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THINK... Like an Entrepreneur

Whether you aspire to be an entrepreneur or an employee, learning to think like an entrepreneur will make you more successful. In fact, today's employers want to hire and advance people with entrepreneurial traits. Developing the qualities of an entrepreneur will enhance your job stature and further your career. The activities in this packet will give a glimpse into the mindset of some celebrated entrepreneurs and provide ideas and tips to help you...

THINK like an entrepreneur.

THINK... Positively

The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude.

— Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey is one of the richest and most influential women in the United States. Her political endorsements can turn a candidate into a president and her book club recommendations can catapult an author into a million dollar success. Yet Oprah began life in a poor Mississippi family. She endured abusive family relationships and had neither guidance nor love from either of her parents. Fortunately, Oprah was smart, talented, creative and ambitious — all traits that have helped to win her fame and fortune. But the one quality most responsible for her great success has been her **positive attitude**. In every situation she faced, Oprah focused on finding a positive outcome. Oprah made it her mission to deliver an uplifting message via her television show and through her OWN network. Because Oprah recognizes the power of a positive attitude and understands that positivity is contagious, she surrounds herself with people who share this all important trait.

Check Your Attitude

Rate yourself. Read the statement and circle the number where you feel you belong. If you circle a 10, you are saying your attitude could not be better in this area; if you circle a 1, you are saying it could not be worse. (For additional insight, have someone who knows you well rate your attitude and compare the two results.)

	Positive										Negative									
1. If I were to guess, I would say that my boss would currently rate my attitude as a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. Given a chance, my co-workers and family would rate my attitude as a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. Realistically, I would rate my current attitude as a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. In dealing with others, I believe my effectiveness would rate a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. My current creativity level is a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. If there were a meter that could gauge my sense of humor, I believe it would read close to a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. My recent disposition – the patience and sensitivity I show to others – deserves a rating of a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. When it comes to not allowing little things to bother me, I deserve a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. Based upon the number of compliments I have received lately, I deserve a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. I would rate my enthusiasm toward my job and life during the past few weeks as a...	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Total _____

A score of 90 or over is a signal that your attitude is “in tune” and no adjustments seem necessary; a score between 70 and 90 indicates that minor adjustments may help; a rating between 50 and 70 suggests a major adjustment; if you rated yourself below 50, a complete overhaul may be required.

THINK... Critically

The whole of science is nothing more than a refinement of everyday thinking.

— Albert Einstein

Solve a Problem Each Day

You become a better basketball player by playing basketball or a better piano player by playing the piano. You can become a better critical thinker by using a problem solving process. See if you can find a solution to some of your everyday challenges using this 5 step strategy.



Identify Write down a problem you want to solve or a situation you want to make better.



Question Ask questions to learn as much as you can about what's causing the problem.



List Propose different solutions to this problem.



Evaluate Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed solution.



Act Choose the best solution and try it out.

After graduating from Princeton University with degrees in electrical engineering and computer science, Jeff Bezos joined a New York investment bank where he was in charge of evaluating the investment possibilities of the Internet. While Web usage was growing by more than 2,000 percent a year, in 1994, the Internet was still not being used for commerce. The amazing potential of the Internet sparked Bezos' entrepreneurial imagination. After exploring many possibilities, he decided that books could be sold electronically. Bezos quit his job, borrowed start-up money and moved to Washington to open a virtual bookstore in his garage. Bezos named his new site, Amazon, after the South American river, and Amazon.com sold its first book in July 1995. It has since become the largest retailer on the Web and the model for Internet sales. Bezos used his well-honed critical thinking skills — **observing, questioning, exploring, analyzing and acting on information** — to come up with his idea and bring it to fruition.

THINK... Action!

Just Do It!

— Nike slogan

The elevation of athletic shoe manufacturing to both a science and a fashion didn't come about until Phil Knight and Bill Bowerman got together. In 1958, Phil Knight, a business major at the University of Oregon, was a miler on coach Bowerman's Oregon track team. Bowerman was obsessed with making his track team the best. He was convinced that a better track shoe would give his team an advantage. Bowerman designed different shoes and Knight tried them out. After Knight left Oregon he enrolled in a Stanford MBA program, where he learned more about starting a business. He also travelled to Japan and connected with a shoe manufacturer who made samples of Bowerman's shoes. Knight started successfully selling these sample shoes out of the trunk of his car. In 1968 Knight and Bowerman formed Nike, Inc. to produce their shoes. Today Nike is a major publicly traded sportswear and equipment supplier headquartered in Oregon, and employs more than 30,000 people worldwide.

Use the 2-Minute Rule

You may put off taking action because you are waiting to free up a "big chunk" of time to accomplish a major undertaking. But if you practice taking action on little things that take only 2-5 minutes to complete, you will be surprised at what you can achieve. Organizational expert, David Allen, advises his clients to follow the two-minute rule. It states that: ***if an action can be done in two minutes or less, do it immediately.***

Write down 10 things you can do today in two to five minutes. Then consider how taking immediate action might make you feel.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- ✓ Use the 2 minute rule to deal with your emails. See how many you can act on immediately. After a while you will become better and better at making decisions, solving problems and taking action.
- ✓ Before each class take 2 minutes to write down 3 questions you might be asked. Then spend another 2 minutes writing responses. This activity will increase your focus and attention and you will be better prepared to learn.
- ✓ Take 2 minutes to write down a problem or challenge and 3 new ideas or solutions. Put your responses aside. You have now activated your unconscious and you will often find that while working on something else your subconscious will come up with possible solutions.

THINK... Persistence

Get a good idea and stay with it. Dog it, and work at it until it's done right.

— Walt Disney

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because “he lacked imagination and had no good ideas.” He went bankrupt five times before he built Disneyland. Thomas Edison’s teachers said he was “too stupid to learn anything” and he was fired from his first job for being “nonproductive.” He tried over 9,000 kinds of filament before he found one that would work in the light bulb. Albert Einstein did not speak until he was 4 years old and flunked grade-school mathematics. His parents and teachers agreed that he was slow, unsociable and adrift in foolish dreams. J.K. Rowlings was jobless, a single parent and nearly destitute when her first Harry Potter book was rejected by twelve publishing houses. Steve Jobs was kicked out of his own company, Apple, and returned to make it the most valuable brand in the world. Each of these resilient individuals faced failure and rejections and turned their stumbling blocks into stepping stones. Developing the ability to persist when things go wrong is an important skill every entrepreneur must cultivate.

Keep on keeping on...

Respond to each statement about persistence by writing a brief explanation of why you agree or disagree.

You need a positive attitude to persist in difficult situations.

I agree/disagree because... _____

Having a goal in mind helps a person persist.

I agree/disagree because... _____

People fail because they give up too easily.

I agree/disagree because... _____

It is important to resist people who might prevent you from accomplishing your goals.

I agree/disagree because... _____

Show You've GOT IT!

Whether you choose to follow in the footsteps of these famous entrepreneurs and open your own business, or you want to find a job as a valued employee, demonstrating that you **think like an entrepreneur** will help you land a good job. Here are some common job interview situations, respond to each one in a way that “shows-off” your entrepreneurial mindset.

THINK... Positively

Describe how you will make a positive first impression on a potential employer without saying a word.

THINK... Critically

How would you respond to an interview question about how you go about solving problems?

THINK... Action!

If an employer asked you to explain a time you took a bold action to solve a problem, what would you say?

THINK... Persistence

Everyone has set backs. What story could you tell a job interviewer about a time you turned an obstacle into a success?

THINK... Like an Entrepreneur!

Want more? Ask your instructor for an “Entrepreneur – RU1?” map.

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