

PREVIEW GUIDE



The Attitude Virus: Curing Negativity in the Workplace

Materials Included With *The Attitude Virus*

- ◆ **DVD** of *The Attitude Virus*. The program is comprised of fictional dramatic vignettes to demonstrate how bad attitudes and negativity can spread throughout the workplace. Examples of six common attitudes are shown: *the steamer*, *the perfectionist*, *the resister*, *the not-my-jobber*, *the rumormonger*, *the uncommitted* and *the pessimist*. With each example, viewers are encouraged to recognize the underlying causes of the attitude problem and to replace old, ineffective reactions with a new response. The main program is followed by individual segments for stop-and-start discussion.

- ◆ The **Leader's Guide** provides background and theory, plus step-by-step instructions for introducing activities, leading discussions, and making transitions between the video, group discussions, and exercises. Two complete training designs are included: one for 2 hours, 40 minutes for Team Leaders, and one for 2 hours, 10 minutes for both Team Members and Team Leaders combined.

- ◆ The **Participant Workbook** contains the worksheets and handouts for the exercises in the Leader's Guide. Exercises are designed to make participants assess their own behaviors, as well as learn and practice reacting vs. acting, intervention and accentuating the positive. One sample workbook is included with purchase of the video program.

- **Note:** *The Attitude Virus* is available in three versions: the Generic version, a Government specific version and a Workforce version set entirely in a manufacturing environment.

The Attitude Virus

SAMPLE PAGES FROM LEADER'S GUIDE

TRAINING SESSION OVERVIEW

(LEADER'S INSTRUCTIONS APPEAR IN BOLD.)

Instructions: The video and exercises, as laid out in this Leader's Guide, will take from 3 to 6 hours, depending upon class size and how much time you allow for the large group discussions. There is one extra module and separate intervention exercises for managers. This is clearly marked in the text and in the Table of Contents.

The ideal class size should range from 10 to 18 learners. If your time is limited, choose only the exercises that would be most beneficial for your company.

To open the training session, you may wish to summarize why the participants are in this session and what they will be doing for the next few hours. You could say:

Leader: "We're here today to learn about how attitudes, both positive and negative, affect you and others at work. We're going to see the 20-minute video, *The AttitudeVirus: Curing Negativity in the Workplace*, have some small and large group discussions, and practice interpersonal skills during role play exercises. The more you put into this class, the more you'll take away. Participation is important.

"This is an opportunity for you to reflect upon how attitudes affect morale, productivity, and how we feel about ourselves. It's a chance for you to assess your attitude and decide for yourself if there are behaviors you would consider changing. It's a chance to learn about how to help change other team members' negative attitudes to improve our work environment. This class is about the choices you and others make about how to behave on the job. Now let's get started and have some fun!"

If you have additional time:

- Review Learning Objectives
- Review the Class Outline
- Review the flipchart listing the following ground rules:
 - This is not a time to vent about the organization
 - Treat colleagues with respect
 - Speak in turn
 - Keep private information private
 - Participate!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this program, learners will be able to:

- Identify three ways that negative attitudes can show up in the workplace.
- Rate their own attitudes.
- State the difference between reacting and acting.
- Identify five stressors that can lead to negative attitudes.
- Identify three interpersonal skills for intervening with workers who display negative attitudes.
- State why positive reinforcement is critical for changing negative behavior patterns.
- List three benefits derived from a positive work environment.
- (Managers) Identify three techniques they can use to prevent an Attitude Virus from permeating the workplace.

OPENING: EXERCISE 1

(15 MINUTES, SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY. LEADER'S INSTRUCTIONS APPEAR IN BOLD.)

Leader: Introduce yourself and have the class introduce themselves if they don't already know each other. “Today we're going to take a look at how negative attitudes infect the workplace. We're going to start out with a plunge into the negative attitude pool. Move your chairs to get into groups of 3 to 4 people. I want you to brainstorm and list ways in which negative attitudes show up in our workplace. Choose one person in the group to write down everyone's idea. Remember, this is not the time to point fingers at particular people or to debate ideas. Every contribution is valuable.”

