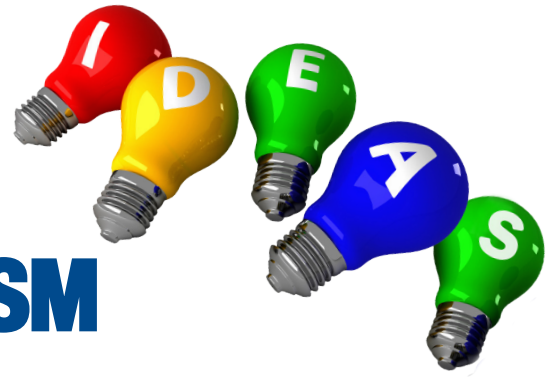


10 TIPS TO STRENGTHEN OPTIMISM



- 1. Assume the best.** Believe in yourself and your ability to create positive results. Optimism has been [linked](#) to both career success and job satisfaction.
- 2. Be realistic.** [Delusional optimism](#) isn't healthy. Avoid complacency – count your blessings; don't take them for granted.
- 3. Start small.** Focus on areas in which you have control. Most people are situationally optimistic; they feel better about things within their personal sphere of influence (e.g., friendships) than global issues such as the environment or economy.
- 4. Seek positive influences.** As both optimism and pessimism are socially contagious, consciously avoid negative people and media; choose to surround yourself with hope-inspiring messages. If you can't change a toxic environment, leave it behind.
- 5. Find balance.** [Research](#) identified the five most significant influences on a sense of optimism as family life, personal health, personal finances, love life, and social life, with “things at work” coming next.
- 6. Set SMART goals.** Breaking major tasks into manageable action steps fosters a sense of control in achieving hopes and dreams.
- 7. Take reasonable chances.** To a certain extent, acting on optimism takes a leap of faith (e.g., applying for a job, submitting a funding proposal, asking someone on a date).
- 8. Accept occasional failure or setbacks.** Learn from them. Recognize the influence of chance and the reality of competition.
- 9. Develop relevant skills** (e.g., job search, career management, financial, leadership). It's easier to be optimistic about the future if you're confident that you have the skills required to achieve success.
- 10. Learn to be optimistic.** Seligman, in his popular book, *Learned Optimism*, provides strategies to train your mind to look for positive outcomes, countering “learned helplessness.” As well as being an innate personal characteristic, optimism can be nurtured and developed.



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