also “walk their talk”. On the other hand, those putting second things first are crisis managers who are unable to stay focused on high-leverage tasks because of their preoccupation with circumstances, their past, or other people. They are caught up in the “thick of thin things” and are driven by the urgent.
- **Thinking Win-Win:** These people have an abundance mentality and the spirit of cooperation. They achieve effective communication and high trust levels in their emotional bank accounts with others, resulting in rewarding relationships and greater power to influence. But those thinking Win-Lose or Lose-Win, have a scarcity mentality and see life as a zero-sum game. They have ineffective communication skills and low trust levels in their emotional bank accounts with others, resulting in a defensive mentality and adversarial feelings.
- **Seeking First to Understand, Then to Be Understood:** Through perceptive observation and empathic listening, these non-judgmental people are intent on learning the needs, interests, and concerns of others. They are then able to courageously state their own needs and wants. But those seeking first to be understood, put forth their point of view based solely on their auto-biography and motives, without attempting to understand others first. They blindly prescribe without first diagnosing the problem.
- **Synergizing:** Effective people know that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. They value and benefit from differences in others, which results in creative cooperation and team-work. . Ineffective people believe the whole is less than the sum of the parts which ultimately results in Compromise, fight or flight. They try to “clone” other people in their own image. Differences in others are looked upon as threats.
- **Sharpening the Saw:** Effective people are involved in self-renewal and self-improvement in the physical, mental, spiritual, and social-emotional areas, which enhance all areas off their life and nurture the other six habits. Ineffective people fall back, lose their interest, and get disordered and they wear out the saw. They lack a program of self-renewal and self-improvement and eventually lose the cutting edge they once had.

Have a look at the comparisons between personally effective people and ineffective people, better to say, Winners Vs Losers.

Winners Vs Losers

- Winner is always part of the answer and loser is always part of the problem.
- Winner always has a programme and loser always has an excuse.
- Winner says ‘let me do it for you’ and loser says ‘that is not my job’.
- Winner sees an answer for every problem and loser sees a problem for every answer.
- Winner says ‘it may be difficult but it is possible’ and loser sys ‘it may be possible by it may be too difficult’



- Winner when makes a mistake says ‘I was wrong’ and loser says ‘It wasn’t my fault’
- Winner makes commitments and loser makes promises
- Winner has dreams and loser has schemes.
- Winner says ‘I must do something’ and loser says ‘something must be done’.
- Winner is a part of the team and loser is apart from the team.
- Winner sees the gain and loser sees the pain.
- Winner sees possibilities and loser sees problems.
- Winner believes in win-win and loser believes for him to win someone has to lose.
- Winner sees the potential and loser sees the past.
- Winner is like a thermostat and loser is like a thermometer.
- Winner chooses what he says and loser says what he chooses.
- Winner uses hard arguments but soft words and loser uses soft arguments but hard words.
- Winner stands firm on values but compromises on petty things and loser stands firm on petty things but compromises on values.
- Winner follows the philosophy ‘do it to others before they do it to you’ and loser doesn’t follow this.
- Winner makes it happen and loser lets it happen.
- Winner plans and prepares to win and loser never does it.

These highlight a point that Preparation is the key word for winning to be personally effective. Preparation is not an easy task. Have a glance on easy and hard things.

Easy Vs Hard

- Bad is easy.....Good is hard.
- Losing is easyWinning is hard.
- Talking is easyListening is hard.
- Watching TV is easyReading is hard.
- Giving advice is easyTaking advice is hard.
- Flab is easyMuscle is hard.
- Stop is easyGo is hard.
- Dirty is easyClean is hard.
- Take is easyGive is hard.
- Dream is easyThink is hard.
- Lying is easyTruth is hard.
- Sleeping is easyWaking is hard.
- Taking about God is easyPray to God is hard.
- Holding a grudge is easyForgiving is hard.
- Telling a secret is easyKeeping a secret is hard.
- Play is easyWork is hard.
- Falling is easyGetting up is hard.
- Spending is easySaving is hard.
- Eating is easyDieting is hard.
- Doubt is easyFaith is hard.
- Laughter is easyTears are hard.
- Criticizing is easy Taking criticism is hard.
- Letting go is easyHanging on is hard.



Secret sin is easyConfession is hard.
Pride is easyHumility is hard.
Excusing oneself is easy Excusing others is hard.
Borrowing is easy Playing back is hard.
Sex is easy Love is hard.
Argument is easy Negotiation is hard.
Naughty is easyNice is hard.
Going along is easyWalking alone is hard.
Dumb is easySmart is hard.
Cowardice is easyBravery is hard.
Messy is easy Neat is hard.
War is easy Peace is hard.
Sarcasm is easySincerity is hard.
An F is easy An A is hard.
Growing weeds is easy Growing flowers is hard.
Reaction is easyAction is hard.
Can't do is easy Can do is hard.
Feasting is easy Fasting is hard.
Following is easy Leading is hard.
Having friend is easyBeing a friend is hard.
Dying is easyLiving is hard.
Being an ineffective person is easyBeing an effective person is hard.

A few glimpses on personal effectiveness are given in this article as tips and by inculcating these habits through untiring perseverance our personal effectiveness can be improved in terms of attitude change and attainment of success. However it is in our hands to make use of our maximum potential.

Practical Exercise:

A practical exercise on filling a schedule can be advocated which can make a true assessment of the score on Personal Effectiveness based on the remarks of trainees.

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