
The Power Of Choice



by JOHN BOE

In aviation, the word “attitude” is a term that refers to the angle that the plane meets the wind, if the wings are level with the horizon and whether the aircraft is climbing or descending. The pilot who fails to take responsibility for the attitude of his or her aircraft is in serious trouble. And likewise, any leader who fails to control their thoughts and take responsibility for their attitude runs a similar risk with their organization.

As a sales manager, you not only set the pace for your sales team, but you’re responsible for setting the tone as well. For better or worse, the leader’s attitude is contagious and permeates throughout their organization. Positive, upbeat companies are always led by positive, upbeat managers. While we’re not always able to control our circumstances, we can and must control how we respond to life’s difficulties, setbacks and challenges. We have a choice about how our day is going to be.

How often do you talk to yourself and what do you say? Research in the field of psychology indicates that the average person maintains an ongoing mental dialog, or “self-talk,” of between 150 to 300

words per minute. Unfortunately, not all of these thoughts are positive. In fact, it has been estimated that of the thousands of thoughts we have each day, approximately 40 percent of them tend to be negative and self-critical in nature. Most of us are generally unaware of this negative background chatter, let alone its sabotaging effect on our emotional state, performance and well-being.

“Watch your thoughts, for they become words. Choose your words, for they become actions. Understand your actions, for they become habits. Study your habits, for they will become your character. Develop your character, for it becomes your destiny.”

— Anonymous

Earl Nightingale, co-founder of the Nightingale-Conant Corp., concluded that life’s “strangest secret” is that you become what you think about all day long. If you want to know where your predominant thoughts lie and what you believe, look at what you are experiencing in your life. Your thoughts are creative by nature and express themselves through your emotions, which in turn, drive your actions. Everything you say, both positive and negative, is in fact an affirmation and reflects your belief. Whatever you think, feel or say about your life today is the scaffolding that builds the events you will experience in the future.

Affirmation and Positive Self-Talk

Positive, upbeat companies are always led by positive, upbeat managers.

William Shakespeare said, “Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” The first

step in the process of changing your belief system is to monitor your thoughts, and the next step is to control them through the power of choice. Once you become conscious of the critical aspects of your internal dialogue, you can choose to reframe your negative thoughts by substituting affirmative statements.

World-class athletes understand the value of affirmation and recognize the impact of their mental preparation on their physical performance. They use the power of positive affirmation to reduce anxiety and increase their expectation of achievement. To be of maximum benefit, an affirmation must be simple, encouraging and stated in the present tense. By repeating an affirmation over and over again it becomes embedded in the subconscious mind.

Do affirmations really work, and can they propel a person to greatness? As a teenager beginning his boxing career in Louisville, Kentucky, Cassius Clay would frequently affirm, "I am the greatest of all time!" While many considered him boastful and few took this 89-pound, 12-year-old seriously, Muhammad Ali used the power of affirmation to become the greatest boxer of all time and arguably the most recognizable sports figure in the world.

Henry Ford was right when he said, "Whether you think you can or think you can't — you're right." Your belief system, like your computer, doesn't judge what you input; it simply accepts it as the truth. The key to cultivating and maintaining a positive mental attitude is to use your power of choice and take control of your thinking. It's a

challenging task to develop a calm, focused mind, but well worth the effort.

Action Plan

Here are some suggestions to help you have a good day every day.

- Establish the habit of getting up early.
- Upon rising, read or listen to something positive and inspirational. Clinical studies indicate that our mind is most receptive to suggestion during the first 15 minutes upon awakening. Here are some books that will help you start your day off on the right foot: *How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success In Selling* by Frank Bettger, *The Magic Of Believing* by Claude M. Bristol, *You'll See It When You Believe It* by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, *The Power Of Positive Thinking* by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, *Think And Grow Rich* by Dr.

Whatever you think, feel or say about your life today is the scaffolding that builds the events you will experience in the future.

Napoleon Hill, *Psycho-Cybernetics* by Dr. Maxwell Maltz.

- Take a few moments to consider the upcoming activities of your day. Visualize events flowing. See people accept your ideas and your day unfolding in a harmonious and productive way. This is a good time to verbalize your affirmations.
- Take time for some physical exercise.
- At noon, take a 10-minute mental break to relax and replenish your energy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

John Boe, a sales trainer and motivational speaker, helps companies recruit, train and motivate salespeople to achieve peak performance. He is a leading authority on body language and temperament styles. To view his online video demo, or to have John Boe speak at your next event, visit www.johnboe.com or call (877) 725-3750.

