

MODULE 17

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Segment	Content
Introduction	<p>Paula, one of your team members, enters the work area and is met by a co-worker, who greets her by name and asks, “How was your son’s ball game last night?” The initial positive/negative ratio for Paula’s morning is 1:0. She sits down at her desk, opens her e-mail and reads one which was sent to her 15 minutes after the end of the previous work day, telling her to send documents to the boss ASAP, and to report to a meeting today, promptly at 8 am. Paula quickly prints the documents and rushes into the meeting...late. The boss looks at his watch and announces that he has not received her documents. Paula’s Positive/negative ratio is now: 1:2. Leaving the meeting, a co-worker asks Paula if they can have lunch together. Paula’s ratio is now an even 2:2. Throughout her day, Paula continues to collect new sensory experiences which can be classified as positive or negative. At the end of the day, if Paula’s experience ratio of positive to negative is at 4:1, she will have had a positive day. As a result of her experiences over the course of her workday, she was able to think creatively and logically. Conversely, if over the course of the day, Paula’s ratio had more negative than positive encounters, Paula’s work ethic would diminish, and her work quality would plummet. If the negative ratio was greater than the positive number, Paula would have been on the defensive for the majority of her work time and because of feeling threatened her work would have suffered becoming less creative and less productive. Interestingly, however, if Paula received all positive feedback, but the feedback was offered in an insincere manner, or inappropriately, Paula’s work ethic would also diminish. How is this possible? Consciously or subconsciously, Paula would conclude that there was no real standard of excellence, or that the praise she received was insincere and undeserved.</p>
Learning and development objective	<p>At the end of this module, you will be able to describe the advantages of accentuating the positive with team members. In addition, you will also learn effective methods for leading through the use of positive affirmations.</p>
Main text	<p>Why Accentuate the Positive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ People, on average, receive a couple of minutes of positive feedback a year versus thousands of hours of negative feedback. Remember the positive/negative ratio in the introductory scenario? If you want your team to be effective, you must create an atmosphere among your team which promotes sincere positive feedback to counter the negative feedback which most of us encounter day after day. As leader, you must lead by example, and provide modelling of different kinds of positive feedback for your team. ▶ Our performance is driven by our behaviours. Our behaviours are driven by our emotions. Our emotions are driven by our thinking. When you have an employee,

	<p>who is constantly negative, they have the effect of draining your team. Even if they are your most productive team member, if you cannot influence them to become positive, rather than negative in their outlook, your team will ultimately be more effective without them. One of your greatest tasks, as an effective leader, is to encourage positive thinking. As a leader, you must examine your own style of leadership, and ensure that you are approaching each task, every day with a positive, 'we can be successful' attitude. If you are not able to convey this outlook, begin the process of re-wiring your own thinking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We all need positive feedback to support the new wiring we are creating. As a leader, you must constantly provide your team members with what they need to become more effective. The research is overwhelming. Positive feedback is needed for new thinking patterns, creative thinking, and maximum results. <p>The Advantages of Positive Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create opportunities for positive feedback by establishing clear expectations on every level, so that each individual team member knows what is expected of them. ▶ Clear expectations start with having clearly defined goals. <p>Victor Parachin's 10 Rules on How To Be A Positive Leader</p> <p>Healthy leadership always follows a path which can only be described as predominately positive. When a leader is positive, the team is motivated and invigorated to be successful. These attitudes generate team loyalty and unity which will lead the team to produce greater results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Give more than you expect others to give. A good leader always gives their team more than they expect from their team. They do not expect their team to do things which they would not also be willing to give. It requires a paradigm shift from looking out for yourself to looking out for your team. Ask yourself: What can I do to lighten my team's load? What can I do which will demonstrate that I am giving my best effort to our task? ▶ Combine optimism and perseverance. When things do not go well with your team, when a task idea fails, or when the deadline is approaching and there appears to be no solution in sight, be optimistic and continue to persevere. If your attitude is that a current failure means that something better is coming in the future, and you must only continue to persevere to find it, then your leadership style will be one which inspires and motivates the team. ▶ See everyone as a diamond in the rough. Each person on your team has the potential to be great. As a leader, it is your responsibility to bring out the very best in each of your team members. Just as you must polish a diamond to see its brilliance, you must polish your team members to allow them to shine. Polish your team by encouraging, educating, and inspiring them. ▶ Express appreciation; accept responsibility. A mark of an effective leader is one, who always accepts responsibility for any failures by the team. The leader does
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not place blame on others, but views failures as an example of not being an effective leader. When the team is praised, the leader does not accept the praise personally, but reflects the praise on to the team. Always be generous in your praise of your team members but remember to make your praise genuine. Catherine the Great is recorded as stating, "I praise loudly, I blame softly." This is a great motto for an effective leader.

