

# Be Mains Ready

**Q.** Aptitude and attitude complement each other in developing public service values amongst civil servants. Comment. (150 Words)

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## Approach / Explanation / Answer

- Explain the term aptitude and attitude.
- Briefly differentiate between the two.
- Describe how they complement each other with the help of examples.
- Conclude suitably.

## Answer

Aptitude is a combination of characteristics that indicates an individual's capacity to acquire some specific knowledge or skill after training. The knowledge of aptitude can help us to predict an individual's future performance. Also, with proper training, these abilities can be considerably enhanced.

Attitude is a state of the mind, a set of views, or thoughts, regarding some topic that has an evaluative feature (positive, negative or neutral quality). It is accompanied by an emotional component, and a tendency to act in a particular way.

### There is a difference between aptitude and attitude

- Attitude is related to existing abilities and skills with certain perceptions while aptitude is the potential ability to acquire skills, abilities, and knowledge.
- While attitude is a positive or negative or indifferent feeling towards a person, object, event or idea; aptitude is a competency to do certain kinds of work. Both attitude and aptitude can be nurtured.

### Aptitude and attitude complementing each other in developing public service value

The presence of aptitude or attitude alone may not suffice. Aptitude needs to be conditioned and often reinforced by the right attitude (of compassion, honesty, public mindedness, etc). A technically brilliant civil servant who lacks the right attitude may turn out to be self-serving and apathetic (absence of compassion), or even corrupt (weak attitude towards integrity and honesty).

Attitude and aptitude often reinforce each other. A civil servant should be high on both of these vital parameters in order to fulfill his mandate of public welfare. A civil servant must possess both to adequately respond to any situation which is complex, multi-faceted and dynamic.

A positive attitude directs and guides a civil servant to utilize his aptitude for the welfare of society. The following examples substantiate this:

- Recently, an IAS officer volunteered to collect relief materials for the Kerala flood victims. The officer had an attitude to reach out to the people and help them. In this case, a competency or skill set was not as important as an urge to serve, i.e. a component of attitude.
- In another example, an IAS officer from Kerala came up with initiatives like Compassionate Kozhikode, Operation Sulaimani, Freedom Café, Tere Mere Beech Mein, etc. to usher in a new era of governance that endeavored to bridge the gap between the district administration and citizens through the optimal employment of social media and technology. These are examples of the importance of aptitude or skill set to achieve the desired goals.

Thus it can be fairly deduced that a successful administrator requires both attitude as well as the aptitude to serve the society. Although their importance may vary from case to case. Right attitude and aptitude also help in nurturing qualities like emotional intelligence, leadership, team spirit, empathy, compassion, etc. which are vital for a civil servant.

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