

# Attitude - a deeper approach to “being the best you can be”

## Stage 1

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Can you “think big”?

# Attitude - the key to success

## What is “attitude”?

Attitude has usually been vaguely defined and poorly understood. Even worse, the huge potential benefits of attitude have often been overlooked. Nevertheless, it is widely recognised as being relevant: “He has a bad attitude to work” and “She has an attitude problem” are commonly used phrases. Most people recognise that a “good attitude” is desirable. The importance of attitude is increasingly appreciated in world-class sport, stemming from the motivation to get that extra advantage.

However, attitude is much more important than generally realised. Simply speaking, it is the key to success - for making life better.

In basic terms, attitude is the *how* we do what we do and the *why* we do what we do - as different from merely *what* we do. It underpins much of our behaviour, providing a foundation for our actions. It determines our overall approach to life. It allows us to do more and be better at what we do.

Two or more people can do exactly the same task or job, yet the outcomes can be significantly different. One person might be quicker, for example, than another. Or work to higher standards. Or be determined to overcome a difficult

*“Attitude  
is a little thing  
that makes  
a big  
difference.”*

**Winston Churchill**

*“Attitude is more  
important than the past,  
than education,  
than money,  
than circumstances,  
than what people do  
or say.  
It is more important  
than appearance,  
giftedness, or skill.”*

**W. C. Fields**

## 1a. Attitude - the key to success

problem, whilst someone else easily gives up. Why is this? When examined, it boils down to having a better attitude to what is being done.

Many people think that the attitude you've got is just something you're stuck with or have inherited. It's true that a lot of what moulds us is early childhood influences, such as how our parents taught us to behave. But the good news is that attitude can be learned or re-learned at any time in life.

We are pioneering world-leaders in the psychology of attitude, knowing exactly what it is, how to apply it, and how to teach it. We have specifically identified attitude as a combination of 16 inter-linked psychological factors. The effect of these 16 key factors adds up to produce an overall state of what we call attitude. Alternatively, you might think of it as excellence or being the best you can be. The absence of these factors produces what could be seen as a "negative attitude", when it is merely a lack of capability. And there are widely differing levels of capability, between a poor and an excellent attitude, directly associated with the application of these 16 key factors. Learning and applying attitude is a matter of precise education.

Let's go a step further. Attitude, when complete or at its best - which is how we ultimately define it - enables someone to be fully alive or fully human. We view it not as something extraordinary, but rather as ordinary with nothing taken away. Looking at everything from a wider perspective, this places the current state of humanity's grasp of attitude as underdeveloped - still in an adolescent

*"You cannot dream  
yourself into  
a character;  
you must hammer  
and forge yourself  
into one."*

**Henry David Thoreau**



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Don't stay the same  
**Be better!**

## 1a. Attitude - the key to success

stage. Attitude is therefore presently experienced in lesser forms when any number of the 16 key factors have not yet been learnt or applied to their full potential. When this is understood, it becomes clear that there is so much more capacity to be realised. Why not fulfil our human potential?

### Benefits and application of attitude

Attitude can be applied to all areas of life, in numerous ways. Some of the main areas that could massively benefit are as follows.

The current primary, secondary, and tertiary education system is lacking, failing the younger generations. A deeper approach to education is required. The key to success is attitude, not knowledge alone. Learning attitude must be a necessary part of any quality education programme, preparing young people for adult life.

Businesses, the public sector, and charitable organisations can all significantly benefit from increased competence. Attitude is the key to greater effectiveness and efficiency. The attitude of staff at every level, from ground floor to senior management, is an untapped potential - offering substantial additional capability. Mediocrity and “dumbing down” should be challenged. On a personal level, job satisfaction and job security is heightened through better attitude, as well as the likelihood of promotion and achieving your preferred employment.



## 1a. Attitude - the key to success

Attitude psychology

making life better

key factors

going for gold

personal development

brain

excellence

be the best you can be

think

capability

growth

effectiveness and efficiency

think more

success

achievement

performance

delivery

make a difference

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Most employers and recruitment agencies recognise the benefits of attitude. People with qualities such as determination, being prepared, trustworthiness, a willingness to work hard, and so on are always in high demand. So having completed a course on attitude could be the “stand out” factor on your CV. Furthermore, it demonstrates to employers that you are self-motivated.

