

Qualities of an Optimistic Leader

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Qualities of an Optimistic Leader

Definitions

- **Optimism**
 - NOUN
 - hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something.
 - "the talks had been amicable and there were grounds for optimism"
 - *synonyms:*
 - hopefulness · hope · confidence · buoyancy · cheer · good cheer · cheerfulness · sanguineness · positiveness · positive attitude

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Definitions

- **Pessimism**

- NOUN

- a tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen; a lack of hope or confidence in the future.

- "the dispute cast an air of deep pessimism over the future of the peace talks"

- *synonyms:*

- defeatism · negative thinking · negativity · expecting the worst · doom and gloom · gloom · gloominess · hopelessness · lack of hope · cynicism · fatalism · depression ·

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Definitions

- **Realism**
 - NOUN
 - the attitude or practice of accepting a situation as it is and being prepared to deal with it accordingly.
 - "the summit was marked by a new mood of realism"
 - *synonyms:*
 - pragmatism · practicality · matter-of-factness · common sense ·

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Three Qualities of Optimistic Leaders

- They Anticipate the Joy in Life
- They Expect to Win
 - If you expect to win, your hopeful mindset will ripple throughout your organization
- They Let Gratitude Guide Them
 - Exceptional leaders regularly thank their team members for their work. They let them know they appreciate their efforts and value their commitment.

Qualities of an Optimistic Leader

8 Reasons why Optimists are Better Leaders

- 1. **Optimists are Solution-Focused**
 - Want to solve problems and improve the situation they are in.
 - Focus on finding a solution, not analyzing the issues surrounding the problem.

Questions to ask:

- What is needed? not What is wrong?
- What is going well? not What is going badly?
- What progress can be made?
- How can we measure that the solution is working?

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- **2. Optimists are not Afraid of Failure**
 - More resilient and able to quickly “bounce back” from failure;
 - Is a risk-taker and comfortable making tough decisions;
 - “Optimism is an essential ingredient for innovation. How else can the individual welcome change over security, adventure over staying in safe places.” – Robert Noyce, Intel Co-Founder
 - Do not seek scapegoats or play the blame game.
 - Want to know what went wrong and what can be done differently to avoid the same mistakes.

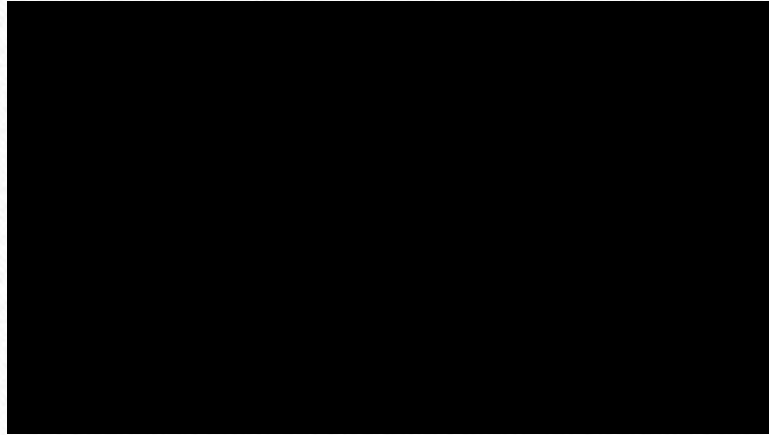
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- **3. Optimists are Great Communicators**
 - Get their energy from people. Good at creating and keeping long-term relationships;
 - Understand the importance of engaging and motivating others. They have a commitment to succeed and will speak from the heart rather than using data reports or research to back them up;
 - To be a good leader, you need to be a good communicator and effective at engaging others to share in your vision of the future.
 - Ronald Reagan – “The Great Communicator”
 - “Optimism was the secret behind his charisma. He was described as an eternal optimist, believed in a better future.” – General Colin Powell

