

NEWSLETTER

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What Does Your Attitude Say About You?

Did you know that you can read people's minds? Perhaps you are not aware of it, but you do it every day, just like other people read your mind on a daily basis. How is this possible? It is done through attitude appraisals.

Every day people are telling you 'I'm bored with my job,' or 'I think you are important,' or perhaps 'I don't like you.' They don't need to use words to convey these feelings, how they think shows in the way they act. Our attitude is like a mirror. It reflects our thinking.

It is often the case that conflict begins as a result of one's attitude. We may act in a way that, even though we do not realise it, causes resentment and anger in other people. Our actions really do speak louder than words.

This is true in every situation we may find ourselves in, but I will concentrate on our attitudes in the dojo.

There are many opportunities in the dojo to act in a certain way that annoys other people. When asked to put the mats away, do you jump straight in or do you disappear to put your kit away? When you borrow a weapon, do you give it back to its owner after training or leave it on the side? When asked to pay your fees, do you pay them on time or does it take a couple of weeks?

To take the mats as an example, when you help your attitude says "I am keen to help out, I want to be part of the team and do my fair share to help the other guys." However, if you don't help then your attitude says "I can't be bothered, I don't care about helping anyone out, I'm just looking after myself."

Which attitude do you think will get you the support and respect of both the instructor and the other students?

You will have noticed by now that I am quite passionate about how we treat the mats we use for training. I insist that they are put away neatly, even if we do not find them in this condition. This is firstly because they are not my mats, so I treat them with respect. Secondly, it gives a message to the owner of the mats. This action says "I care about your mats, and I appreciate you letting me use them so I will look after them". This makes the owner happy, and he/she will continue to let me use them for our training because they know I will look after them.

What would my actions say if I left them in an untidy state, or did not put them away properly? Would the owner still let me use them?

Your attitude can also be seen in many other ways, such as the way you bow, the way you dress and look after your training clothing, the way you address your fellow students, both higher grades and the grades that are lower than yourself. As you can see, it's actually quite frightening what we give away about ourselves by just being ourselves!

Also remember that our attitudes are powerful teachers. If a senior student is rude to lower grades, or applying techniques with too much power, what is that senior student teaching the lower grades? He is teaching the lower grades that it is ok to be rude, or to be violent. When in a position of authority, people constantly scrutinise you and watch how you behave. If your attitude is wrong, people will pick up on this and justify their actions based upon your behaviour, "its ok because so and so did that the other day."

Part of our training is to understand the result of our actions on other people, both the physical technique and our non-physical actions. Our success or failure in everything we do depends on our attitude. Learn to cultivate a positive and enthusiastic attitude, you will be amazed at the results.

Train hard,

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