

Creating Positive Ripples

Is yours a positive organisation? It's easy to look on 'the up-side' when things are going well, but during times of change or instability, when people feel that they are working hard just to stand still, there is value in adding your energy to creating positive ripples – making yours a positive environment, filled with positive people, who clients want to do business with!

Everybody knows the story of two people looking at a glass, which for one is half full and for the other is half empty. How these two people view the glass is an indication of their state of mind and a product of the world in which they find themselves. While some people are able to see positives, it seems that others carry their own private rain cloud – helping to create a greyer and less pleasant world for those around them.



The Ripple Effect

Imagine you are in a long queue of slow moving traffic and you leave a gap in front of you for someone to join from a side road. It makes you feel good if they acknowledge your action with a wave and when they smile, you smile back. Your day is going well. Meanwhile, the person in the car behind you turns pink and they seethe as they are now one place further back in the queue. You feel so good, that you don't mind when the person you let in then let's someone else in front of them at the next junction... while the person in the car behind has gone from pink to red. One more car joining the queue and they will be purple...

You are experiencing a positive ripple, which will actually affect how you will arrive at work or at your next meeting and which in turn will affect how your interactions go and how your colleagues or customers feel about you. The person in the car behind is experiencing a negative ripple which, if they let it, will affect how they arrive at their next meeting – in turn, affecting how the meeting goes, how their colleagues or customers feel about them and so on. They are likely to be set for a bad day and are quite likely to share it with everyone they meet! Great ambassadors for the company!

Businesses need to have positive, highly motivated, focused people, with a 'can do', glass half full attitude. Understanding that we each have a choice of attitude and recognising that how we arrive at work, how we present ourselves and our ideas and how we speak with (and listen to) others, will all have a major impact on the culture of our team and ultimately the organisation, contributing to whether it feels positive and vibrant, or not.

5 Steps to Creating a Positive Motivational Culture

People who feel good about themselves are well positioned to produce great results and people who produce great results, usually feel good about themselves. This isn't hard to understand – it's common sense, but the trick is to find ways to feed this positive cycle in order to create a culture in which people are able to feel motivated.

Step 1

Be a positive role model – create opportunities to spread positive ripples.

Step 2

Don't ignore negativity – If you do, you effectively condone it and allow the negative ripple to gain momentum – allowing the situation to get worse and infecting more people with the 'pessimism bug'.

Step 3

Champion a positive culture – Look for the positives and demand that others do the same.

Step 4

Create warmth – Use humour whenever it is appropriate – This will help you to engage and encourage others to 'tune-in' to your thinking. It will also offer variety and give 'colour to your palette', emphasising the importance of an idea when you choose to support it with a different emotion or style.

Step 5

Create warmth – Remember to smile – This will have the effect of lightening the atmosphere and relaxing people with whom you interact. Combining a smile with strong eye contact (and perhaps an encouraging nod) makes it very likely that you will receive a smile and other positive signals back – putting you at the heart of a new positive ripple!

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10 Steps to becoming a Positive Role Model

Step 1

Positive preparation – Confidence comes from knowing that you have thought things through and are prepared in all areas of your work. Take time to think and plan. Create your strategy and game plan and think through your tactics. Add a desire to create and build positivity to your daily agenda.

Step 2

Positive visualisation – Visualise challenges and tasks positively. Picture yourself with positive and enthusiastic people; notice their positive body language as they respond to yours. Visualise the positive outcomes of your interaction.

Step 3

Positive affirmations and self-talk – Reassure yourself about what you are doing: “I am positive...”, “I am well prepared...” This is much more likely to be helpful if you really **are** positive and well prepared!

Step 4

Positive language – People who begin every sentence with: “The trouble is...” can become very draining. Use positive language and look for solutions, not problems. Draw strength from your own and the team’s success and encourage other people to do the same.

Step 5

Positive energy – Have you noticed that some people ‘SAP’ your energy, whilst others give you a ‘ZAP’ that really helps you to move forward? What do you need to do to ‘ZAP’ yourself and the people around you? How can you get people to ‘want to bother’?

Step 6

Positive listening – Demonstrate your interest in others, by asking about their world. Re-adjust your ratio of listening to talking. The more senior you are the harder this can be. Look for opportunities to be a Mentor or a Coach to others.

Step 7

Positive encouragement – Enjoy other peoples’ successes. Help them to be proud of the good things that they have done. The best gift you can give to anyone is your attention.

Step 8

Positive personal presentation – Business-like people dress in a business-like way. You don’t have to get into ‘power dressing’, but dressing appropriately demonstrates a respect for others, whilst looking overly casual can create ‘mental interference’. This will make it hard for some people to listen to you or your message. ‘Looking the part’ will also help you to ‘feel the part’.

Step 9

Positive eye contact – No part of your facial expression is more important in communicating sincerity and credibility than your eyes. Remember to make eye contact to help you connect and establish rapport.

Step 10

Positive gestures – Use your hands to emphasise what you are saying. Most people have a wide ‘gestural’ vocabulary at their disposal, and by using your visual communication skills you can inject energy and create pictures that will add emphasis or clarity to your message.



This extract is taken from a series of 30 Hints & Tips, created by Mark Barnes of Step System.

Step System creates and supplies coaching and training interventions, supported by blended learning and focused publications, delivering success in the areas of personal, team and organisational development.

Next Step

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