

6 Ways to Remain Positive (and Productive) in Difficult Situations

No one needs to tell you that one of the keys to staying positive in the workplace is to enjoy what you're doing. However, each of us is bound to face personal or professional challenges that will impact our attitudes and productivity at work. Regardless of your circumstances, there are a number of tactics that you can use to stay positive, and many are actually quite simple.

1. Look for the positive in the negative.

Sounds too simplistic to work, but your outlook often has a way of affecting how you approach a situation. When something goes wrong, look at it from a different perspective and try to find the positive in the problem. Consider whether you now have an opportunity to learn something new or to demonstrate to others how you handle stressful circumstances. Take the time to ask yourself questions about how the circumstances could lead to something good.

2. Be realistic about the situation.

Sometimes, you can lose perspective in difficult situations, especially when challenges are close to you. Take a step back, breathe, and refocus your energy. Not only will this help keep the situation in perspective, it can provide you to be proactive rather than reactive.

3. Seek support.

Others can often shed new light on a challenging situation. Talk to a colleague, friend, or family member for a little moral support. They might help you frame the situation in a different way — and possibly even help you come up with a solution to ease your worry or concern.

4. Set some goals.

It's hard to stay positive and motivated without goals. Even small goals can do wonders for your mood and motivation. Set aside some time to develop short-term goals for the difficulties you're currently experiencing. This will give you something positive to focus on as you work through the situation. Once you've settled on your short-term goals, set some long-term ones as well. Both will provide you with momentum to change the situation for the better.

5. Help out one of your colleagues.

There's no doubt you've heard the old adage, "You get what you give." Helping out a colleague on a special project can make you feel a lot more productive, and productivity can have a positive impact on your mood. It also comes with the added bonus of showing others a willingness to take on additional work, which isn't a bad way to propel your career growth.

6. Get some exercise.

Exercise isn't just a great way to burn off stress. It can also help with your waning positivity. Consider getting a little exercise before you come into the office. Better yet, use exercise as a way of removing yourself (momentarily, at least) from difficult situations. Go for a walk. Take a break and hit the gym. Simply do something to clear your head.

There's no denying that staying positive in a difficult situation takes a great deal of effort. But rarely is that effort wasted, because you'll often come out better for it in the end.