

Best Practice Guide

Attitude



Address Your Attitude

Attitude can be defined as: 'How you might react or behave in a specific circumstance'.

Your attitude will determine everything from your approach to following distances, the speed you choose to travel at, the way you interact with other drivers, as well as your appetite for taking risks, such as drinking and driving. Your attitude will even influence your thinking on what constitutes a hazard in the first place.

By following some best practice advice you can learn how to develop and maintain the right attitude.

Identify Your Attitude

It is often the case that people who show signs of a negative attitude while driving also have the same attitude in everyday life, not just when behind the wheel. If you often feel 'stressed out', upset, angry or under pressure in your everyday life you are also likely to feel the same while driving.

Look For Warning Signs

Recognising what kind of attitude you have is crucial to safe driving.

If you do any of the following while behind the wheel you almost certainly have the wrong attitude:

- Have regular near-misses.
- Get angry with other drivers.
- Take risks on the road.
- Break the law, such as drinking and driving, speeding or using a mobile phone while driving.



Identify Triggers

When trying to identify the reasons for having a bad attitude it can help to look for particular triggers that seem to have a negative affect on how you feel.

These are likely to vary from person to person but could include:

- Stress at home.
- Feeling under pressure at work.
- Side effects of medicines or drugs.
- Lack of sleep.
- Lack of personal time.

Make Changes

If you recognise that you have the wrong attitude to driving it is vital that you make changes to improve your attitude immediately. There are many ways to do this and the key is identifying the best way for you.

It could be:

- Spending more time relaxing.
- Taking up a hobby.
- Getting more sleep.
- Exercising more frequently.
- Avoiding drinking alcohol and taking drugs in your personal time. These can drastically affect your attitude, even several days after consumption.

You may need to take a number of steps to improve your attitude and it may take some time for you to notice a difference.

Avoid Stresses On The Road

Many factors can affect your emotions while driving, such as unexpected tailbacks, road works, feeling rushed, sudden bad weather, problems with your vehicle, or breaking down. You can avoid as many stresses as possible through careful journey planning.

This includes:

- Allowing plenty of time for every journey so you don't feel rushed.
- Avoiding traffic hot spots and road works.
- Avoiding travelling in bad weather.
- Making sure your vehicle is up to the job by carrying out regular maintenance.
- Planning ahead so you know where to park.

Accept That People Make Mistakes

Try to accept that all drivers make mistakes, including you and learn to recognise the response that makes you feel like you want to retaliate when someone does make a mistake. Do not retaliate and allow yourself a moment of self congratulation.

Consider The Consequences

If you are in a situation while driving when you are tempted to react in any way, the most important thing to consider first is what the possible consequences of your actions could be.

If someone does something to annoy you while you are driving, THINK about your actions before you do anything. Never take chances on the road, and never adopt the attitude of trying to teach other drivers a lesson.



Learn To Apologise

If you make a mistake on the road it is important that you adopt the right attitude and apologise to the other driver(s) involved. A simple raised hand will usually be enough to show that you are aware of your actions and that you accept you were at fault.

Seek Help

There are always ways of dealing with problems, whether they are at work or at home. Speak to your manager if you feel that pressure at work is affecting your attitude. Visit your doctor if you feel you are struggling to control your attitude.

- A** Avoid stressful situations on the road through careful journey planning.
- T** Think about your actions before reacting.
- T** Taking risks on the road is an indicator of a bad attitude.
- I** Identify the triggers which affect your attitude.
- T** Talk to your doctor if you are struggling to control your attitude.
- U** Understand and accept that people make mistakes.
- D** Drugs and alcohol can affect attitude several days after consumption.
- E** Everyone has different ways of improving and managing their attitude.

WARNING

Research and best practice from around the world indicates that without a doubt, once you have mastered the techniques of driving, the next single most important factor that determines your safety through your driving career is your own attitude.