

# Positively Contagious



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The Swine Flu is not the only thing you catch at work. Turns out you are just as likely to catch someone's bad mood and negative attitude. Yes, the latest research demonstrates what we've all known to be true, emotions are contagious. Researchers call them emotional contagions and they impact our work environments, productivity, teamwork, service and performance in significant and profound ways.

As we know all too well, one negative employee can pollute an entire team and create a toxic work environment. One negative leader can make work miserable for his/her team. An employee in a bad mood can scare away countless customers. Complaining can act like a cancer and spread throughout the entire organization and eventually destroy your vision and goals. And pervasive negative attitudes can sabotage the morale and performance of teams with great talent and potential.

That's the bad news... but there's also good news.

Positive emotions are just as contagious as negative emotions. One positive leader can rally a group of willing people to accomplish amazing things. One Chief Energy Officer who sits at the welcome desk can positively infect every person who walks in your business/school/workplace.

One positive team member can slowly but surely improve the mood and moral of her team. And pervasive positive attitudes and emotions at work can fuel the morale and performance of your organization.

Emotional contagions are the reason why when I speak to businesses, schools and sports teams I say that everyone in the organization contributes to the culture of it. You are not just a creation of your culture but rather you are creating it every day through your thoughts, beliefs and actions. What you think matters. How you feel matters. And the energy you share with others, whether it's positive or negative, really matters.

You can be a germ and attack your organization's immune system or you can act like a dose of Vitamin C and strengthen it.

So the next time you head into work with a bad mood you might want to stop before you walk in the door and consider what your boss would say if you had the Swine Flu. She would tell you to stay home until you are healthy and not contagious. And in that moment, as you stand at the door you have choice: You can go home so you don't infect anyone with your bad mood, or you can choose to get healthy right there, change your attitude, and decide to be positively contagious.

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