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- Ronald Reagan



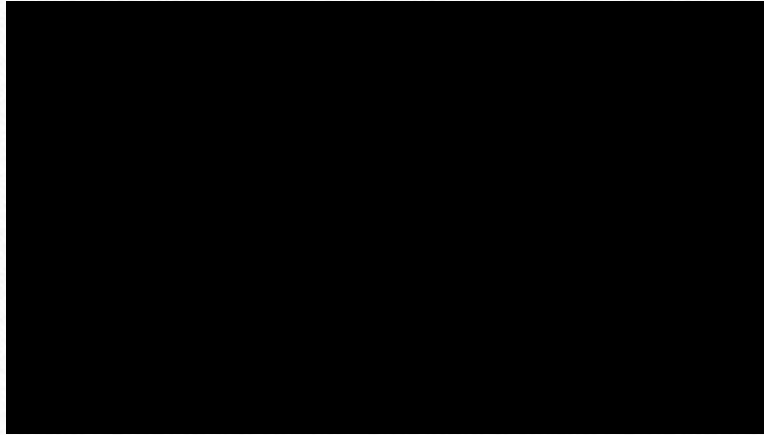
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- 4. **Optimists are future oriented thinkers**
 - A big picture thinker has a positive view of the future, looking at the possibility of the great things that could happen in the future.
 - An optimist sees opportunity where others see uncertainty and despair. When the economy is down, the pessimist uses those factors to stay in place.
 - Kennedy moon speech

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John F. Kennedy



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- 5. Optimists use the language of motivation
 - Winston Churchill – He would assess the situation and acknowledge the reality of it. He then would present a strategy for overcoming the challenge. He would create the vision of what the future would look like when they were successful.
 - Churchill faced many skeptics prior to entering WWII. He did a series of optimistic speeches turned the tide that

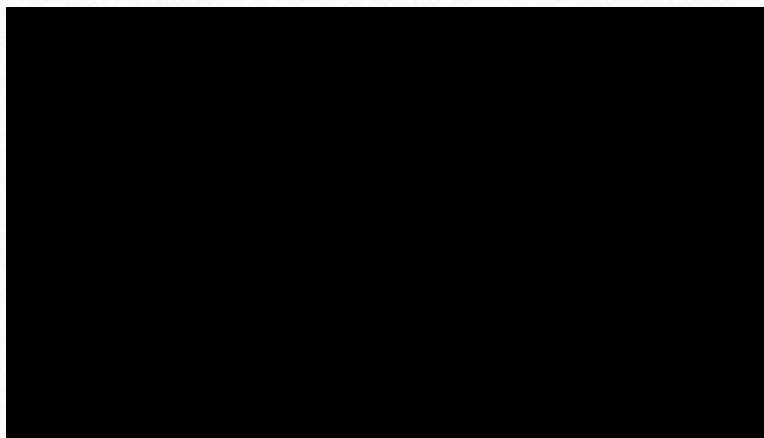
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- 6. **Optimists behaviors are infectious**
 - Research – When people are surrounded by happy people they are more likely to become happy too. The research even calculated that happiness could spread and impact on people up to three degrees of separation.
 - Optimistic leaders' behaviors are infectious and they have a positive impact on the morale and state of happiness of the people they had.
 - “Your employees are looking to you for inspiration and they’re not getting it from the news headlines. You need to inspire your employees, clients, customers, infusing them with the confidence that in the end, all will be well.” – General Colin Powell
 - Jim Valvano speech

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Jim Valvano



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8 Reasons why Optimists are Better Leaders

- 7. Optimists value the principle of collaboration
 - Do not like to work alone and will seek others thoughts and opinions before making decisions;
 - Will openly share info and knowledge with others to enable them to fully participate in the decision making process;
 - Optimists style is not one of command and control but where diversity and the expression of opposing thought and opinions are encouraged.
 - Maybe it can't be done, but always start out believing it can be done until the facts and analysis pile up against it. Don't surround yourself by skeptics but don't shut our skeptics who give you solid counterviews.

