

Get Rid of Negative Thoughts/Overcoming You!

By Roger Manning

We all have our moments in life where we will have tougher times and sometimes we encounter situations that we can hardly bare. No one gets through life without tough times. Sometimes many of us feel like the world is picking on us more so than the next guy. Perhaps you are truly experiencing a string of bad luck compared to most people. Perhaps you just lost your job right on the tails of going through an ugly divorce. Three months ago you were informed of a death in the family.

How you perceive and manage your negative situations is how your life will be. If you perceive your situation as negative and chose to react negatively to it, then your outward appearance, mannerisms and speaking patterns will also become negative. You are what you think about!

When it comes to gaining employment though, most employers want to hire happy people and avoid hiring people who are down on themselves. Employers can tell which potential employee has the glass of water that is "half full" as compared to the employee whose glass is "half empty"!

Which candidate would you prefer to hire and work with based upon these interactions, Candidate 1 or Candidate 2?

Employer: "Hi John, how has your day been going so far"?

Candidate 1: "Oh OK I guess. The traffic was really bad on the way over here and the heavy rain kept everyone bumper-to-bumper. I was really worried whether I was going to make this interview".

Candidate 2: "Fantastic. I am really happy to be here and meet you. Although the traffic was really jammed up this morning, it gave me a chance to think about some good questions regarding this opportunity. I am excited about speaking with you".

Recent Downsizing/lay off Attitudes

Employer: "Tell me about the circumstances revolving around your release from XYZ Company".

Candidate 1: "Sure, XYZ Company was recently acquired by Acme Corporation and Acme simply did not want to keep any of the XYZ employees. You know, they look after their own. I didn't matter how good my results were, I just wasn't one of them".

Candidate 2: "It is unfortunate for me and many others that Acme Corporation already had strong management in place when they acquired XYZ Company. I was ranked #2 out of 12 other managers in my same capacity. Acme told me that I had been a tremendous asset to XYZ and they could see me as a tremendous asset for them. However, they had no room on the team for me at this location due to duplication. They did in fact offer me another opportunity

which I had to decline due to relocation. I am leaving XYZ/Acme with very strong references and recommendations. In fact, the President of XYZ told me that you could call him personally. The whole experience has taught me that I have done well in my career with XYZ and am valued for all of my accomplishments. I am ready to give all my energy and experience to my new employer”!

Extended Unemployment

You can see yourself and your situation in many ways but you are truly in control of how you see it...positive or negative. Let’s look at these situations and word descriptions of how you could perceive yourself. How would you describe yourself if:

Recent Divorce

- I don’t know what I am going to do! **OR** I have some really good plans and ideas for my life this year!
- I am scared! **OR** I am really excited and have an opportunity to move on!
- How am I going to make a living? **OR** I have the opportunity to pursue whatever career opportunities that I want!
- I can’t! **OR** I can!
- Help! **OR** Can I help you?

Older Employee

- I am old. **OR** I am mature and experienced.
- I am too experienced. **OR** I am able and willing.
- I am tired. **OR** I am enthused and energized.

Pessimistic Attitude About Life

- What is the use? **OR** I love a good challenge!
- Why me? **OR** I am glad to have this chance to learn from this experience!
- Do I have to? **OR** This is great! I am so happy to have this opportunity!

Overweight/Physical Appearance

- I am fat! **OR** I am a beautiful person who can excel at whatever I chose regardless of my weight! I will begin to reduce my over-eating!
- I am so tired! **OR** I am excited about getting up every morning and going to work! I will begin to get more exercise too!
- I am unattractive! **OR** I have a great personality that wins people’s friendship! I can improve my appearance with a new hairstyle!
- I have old clothes! **OR** Clothes don’t make the man. I have a great personality! Besides, I can do better at ironing my clothes and shining my shoes.

Do you see the difference? Would you want to hire Candidate 1 or Candidate 2?

Can you hear how the second candidate ignores the negative or chooses to "paint a mental picture" that has a more positive outlook on life? I am putting Candidate 2 on my team.

So how can you sound happy when you're really feeling the opposite? First, admit you have a problem. Tell yourself out loud that you have a tendency to be pessimistic and that you are going to look for the positive. You don't need to totally revise your personality, but you have to recognize that it's not a lot of fun to be around someone who's cranky and negative, and people have that choice when they hire.

Set yourself in front of a mirror. Pay special attention to your posture. Are you sitting up-right and erect or do you slouch? Did you know that slouching and poor posture can affect your attitude negatively? How about eye contact with yourself? Do you look yourself in the eyes and have a tendency to not want to or to feel sorry for yourself? Well, cut it out and tell yourself that you are an important person to look squarely in the eye. You have to respect yourself before other will respect you! Do you frown and/or have frown wrinkles?

Did you know that it takes more muscles and effort to frown than it does to smile? A frown is like an old house in need of repairs. A smile adds face value and is like new siding on that old house! Whether you frown or smile is totally your decision. So sit in front of the mirror and smile. See how easy it can be. Did you notice that what you felt so bad about before suddenly doesn't seem so bad when you are smiling? It is really hard to feel sorry for yourself or to feel bad when you are smiling! Always practice answering interview questions in front of your mirror prior to going to the interview. Be sure to smile and let your personality flow.

Next, set up reasonable daily goals and reward yourself when you accomplish them. If you are unemployed, a reasonable goal might be making five personal contacts each day this week. I will improve that to 7 new contacts per day next week. The goal can't be vague or too large, and certainly shouldn't be "I'm going to find a job today." You need some steps leading to the outcome. Likewise if you are "blue" or depressed about being overweight, you wouldn't set a goal of losing 25 pounds in one week. Create small goals which lead to success and then create larger goals that stretch you and challenge you to success. You will learn that achieving small steps becomes fast and you look forward to accomplishing bigger steps.

Next, you have to tell yourself that job hunting is a numbers game and it is hard work! Yes it is work so go at this with some discipline and dedication. You can't lie in bed all day 3 days a week and send a few resumes out and expect to accomplish your goal.

Realize that every "no" is one step closer to the "yes".

Finally, you must network with friends, business acquaintances, Search Consultants, advisors, consultants as well as make direct contact with potential hiring managers. If you find yourself having difficulty maintaining a positive attitude, you may want to seek the advice of your pastor, family counseling or close confidant. I find help in prayer.

Can You Do It? Of Course You Can!

Can people really turn their job searches around just by reining in negative thoughts?

Picture every interview as your ideal job. Your attitude should be that "THIS IS" the job and I am interviewing like it will be the last job that I will ever have. After the interview, you can turn it down if you want, but use the same kind of enthusiasm. It wasn't for me but the next will be. I am grateful for this opportunity to meet you and hear about the opportunity. Have enthusiasm and energy each time. You'd soon be energized to go to work each day, so emphasize that you're a high-energy person who's energized to go to work.

Picture who you want to work with, where the job will be and what you'd be doing. When you go into an interview, you'll already see yourself helping the employer succeed. That attitude will come through. "It's not 'Do you want me?' It's 'Here's how I'm able to help you'".

And as for being too old or overweight, just remember everyone has something to overcome. So get out there and try one more time because this may be the day you talk to the person who puts you in touch with someone who hires you for your dream job. This is the same philosophy that I begin each work day as a Search Consultant. I know there is someone out there that can lead me to that perfect candidate for each of my job assignments. This will work for you too.