Welcome to Two-Minute Tuesday. I'm Audrey Savas. Our topic today is controlling workplace negativity before it spreads.

Negative attitudes are a lot like a common cold. It can start with just one employee, but soon everyone is feeling the effects, and morale and performance decline.

But unlike the common cold, there's a cure! Enthusiasm and positive attitudes can spread just as quickly — improving performance and increasing productivity.

So how do we prepare, handle, or fix workplace negativity? Here are five tips, from Dale Carnegie, for overcoming workplace negativity with enthusiasm.

Tip 1: Turn barriers into opportunities. Think of negative behaviors and attitudes as opportunities for improvement. Now, instead of dreading these issues, you can maintain your own positive attitude by controlling your response.

Tip 2: Replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk. Negative thoughts impact our outlook, erode our confidence, and lead to self-doubt. Look for negative messages in your own thinking or in the thinking and actions of others. Then, try turning the negatives into positives. Positive thinking will result in positive actions and results.

Tip 3: Build relationships based on trust. Negative attitudes make it difficult to trust others; and without trust you can’t influence positive change. Use positive attitudes and enthusiasm to build relationships. Taking action to build trust will increase comfort levels and strengthen relationships.

Tip 4: Win people to your way of thinking. When handled well, disagreements are opportunities for positive change. Show respect for the opinions of others. Never tell someone they are wrong, and try to see things from the other point of view.

Tip 5: Disagree agreeably. The key question that we all face is, "How do we disagree agreeably and still have our ideas heard?" Keep the lines of communication open by trying to see things from a different perspective. Take the time to really think about how the other person thinks and why they feel the way they do.

And remember ... communication is the key to avoiding workplace negativity. Turn negative words into positive words. Negativity disrupts morale and cohesion and can easily be identified by the choice of words used. Listen for negative words and phrases, and steer conversations back onto a more positive, or neutral, track.
Slide 11
After all, open and consistent communication builds commitment, increases morale and productivity, and creates an overall positive environment.

Slide 12
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