

**** Self-Esteem in the Workplace * ***

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What is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem is the value we place on ourselves and the feelings we have toward ourselves.

If we have high self-esteem, we accept ourselves for who we are.

- We take responsibility for every aspect of our lives and spend less time blaming others.
- We accept the faults and imperfections of others like our bosses, co-workers and subordinates.
- We are less affected by others opinions.
- We are in control of our emotions so will react better to stressful situations.
- We are more confident and more willing to challenge ourselves

If We Have Low Self-Esteem, We Feel We Have Little Worth.

- We tend not to take risks such as asking for a raise, promotion or taking advancement exams.
- We tend to seek the approval of others.
- We tend to be more jealous and envious of others advancement, money and success.
- We blame others for things that happen to us.
- We are threatened by co-workers and will tend to be angry toward them.

Why We Have Low Self-Esteem?

- Parents, spouses, siblings always make us feel inadequate.
- Co-workers and bosses knock you down to gain an edge.
- Social codes may make you feel like you can't get ahead.
- We don't accept what and where we are in life.

Changing Our Self-Esteem

Changing your self-esteem comes with changing your beliefs about yourself.

Two powerful tools you can use are affirmations and visualization:

Affirmations:

Positive statements we review to ourselves on a regular basis until we think they are true.

Examples:

- My boss isn't any better than I am. He/she is just another person in this world and I am just as good as they are.
- I am going to get that promotion because I deserve it as much as anyone else.
- I am going to take and pass the next advancement/promotion test.

Visualization:

Create a mental picture of what you want and focus your attention on it until it comes true.

Examples:

- Picture yourself fitting into a favorite dress that might not fit anymore.
- See yourself in the new position you've been wanting.
- Visualize yourself debt-free and starting to save money because of the raise you just received.

Things That Affect Our Self-Esteem

The Past:

Often times the past distracts us from achieving our goals.

Negative emotions regarding the past hurt our self-esteem. Examples might include losing a job, making a mistake at work or slipping-up during a presentation.

The more we dwell on the past the more we feel incapable and incompetent.

Good News:

Although we can't change the past, we can change our thoughts about it.

Remember that no event is inherently bad; it's only as bad as we decide.

Since it is impossible to change the past, we should accept its lessons and move on.

For example, if you've been fired from a job, you have two choices. You can be mad at others, blame your boss, co-workers or subordinates OR you can think back to what caused you to lose that job and make sure you don't repeat the actions.

Making Mistakes:

Making mistakes sometimes makes us feel dumb, stupid or inadequate.

We tend to look back on our mistakes in a negative way, which leads to negative feelings about ourselves.

Good News:

Making mistakes is perfectly normal, even making some very big ones. Mistakes are not a reflection of our intelligence or self-worth.

Things to remember:

- Everyone makes mistakes.
- Mistakes are unavoidable.
- It's fine to admit mistakes.
- Making mistakes is part of our growing process.

The main thing we must remember is that we shouldn't condemn ourselves for making mistakes. We should learn from them and be proud of the fact that we may challenged ourselves.

Habits:

Bad habits reduce our self-esteem. Bad habits can include coming into work late, not finishing projects on time and gossiping. Other bad habits could include drinking, smoking, etc...

Bad habits get in the way of us feeling good about ourselves or accomplishing our goals, which ends up snowballing negatively into other aspects of our lives.

Good news:

Bad habits can be broken at will. People quit smoking, lose weight, stop gossiping or dwelling on the past.

You can replace unwanted behaviors with actions that benefit you.

One way to break bad habits is to think of a bad habit of that you have and replace it with a good habit.

For example:

- Instead of gossiping, turn your conversations about people into more positive statements.
- Replace dwelling on the past with looking forward to better days ahead.
- Drink a bottle of water instead of a soda. Chew gum instead of having a cigarette. Eat fruit instead of a bag of chips.

Negativity:

Feeling negative about a bad situation is never good and typically makes a situation worse and is very unproductive.

One should try to come to the realization that all circumstances, situations and events aren't either good or bad. They are pretty much neutral.

