

SUPERCOMPETENT KEY #6: ATTITUDE

Attitude is your motivation, drive, and proactiveness.

The most effective people in any endeavor are those with a hard-working, positive, can-do attitude. Their attitudes exude the kind of passion that commits fully to a course of action and sees it all the way through. It's infectious, and it keeps them and others in their team moving forward, even when the way becomes difficult.

In order to succeed in a competitive work environment, you have to be a self-starter, consistently driven, consistently flexible, and consistently innovative. You must also learn to be a good communicator in all directions: up to your customers and superiors, laterally to your coworkers, and down to your subordinates.

On top of all that, you have to be willing to accommodate different personalities, points of view, and the various vagaries of emotion and circumstance that affect other people's behavior on a daily basis.

Having trouble honing your Attitude to a *SuperCompetent* level? Keep these five tips in mind:

1. **Keep an eye on your stress level.** It's a mistake to ignore your emotional health. Negative emotions, stress, worry, and your temper can all conspire to bring you down—especially if you don't take the occasional break to recharge your batteries. Don't let them cause you to boil over and impair your productivity.
2. **Even when a task is monumental, keep working at it until you whittle it down to size.** Most tasks can be broken down into manageable subtasks. Don't look at that mountain of work and just give up. Dive in, find an efficient way to do what needs to be done, and move that mountain.
3. **Don't be afraid to unleash your creativity and apply it to problems at work.** If you try, you just may discover a new, simpler way of doing things. Without creativity there is no progress, no change, no experimentation, no innovation. Creativity, properly used, opens up new worlds of possibility and profit.
4. **Learn to communicate clearly.** People can't read your mind. Clean communication is necessary in all directions in order to avoid misunderstandings and mistakes. Learn to deal with difficult personalities, emphasize teamwork, and play nice—even when others don't seem willing to do so.



5. **Look for a silver lining in every situation.** Do your best to be positive at all times. Wherever it's possible, try to reframe challenges and problems as opportunities. Sure, maybe it's not what you were looking for, but some of the world's most spectacular successes started as spectacular failures.

Your attitude is your state of mind, the way you perceive the world about you. So be upbeat; be positive; and always have a can-do attitude about work and what you can accomplish there. A particular task may seem outrageously difficult, and it may seem impossible for anything human to accomplish it, but here's one thing that's certain: if you don't try, you'll definitely never get it done.

On the other hand, if you jump right in, show your willingness to be part of a team and to make the proper effort to accomplish whatever needs to be done, you'll become insanely productive. Do this right, and you'll end up so far ahead you'll wonder when you passed the finish line.

© 2010 Laura Stack. Laura Stack is a personal productivity expert, author, and professional speaker whose mission is to build high-performance productivity cultures in organizations by creating Maximum Results in Minimum Time®. She is the president of The Productivity Pro®, Inc., a time management training firm specializing in productivity improvement in high-stress organizations and the 2011-2012 President of the National Speakers Association. Since 1992, Laura has presented keynotes and seminars on improving output, lowering stress, and saving time in today's workplaces. She is the bestselling author of four books: *SUPERCOMPETENT*; *The Exhaustion Cure*; *Find More Time*; and *Leave the Office Earlier*. Laura has been a spokesperson for Microsoft, 3M, Xerox, and Office Depot. She is the creator of The Productivity Pro® planner by Day-Timer and has been featured on the CBS Early Show, CNN, and the *New York Times*. Her clients include Starbucks, Cisco Systems, Wal-Mart, and Bank of America. To have Laura speak at your next event, call 303-471-7401 or visit www.TheProductivityPro.com to sign up for her free monthly productivity newsletter.