Thesis: Attitude isn’t everything, but it is ______________________ ______________________ that can make a difference in your life.

Businessman, philanthropist, and author W. Clement Stone stated, “There is little difference in people, but the little difference makes a big difference. The little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative.”

Your Attitude is the ______________________ ______________________ of your mind.

What Is Your Attitude?

It is the advance man of your true self.
Its root is inward but its fruit is outward.
It is your best friend or worst enemy.
It is more honest and consistent about you than your words.
It is your outward look based on your past experiences.
It is what draws people to you or repels them.
It is never content until it is expressed.
It is the librarian of your past.
It is the speaker or your present.
It is the prophet of your future.
What Your Attitude Cannot Do For You

You cannot disconnect attitude from ____________ and expect success.

1. Your Attitude Cannot Substitute for ____________.

   Some people confuse ____________, which is a function of ____________, with ____________, which is a function of ____________.

   Incompetence is a God given gift with which all humankind is endowed. If competency replaced the half-done work we get now, the television repair shops, kitchen appliance service department and automobile mechanics would go out of business.

   If we were all good drivers, insurance agents would be out of work and there would be no need for auto body shops. If we were competent in caring for our own bodies, we’d need half the doctors we have now.

   Americans have been complaining about incompetence in government. But they don’t know what bad government is until they have a thoroughly efficient one that does everything it says it’s going to do.

   Do we really want an Internal Revenue Service so good and efficient that they catch every nickel and dime we deduct that we shouldn’t? Do we want police enforcing the letter of the law every time we drive twenty-seven mph in a twenty-five mph zone?
I contend that we do not, and I say that an efficient, thoroughly competent government is not only dangerous but un-American.

Fortunately, I don’t think there’s much chance that the level of incompetence in all of us will decline in the foreseeable future.

— Andy Rooney

2. Your Attitude Cannot Substitute for ________________.

“When a person with experience meets a person with money, the person with experience will get the money and the person with the money will get the experience.”

3. Your Attitude Cannot Change the ________________.

“If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude. Don’t complain.”

— Maya Angelou

4. Your Attitude Cannot Substitute for ________________

______________.

“A time comes when you need to stop waiting for the man you want to become and start being the man you want to be.”

— Bruce Springsteen

5. Your Attitude Will Not Stay Good ________________.
What Your Attitude Can Do For You

For years I have tried to live by the following statement: I cannot always choose what happens to me, but I can always choose what happens in me. Some things in life are beyond my control. Some things are within it. My attitude in the areas beyond my control ________________ be the difference maker. My attitude in the areas that I do control ________________ be the difference maker. In other words, the greatest difference my “difference maker” can make is within me, not others.

1. Your Attitude Makes a Difference in Your ________________ to ________________.

“All’s well that begins well!”

2. Your Attitude Makes a Difference in Your ________________ with People.

Many factors come into play when it comes to skills working with people, but what makes or breaks that ability is a person’s attitude. I recently wrote a book called Winning With People in which I describe twenty-five people principles that anyone can use to become better at building relationships and working with others. Many of those principles are attitude-based. Here are some examples:

• The ________________ Principle: Who we are determines how we see others. Our perception of others depends more on our attitude than it does their characteristics. If we are positive, we see them as positive.
• The ______________ Principle: Hurting people hurt people and are easily hurt by them. Our negative experiences and emotional baggage color our perception of others’ actions. Normal interactions can cause us pain even when another person did nothing to inflict pain.

• The ______________ Principle: We can lift people up or take them down in our relationships. People possess a mindset of either lifting or limiting others.

• The ______________ Principle: Each person we meet has the potential to teach us something. Some people possess a teachable attitude, and they assume that they can learn something from everyone they meet. Others look down on many people and assume that they have nothing to offer.

3. Your Attitude Makes a Difference in How You Face ______________.

Demosthenes, called the greatest orator of ancient Greece, possessed a speech impediment. He overcame it by reciting verses with pebbles in his mouth and speaking over the roar of the waves at the seashore.