Our interpretation of the events is what makes them positive or negative, not the events themselves.

How many times have you seen peers of yours get raises or promotions when you didn't but thought you deserved it so you develop a negative attitude towards them?

Good News:

We can change our negative responses to things that happen to us to positive ones.

Remember that promotion and raise you didn't get? Well think of it this way. If they could do it, so can you. You should look at it as inspiration that a raise and promotion is in your future if you focus on your goals.

Whenever something happens to you, look at the positive side of it and the negative side of it and take the more constructive positive view.

Remember you are the one responsible for making your life a happy life and you are in complete control.

Setting Goals:

One way to improve self-esteem and stay focused on the positive aspects of your life and change bad habits is to set realistic goals for yourself in a number of aspects of your life.

To be effective, goals should have specific numbers and dates on them so you hold yourself accountable for them.

Goals could be defined under the following categories:

- Self-Improvement
- Fitness and Dietary
- Financial
- Professional
- Family

Self-Improvement:

- Read one book per month on specific problems you might be experiencing at any particular point in time. There are great books written on a wide array of topics including, improving relationships, bettering your career and planning your finances for the future.
- Don't hold grudges.
- Follow fitness goals for all of 2008.
- Attend 6 Bottomless Closet seminars in 2008.

Fitness and Dietary Goals:

Key to losing weight: 1 pound equals 2000 calories so if you can reduce what you eat or increase activity to burn about 300 calories per day you can lose 10-12 pounds in 3 months, 40-50 pounds in a year!!!

- Lose 10 pounds by April of 2008.
- Walk 20 minutes a day 4 times a week.
- Start an exercise routine consisting of 30 to 40 minutes a few times a week.
- Substitute water for soda and other soft drinks.
- Drink green tea instead of coffee when possible.
- Take stairs whenever possible instead of escalators or elevators.
- Stand and walk around while talking on the phone instead of sitting.

Financial:

- Put 10% of your pay into your 401k plan in January 2008.
- Start contributing \$25 a month to a college fund for kids by June 2008.
- Start researching scholarship plans for college by end of 2008.
- Put \$20 a week away to buy gifts for the holidays. That's \$1000 for the year!!!

Family Goals:

- Save money and go on that vacation you've always wanted to go on by the summer of 2009.
- Spend 1/2 hour of uninterrupted time with kids each day.
- Have a family game night on Saturday nights.
- Sit down with kids during the summer to discuss their goals, like making the honor role, not being late for school, never missing homework.

Professional:

- Seek a promotion through taking an advancement exam at the next opportunity.
- Ask for a raise based on the great project you just completed.
- Stop gossiping and replace it with talking about how you could improve things in your department.
- Be positive about every situation that comes your way.
- Take on new responsibilities with a smile and positive attitude.
- Dress for the job that you want, not the job that you have. Dress for success!!!

Takeaways:

- You are in complete control of the way you feel about yourself and your professional life.
- You are exactly where you are supposed to be and everything that has led you to this point has happened for a reason.
- Defining goals for all aspects of your life will lead to a more productive life-style and an improved self-esteem.
- Everybody is inherently equal and you have just as much to offer than anyone.
- The more you give the more you get.
- Don't hold grudges.
- Always do what you think is the right thing to do at the time and everything will fall into place.
- Nobody is better than you and you deserve as much out of your career, other people and life as anyone.

You Truly Are the Best!

Recommended Readings

"Maximum Self-Esteem" by Jerry Minchinton.

"30-Day Job Promotion" by Susan Whitcomb

"The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari" by Robin Sharma

"The Saint, the Surfer and the CEO" by Robin Sharma

"The Easy Way to Stop Drinking" by Allen Carr

"The Easy Way to Stop Smoking" by Allen Carr

"Fire-up Your Metabolism" by Lyssie Lakatos

"Eat that Frog" by Brian Tracy

"America's Cheapest Family" by Steve and Annette Economides

"What You Don't Know May be Killing You" by Dr. Don Colbert

"The Magic of Thinking Big" by David Schwartz