- ▶ **Keep your ego in check.** Just because you have been named a leader, or made the leader of a team project, does not mean that you assume the role of 'boss' and demand respect from your subordinates. Watch your opinion of yourself. Keep things in balance, especially your ego. No matter how successful you become or how you are praised and acclaimed by others, remain humble. Keep a life balance of success and humility.
- ▶ **Show respect for the people around you.** Let your greatest legacy of leadership be the way you treat those who work for you and with you. Pay attention, especially to those 'unsung' tireless workers, who are rarely acknowledged. Grace your professional and personal life with kindness, compassion, sincerity, and humility.
- ▶ **Treat team members as family.** If you consider your team members as family, you will ask about their lives, you will choose to talk with them and take time to interact with them. Consider walking down the hall to deliver a short message and having a moment of personal interaction with your team members, rather than sending a non-personal e-mail. Just as making time for your family is important; making a point to have time to interact with your team members is invaluable. Treat them as you treat your family members.
- ▶ **Be a source of inspiration.** Grasp every minute of every day to develop your interests and expand your own experiences. Share with your team your interests and the things you are learning, when appropriate. Encourage your team members to expand their own thinking and seek out new interests. Become an inspiration for them to strive to be their best, not just at work, but in all areas of their lives.
- ▶ **Stress cooperation, not competition.** When your team members are in competition with each other, they will withhold ideas and you will simply have a group of individuals working on the same project. Your results will only be as high as the best individual performance. In contrast, if your team is a cooperative group, ideas will flow freely. Your team's success will be based on, not one single individual, but the efforts of the group, which will be much higher.
- ▶ **Maintain a sense of humour.** A serious, stoic leader is no fun. A leader who maintains a sense of humour, playfulness, and lightness is a joy. So, stop taking everything so seriously, and have some fun. Enjoy your work and enjoy, while respecting, your team.

Your team's morale will be determined by your positive or negative leadership, by your seriousness or sense of fun, by your optimism or pessimism, and by the team's

	<p>competitiveness or cooperation. The result of effective leadership is excellent results, whilst the result of ineffective leadership is mediocre results.</p>
<p>Key point</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Accentuate the positive with your team members. ▶ Provide positive feedback. ▶ Ten Rules to Becoming an Effective Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Give more than you expect others to give. ○ Combine optimism and perseverance. ○ See everyone as a diamond in the rough. ○ Express appreciation; accept responsibility. ○ Keep your ego in check. ○ Show respect for the people around you. ○ Treat team members as family. ○ Be a source of inspiration. ○ Stress cooperation, not competition. ○ Maintain a sense of humour.
<p>Task for the day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ So today, have a go, give somebody some positive feedback say, “<i>Well done.</i>” for the smallest thing which is sending your team off in the right direction. Have a good day and give somebody some positive feedback. Well done.
<p>Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ When you gave one of your co-workers some positive feedback; how did they react? Did you see any difference in their attitude or work product? ▶ Were you careful to give only feedback which was genuine? Did your feedback create forward movement toward your team’s goals?