

“We must be the change we want to see.” —M.K. Gandhi

Above all else: There is attitude

This is the first of an eight-part series from Carl Van’s popular book: *The 8 Characteristics of the Awesome Adjuster*. This first segment outlines one of those characteristics.

—Ken Bohn, Senior Editor

Oceans of words have been published on the subject of positive attitude. The overriding theme in my book is that the best adjusters are people who look for the positive in every situation.

1. Overworking is an opportunity to demonstrate work ethic.
2. Making mistakes is an opportunity to learn something new.
3. Being asked to do more than anyone else is an outward expression that someone thinks more of you than anyone else.

Awesome adjusters don’t get bent out of shape, they question the status quo. They always have a suggestion for improvement when they express a concern and they look for ways to make something work, rather than searching for why it won’t.

To that end, start by looking for the opportunity:

1. Decide what is important to you.
2. Make sure it is something you can reasonably achieve.
3. Give yourself a taste.

The secret is giving yourself a taste. Stay away from the *Imagine This* technique. Pretend you already have achieved what you want. If you want to be a person who people respect because of your positive attitude, *then act as if you already are that person*. The better you envision your goal, the more your attitude will become it.

Another positive technique is to practice rephrasing the actions you consider negative.

Here is the exercise. See if you can reword comments (lower left) to point out the positive. Keep in mind all of the comments are completely valid. But see if you can change them around just a little so they seem positive instead of negative. If you can, you are ahead of the game.

During my days as a claims manager, I was in my boss’s office, bitching, whining and complaining. Finally, after seven minutes or so, I finally stopped. He looked at me for a few seconds and said, “*Carl, are you finished? Because I want to remind you of something: You asked for this job, remember? You sat in this very office and went into detail about how tough this job was going to be and why you were the only person I should select. Twenty-two people applied for this job and you got it. I saw something in you I didn’t see in anybody else.*”

“If you want an easy job, go to McDonald’s where a little buzzer goes off when the fries are done. But before you leave my office, let me remind you of something. You got something 21 other people didn’t get. You got the chance to prove you could do this job. No one else even got the chance.”

Somehow, my boss recognized that all of the extra hard work I was going to have to do was my opportunity to prove that he was right for hiring me in the first place. That all of that hard work was my opportunity to show I was the right person for the job.

Somehow my attitude had gotten turned around and I found myself looking for the wrong things. The key was knowing how to recognize opportunity when it is there.

MAKE THE TURN TOWARD A POSITIVE ATTITUDE	
THE COMMON COMPLAINT	AN “AWESOME” VIEWPOINT
I have too much work.	I have job security.
My manager gives me all the difficult files.	My manager trusts me to handle the difficult files.
Customers are always complaining.	Customers need my help.
If this job was easier, I’d like it better.	If this job was easier, the company would hire someone less talented.
No one helps me unless I ask for it.	I’m left alone to do my job.
One little mistake could cost the company thousands.	I have a job that is important. My company trusts my decisions.
The only time I see my supervisor is when I make a mistake.	My supervisor lets me do my job.
I am required to attend conferences and review them in office meetings.	I am trusted to interpret important information and help train others.
The insureds are so needy, I wish they’d leave me alone.	If they so weren’t so needy, anyone could do this job.
I’m the only one in my office with any experience.	I am relied upon in my office because of my experience.

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If you spend just one week pretending you already have what you want and rewording every negative comment you say or hear, I promise you will see an immediate change in your attitude toward your responsibilities.

You can be stressed out that you have too much work, or you can be relieved you don't have job security concerns. Just keep in mind, that either way, it is a choice **you** make.

Awesome adjusters know that having a positive attitude is nothing more than deciding they have it. They know that once you allow yourself a taste of positive attitude, job satisfaction will go up and your stress levels will go down.

Then, if you like the way that tastes, go ahead and indulge. Keep eating up that positive attitude. Don't worry; positive attitude is the ultimate diet. High on energy, with no fat and no carbs!

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seminar solutions

The seminar entitled *8 Characteristics of the Awesome Claims Adjuster* is designed to heighten the awareness of the characteristics that are the trademark of truly exceptional adjusters (Attitude, Initiative, Customer Service, Teamwork, Desire for Excellence, etc.). This is not a class to correct performance problems. This is intended for already solid performers who wish to become superior.

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