Pass out the Handout for Opening Exercise 1. Give participants from 5 to 10 minutes, depending upon what is needed. Move around the room to insure that everyone is keeping to the topic and focusing on behaviors rather than on specific people. When the time is up, ask the learners to turn their chairs to the front and for each group to report five things on their list. Write these responses on a flip chart or on a whiteboard. Go around the room until every idea has been listed.

You should have elicited things such as: (you can add these things if they haven't been mentioned)

- People arrive to work and to meetings late.
- People spend too much time gossiping.
- Co-workers don't cooperate.
- Poor or no communication.
- There is resistance to change.

After discussing the list, ask the participants, “How do you think these behaviors could hurt a team's goals?” **Spend a couple of minutes acknowledging what people have to say, then sum up with,** “Great, I appreciate your participation. We're going to spend more time discussing negativity in the workplace and its impact. But first, let's look at a twenty minute video I think you'll enjoy. It's called, ***The Attitude Virus.***”

SELF ASSESSMENT: EXERCISE 2

(15 MINUTES. LEADER'S INSTRUCTIONS APPEAR IN BOLD.)

Leader: "It's contagious, it can spread in a matter of minutes and before anyone realizes what's happened, the entire workplace can be affected. But chicken soup and antibiotics won't stop this epidemic because it isn't a physical illness. It's what can be called an Attitude Virus, a disease that causes negativity in all it touches.

"To protect himself from infection, the host of the video wears a biohazard suit. He explains that the Attitude Virus can be anywhere and that it can cause a lot of damage to a team's productivity in a very short time. But diagnosing the virus can be difficult, because it affects different people in different ways."

"Incalculable productivity is lost each year because of negative attitudes, whereas healthy attitudes are closely related to motivation, work enjoyment, and increased productivity. But how does a company stop this negative infestation? First, says the host, you must recognize that there is an attitude problem."

"Let's see where you rate on the negativity scale." **Hand out the Self-Assessment worksheet, with Scoring instructions printed on the backside.** "This is a short form to fill out to assess your attitude about work. You will not be turning this in. It is only to be used for your information, so be as honest as possible. When you are done rating the questions, turn the sheet over to learn how to score yourself."

When everyone has finished, sum up with, "Was anyone surprised by their results? This self-assessment is yours to keep. You may want to refer back to it from time to time to check in and see what your behaviors at work are communicating to others about your attitude."

SELF ASSESSMENT: EXERCISE 2 HANDOUT

Instructions: Where do you rate on the negativity scale? Score yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 for each question. This is not to be turned in. It is simply for your personal information, so be as honest with your answers as possible.

<u>1</u> Never	<u>2</u> Seldom	<u>3</u> Sometimes	<u>4</u> Often	<u>5</u> Always
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QUESTIONS

1. Do you come to work feeling enthusiastic and confident? _____
2. Do you focus on your goals even when you're having a bad day? _____
3. Do you look for positive solutions when things don't go your way at work? _____
4. Do you set a good example for co-workers? _____
5. Do you communicate well with your colleagues? _____
6. Do co-workers feel they can come to you for help? _____
7. Are you satisfied with the quality of work you do? _____
8. Do you find healthy ways to relieve stress? _____
9. Do you work with others to meet the team's and your goals? _____
10. Are you open to changes in your routine or environment? _____

TOTAL _____

REACTING VS. ACTING

ROLE PLAY: EXERCISE 4 HANDOUT

Instructions: Working together in small groups, answer the following questions about the role play on the front of this paper. Have one person volunteer to take notes to report back later to the larger group. You have 10 minutes.

1. What are some of the reasons Bob is in a negative mood? _____

2. How might Bob have avoided passing on the Attitude Virus to Sylvia? _____

3. Was Sylvia's reaction appropriate? How could she have responded to prevent the virus from spreading to her?

4. How might Sylvia have better handled this problem with Chris? _____

5. Who do you think will be the next victims of the Attitude Virus? _____

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