

# Enthusiasm by Tony Alessandra

You generally wear your positivity on the ‘inside.’ But your enthusiasm is how you show it to the world by your face, your voice, and your gestures. Sometimes we feel enthusiastic about our ideas but we're afraid to show it. But I think the people who influence us the most are those who are able to express on the outside what they're feeling on the inside.

A friend of mine remembers touring a client's office and seeing “cute” signs with negative messages plastered everywhere: “It's hard to soar like an eagle when you're surrounded by turkeys,” “Even a bad day on vacation is better than a good day at work,” and the like. Every message that every employee saw every day was negative. No wonder, my friend later concluded, morale there was so low.

Most people like to be around those who radiate joy and interest, whether at work or at play. What's more, enthusiasm is infectious. It spreads. But so does the lack of it. The choice is yours.

We've probably all worked with people who were negative about the job, the firm, their colleagues, the environment, the world itself, and then were further upset when—surprise!—they didn't get the big promotion. They chose to be problems, not problem-solvers. So was it any wonder that the boss would pick someone who was more positive and enthusiastic?

The response you receive from the world is in large measure a reflection of your own attitude. From the beginning to the end of every meeting with another person, you are on stage: You're being evaluated by that other person, consciously or subconsciously. While I'm not suggesting you put on a phony happy face, I am reminding you to be aware that your every word, gesture, expression, and impression is being watched—especially in initial encounters—and will either help or hinder you in fostering honest, open, and trusting communications.

If your overall approach is cheerful, hopeful, and tolerant of differences, you send out a positive message. On the other hand, if you're critical, pessimistic, and intolerant of anything unfamiliar, you convey a negative outlook. Guess which attitude gets better results when you're trying to influence people?

Here's to more personal insight.