

attitude

a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behavior

We've all felt that familiar drag in energy level when we know we're going into a meeting with a nay-sayer who criticizes every idea on the table. We're also familiar with how our moods can be lifted when the office cheerleader comes by with a smile and a plate of donuts on a busy Friday. While these may seem like no-brainers on the scale of negative-to-positive energies in a workplace, deep down, attitude has a significant impact on a workplace, including productivity levels and morale.

The Difference Between a Negative Attitude and a Bad Mood It's important to note that everyone has good days and bad days. Losing a client, flubbing a presentation or even having a frustrating commute can put a generally kind and even-keeled person in a bad mood. *A bad attitude, however, is typically a state of mind*, and it has the potential to permeate a workplace and drag everyone down with it. If you're a colleague, you may be able to steer clear of this personality type or steel yourself for necessary interactions; as a manager, you may need to choose between redirecting behavior or letting a bad attitude staffer go, rather than run the risk of alienating other employees.

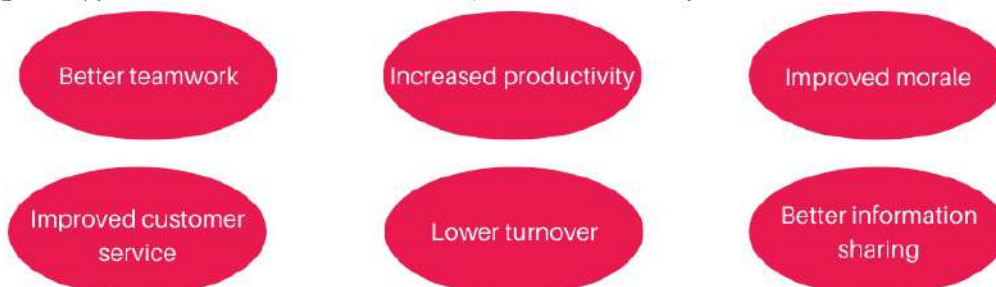
How Negativity Impacts a Workplace A negative attitude doesn't just put others in a bad mood – it also has a tangible, measurable impact on how an office functions. Here are some of the effects of an unchecked negative attitude:



Negativity can breed contempt and create an environment where there's no incentive to try, colleagues don't trust one another and people strive to get through the day rather than thrive, succeed and take initiative.

When there are positive attitudes in a workplace, there's a feeling that anything can be accomplished.

Colleagues support each other and work in tandem, and a host of other positive outcomes materialize, such as:



Positivity can be contagious, where everyone feels like they're on the same team, the effort is collective, and everyone's ideas are valued and welcomed.

Surround yourself with positive people Who you hang around with rubs off on you. If you're always with negative people who complain about everything, you'll become a complainer and see the world as negative as they do.

Control your language The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis suggests that the language you use every day, both in thought and spoken word, has a cumulative effect on how you think about yourself, your work, and those around you.

Don't rely on an outside source of positivity Whether you rely on a phrase that you repeat over and over when times are stressful or you have some other trick to help resurrect and keep a positive attitude, be sure to come up with a mechanism that doesn't rely on someone else or a specific situation.

Assume responsibility, and choose your response Refusing to take responsibility for your actions and your situation, or not taking control of how you respond, kills a positive attitude immediately. Refusing to acknowledge it means you can't correct the behavior and it will happen again, and you also set yourself up for a victimhood mindset in which things happen to you.



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