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8 Reasons why Optimists are Better Leaders

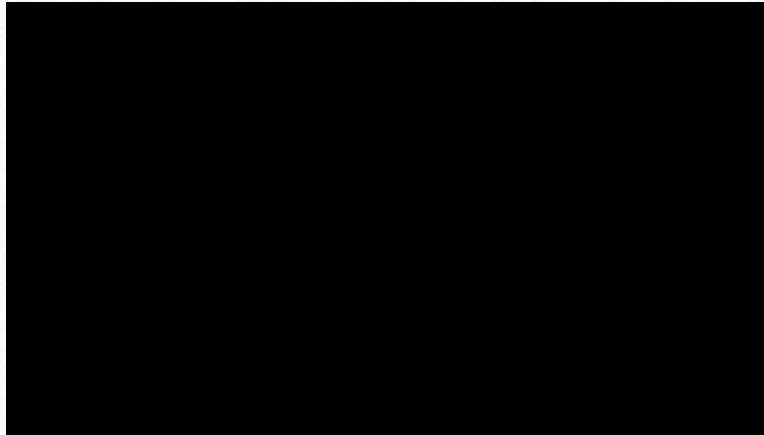
- 8. Optimists have a Success Mindset

- Always focus on the positive aspects of a situation
- Hope and belief in a better future
- Focus on opportunities instead of obstacles;
- Negativity and fear do not belong in the world;
- Does not allow their people to wallow in the dark and difficult times.

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” - Churchill

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Martin Luther King, Jr.



Qualities of an Optimistic Leader

Martin Luther King, Jr.

- *"If you can't fly, then run; if you can't run, then walk; if you can't walk, then crawl; but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward."*
- *"We must accept finite disappointment but never lose infinite hope."*
- *"I have a dream."*
- *"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree."*
- *"Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase."*

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- Alan Loy McGinnis – Author of *The Power of Optimism*
 - “Optimists look for partial solutions, freed from perfectionism and analysis paralysis; open to taking small steps toward achieving success.”
 - “Optimists use their imagination to rehearse success. They play positive mental videos and believe their personal best is yet to come.”
- Gottfried Leibniz – Inventor of Calculus
 - “Optimism is an emotional competence that can help boost productivity, enhance employee morale, overcome conflict and have a positive impact on the bottom line.”

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Strategies You Can Consider to Become more Optimistic or in Helping Someone Else Who Suffers from Pessimism

- 1. Avoid negative environments
 - Stay away from the professional complainer
- 2. Celebrate your strengths
 - Play out your strengths, not correct your weaknesses. Focus on what you do well.
- 3. Take care of your spiritual and emotional well-being
 - Read, especially biographies of successful people.
- 4. Manage or ignore what you cannot change
 - Ben Franklin – “While we may not be able to control all that happens to us, we can control what happens inside us.” $E+R=O$

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Strategies You Can Consider to Become more Optimistic or in Helping Someone Else Who Suffers from Pessimism

- 5. Learn to re-frame
 - Shift perspective and look for hidden positives in a negative situation
- 6. Adapt your language and outlook
 - Yes..... But; shift to Yes..... And
- 7. Focus outside yourself
 - Important people, pursuits, and projects that fire you up
- 8. Nurture a culture of optimism
 - When you are in charge of other people at work, expect people to succeed, even when they fail, encourage them so that they can tackle the next challenge

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Strategies You Can Consider to Become more Optimistic or in Helping Someone Else Who Suffers from Pessimism

- 9. Cultivate spontaneity
 - Take a walk with kids, play a game;
 - Get out of your comfort zone and being spontaneous helps to develop your optimistic muscle.
- 10. Consider the health benefits
 - Consider stats linking optimism to greater health.

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- The American, by nature, is optimistic. He is experimental, an inventor and a builder who builds best when called upon to build greatly. - John F. Kennedy