

Positively Speaking

Ever wondered why some people simply appear more positive than others? Being positive is not all in the state of mind. It also translates to how you communicate – your choice of words, your tone of voice and your non-verbal cues. What type of words should you use to make yourself a more confident and positive person? Here are a few tips:

At job interviews

At job interviews, speak clearly and confidently. Do not speak too fast as this could send a message that you are nervous. When describing your job scope and duties, use active words to demonstrate your capabilities, e.g. "initiated", "conceptualised", "designed", "organised", etc. Speak enthusiastically and ask relevant questions about the job - this will demonstrate your interest in the position. Avoid any negativity such as complaining about your current employer or boss, or putting down your ex-colleagues.

On the job

A positive worker is a morale booster to the company. Everyone likes being around pleasant people at the workplace. When it comes to promotions and rewards, bosses notice people who communicate effectively and confidently.

Take note of the following tips on how to be positive at the workplace:

- **Know how to present your information.** Be tactful when presenting bad news. For example, if there is a problem at work and you need to inform your bosses about this, remember to provide them with possible solutions. Convey the problem to them calmly by stating the facts (no finger-pointing!), then present your possible solutions and seek their advice on which solution would be best.
- **Always use positive words.** Your choice of words matters. Instead of negative word like "problems", use "challenges". Instead of using the word "complaints" or "criticisms", use the word "feedback".
- **Use confident words.** Instead of using "I feel" or "I think" when presenting your ideas to your boss or co-workers, use "I believe" or "I'm confident that this will work". Your words should demonstrate conviction and your commitment to the task on hand.
- **Practise good manners.** Always say "thank you" and "please". It is simple manners but many people forget them at the workplace.
- **Use humour.** Humour does not mean acting silly, telling malicious jokes about co-workers or being the office clown. Use humour in a way that will make you see the lighter side of things, encouraging others to be able to laugh at themselves and to feel good around you. It is all about being friendly and making others smile with your presence.

In written communication

The same rules apply when communicating via email or memo. In fact, be extra careful with written communication, as the risk of it being misinterpreted is higher. There are no non-verbal cues to support the message, therefore, the recipient assumes the tone of the message and the assumption may be wrong! A joke might be interpreted as sarcasm; an abrupt ending could be read as anger. Therefore, always choose your words carefully - a misunderstood message may cost you your job.