Martin Luther, father of the Reformation, made use of the time he was confined in the castle of Wartburg to translate the Bible into German.

Composer Ludwig von Beethoven wrote his greatest symphonic masterpieces after he had become deaf.
John Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim’s Progress* while in prison. Daniel Dafoe also wrote while in prison, producing *Robinson Crusoe*.

Napoleon’s school companions mocked him because of his humble origins and poverty. He responded by studying harder and soon he became the best student in his class. He went on to become one of the greatest generals in history.

Lincoln is considered by many to be the best of the United States’ presidents, yet he probably would not have stood out as a great leader had he not led the country through the Civil War. Often the circumstances seem to be instrumental in the creation of great leaders and thinkers. But that is the case only when their attitudes are right.

**The Power of Attitude**

*The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company…a church…a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we embrace for that day. We cannot change our past…we cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude…I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you…we are in charge of our ATTITUDES.*

— Chuck Swindoll
Making your attitude your greatest asset begins when you choose to have the right attitude. Once that decision is made, the following steps will help you achieve an attitude that will be a positive Difference-Maker in your life.

1. _________________ Your Present Attitude.

Stages of Evaluation

1. Identify Problem _________________ — What attitudes make you feel the most negative about yourself? Usually feelings can be sensed before the problem is clarified. Write them down.

2. Identify Problem _________________ — What attitudes cause you the most problems when dealing with others? Write them down.

3. Identify Problem _________________ — We are the sum of our thoughts. “As a man thinks within himself, so he is.” What thoughts consistently control your mind? Although this is the beginning step in correcting attitude problems, these are not as easy to identify as the first two.

2. Have a _________________ to Change.

No choice will determine the success of your attitude change more than desiring to change. When all else fails, desire alone can keep you heading in the right direction. Many people have climbed over insurmountable obstacles to make themselves better people when they realized that change is possible if they really want it badly enough.
You are the way you are because that’s the way you want to be. If you really wanted to be any different, you would be in the process of changing right now.

— Fred Smith

3. Change Your Attitude by Changing Your

___________________.

That which holds our attention determines our actions. We are where we are and what we are because of the dominating thoughts that occupy our minds. William James said, “The greatest discovery of my generation is that people can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.”

Major premise: We can control our thoughts. Minor premise: Our feelings come from our thoughts. Conclusion? We can control our feelings by learning to change one thing: the way we think. It is that simple. Our feelings come from our thoughts. Therefore, we can change them by changing our thought patterns.

Attitudes are nothing more than habits of thought.

This cycle can be positive or negative. The process for developing habits, good or bad, is the same. It is as easy to form a habit of succeeding as it is to succumb to the habit of failure. Observe the following two cycles and see the difference.
4. Manage Your Attitude

the Right Attitude is Easier than
the Right Attitude.

“Be pleasant until 10 a.m. and the rest of the day will take care of itself.”

— Elbert Hubbard

“Assume cheerfulness you do not feel, and shortly you feel the cheerfulness you assumed.”

— Chinese Proverb

“Things turn out the best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.”

— John Wooden
5. Take ________________ for Your Attitude.

First Rule in Winning — “______________
______________ ________________.” Your attitude is
totally in your control!

You can’t control the length of your life — but you can
control its width and depth.

You can’t control the contour of your face — but you can
control its expression.

You can’t control the weather — but you can control the
atmosphere of your mind.

Why worry about things you can’t control when you can keep
yourself busy controlling the things that depend on you.

My mother had only gone as far as the tenth grade,
and my father had a third-grade education, but they both
were very literate. They spoke well, and their values were
high. They drummed into our heads that the situation
you live in doesn’t have to live in you.

— Roberta Flack
Leadership expert John C. Maxwell believes attitude is one thing that can make all the difference in your life - and now shows you how you can make it your best asset.

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