Our 16 key factors are equally relevant when it comes to the aim of achieving and maintaining healthy long-term personal relationships. This is especially true with regards to intimate relationships with a partner, as well as all parent-child interactions. Many family and intimate relationships need to mature; the current situation is usually far from ideal. There is too much unnecessary heartache and dysfunction. Change for the better is long overdue. Serious levels of respect are necessary for love to thrive.

Many people are searching for that “something more”. This is often known as personal or spiritual development. It might be linked with a campaigning desire to see improvements in social justice. Attitude, yet again, provides the answers for precisely what needs to be learned and unlearned. Our approach is no-nonsense and works on the principle of “Actions speak louder than words”.

If your dream is doing well at sport, or any other leisure pursuit, attitude once more is the key to success.

Better thinking skills, development of character strengths, more capability, greater caring, clearer understanding, wisdom, etc are all centred around having a “being the best you can be” attitude.



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What are YOUR dreams?

## Komsberg Wilderness Nature Reserve

Throughout this course, as an example of how attitude can be applied in practice, we'll be using Komsberg Wilderness Nature Reserve. This is our own nature reserve in South Africa. It's a huge and challenging place: 30,700 acres or 125 sq km in size, 17 miles in length. Komsberg is one of the biggest private nature reserves in the country. The sense of wilderness is authentic and truly awesome.

Komsberg Wilderness Nature Reserve is a special place. It is situated within both the upland succulent Karoo and fynbos biomes (if you don't know, a biome is a major ecosystem), widely recognised as two of the world's 25 most important conservation hotspots for biodiversity.

To establish a reserve as big as Komsberg involves serious hard work - in our case, underpinned by outstanding psychological attitude. We've successfully re-introduced lots of large wild animals. But, first, we had to erect over 98km or 61 miles of perimeter fencing to a height of 2.4m.

We'll be providing specific examples of what it takes to manage this amazing place, module by module. Later in the course, we'll also use other aspects of our work to illustrate practical application. You'll hopefully be inspired to make your own dreams come true, whatever they might be.



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One of Komsberg's  
many spectacular views



## Learning attitude: helpful tips

This is a modular course, which means learning on a step-by-step basis. We are starting slowly, with the basics. As you progress through the course, we will tackle more complex issues; by then, you will be better prepared to understand more. Gradually, the accumulated know-how will build and show up as increased benefits. But it takes time: “Rome wasn’t built in a day.” That said, you also need the enthusiasm that Rome *can* be built in a day - as well as patience.

This course is aimed widely, for a worldwide audience. It is as relevant for someone who is already experienced as it is for the beginner, as well as for any age of adult. In aiming for such a broad readership, we have nevertheless done our best to stay true to explaining each subject regardless of who or where you are. However, we appreciate that these first few modules start off by introducing the fundamentals; if your understanding is advanced, please bear with us and keep going - because there is plenty of detailed content in this course suitable for your level, and this could be possibly overlooked.

We take an honest, straight-talking, and bullshit-free approach. We don’t use any clever buzz words or jargon to hide a lack of practical understanding. Likewise, we don’t waffle, hype or jazz anything up, nor seek to make ourselves look clever. Whenever possible, we do our best to keep things simple. We explain a topic conceptually, with the aim of it being practically applied. We may refer to psychology studies, yet do not provide references for what we mention, as this



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is not an academic publication. We trust that our uncomplicated style won't be mistaken for lacking detail or conceptual depth, as it does not.

When you are reading through these modules, try to minimise any outer distractions that might interrupt your focus. Create the time and space for learning. Then read slowly and deeply. We often pack a lot into just a few words or sentences, so it's easy to miss some important meaning if you rush ahead too quickly. We strongly advise that you re-read the modules as you develop; by doing so, you'll acquire additional understanding. As with anything in life, the more effort you put in, the more you'll get out of it - so approach this course with as much seriousness as possible.



### Activity (optional):



We suggest you watch the following talk on changing education paradigms by Ken Robinson. Here's the link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>

This slightly different Ken Robinson TED talk is also worth watching, with added humour. Here's the link:

[http://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html)

Email us at [attitudcourse@gmail.com](mailto:attitudcourse@gmail.com) for module 1b.

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