



# “CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE”



There is always a choice about the way you do your work, even if there is not a choice about the work itself.



Each day when we come to work we bring an attitude. We can bring a moody attitude and have a depressing day. We can bring a grouchy attitude and irritate our coworkers and customers. Or we can bring a sunny, playful, cheerful attitude and have a great day. We can choose the kind of day we will have. Think about it. As long as we are going to be at work, we might as well have the best day we can have.

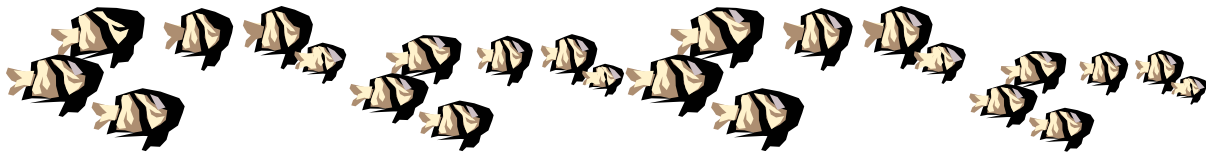
Out of the four ‘FISH!’ philosophies that you will learn this week, this one is the core. Without choosing your attitude the others are a waste of time.

We don’t have a lot to do with selecting the work that needs to be done, but we can choose how we approach that work.

*Stephen Covey told this story at a seminar in 1985:*

*Three high school graduates, two men and a woman were walking in the Arizona desert when a rattlesnake, coiled in the dark, bit the woman. The two guys took off after the snake and eventually caught it and brought it back. Meanwhile the woman, left to deal with the venom, nearly died.*

*The point is that at one time or another, life bites us all. The choice is the same in each case. We can chase the snakes in our lives or deal with the poison.*



Remember: whatever your attitude at the moment, it is the one you are presently choosing.

***“When we choose to love the work we do, we can catch our limit of happiness, meaning, and fulfillment every day.”***

How important is that? Incredibly important, especially when you consider that people spend about 75 percent of their adult wake time doing work-related activities – getting ready for work, traveling to work, working, contemplating work, and decompressing after work. If we spend that much time in that part of our lives, we ought to enjoy it and be energized by it. And yet, too many people are trading time on the job to satisfy needs elsewhere; “Thank God it’s Friday” is still a way of life for many people.

### Loving What You Do

It is fashionable today to believe that we should not settle for anything less than doing what we love. Write poetry, travel the world on a sail boat, paint – do whatever you love, and the money will follow. We tell ourselves that life is too short to spend our working hours doing anything less than the ideal and we continue our search for the perfect workplace. The danger is that if our quest for ideal work focuses us on the future, we will miss the amazingly wonderful life that is available today, in this moment.

The fact is that in the real world there are conditions which prevent us from chasing the perfect, ideal job. Many of us have significant responsibilities to family members or to a way of life. For others, a true calling hasn’t made itself visible yet. Some of us are under so much stress

in our personal lives there is literally no time or energy to seek a new line of work.

FISH! Is a story about finding the deep source of energy, creativity, and passion that exists inside each of us by learning to love what we do, even if at the moment we may not be doing exactly what we love.

### What Do You Own?

A parable: Three neighbors were talking when the subject of possessions came up. “I own a huge mansion!” one proudly proclaimed. “I own a successful farm!” said the second. “I have optimism,” the third said quietly. His two neighbors laughed at him, for what good is a possession that cannot be seen or touched?

That night a huge storm struck. The storm destroyed the first neighbor’s house. “What am I to do?” he cried. The storm ruined the second neighbor’s crops. “What will I do?” he lamented. The storm also destroyed the third neighbor’s home and farm. “Hmmm, what should I do first?” he asked himself and then he began doing it. He rebuilt his home and replanted his crops.

His neighbors had been sitting this entire time, feeling sorry for themselves. But they watched their neighbor rebuild and they decided to ask him his secret. “It is no secret,” the man said. “The only thing I own is what I think.” The two neighbors suddenly understood, and with the third neighbor’s help, they rebuilt too.

From then on, whenever they met, they did not talk about possessions. They talked about their blessings, and they shared them, for what sense does it make to hold on to something you do not own?