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# ATTITUDE

by  
Sanka  
W.  
Dog

8  
TRAITS  
OF  
IDITAROD



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**Attitude turns barriers into hurdles, obstacles into opportunities and problems into solutions.**

The 5<sup>th</sup> trait of Iditarod is "A" for Attitude. In Iditarod Classics, Lew Freedman shares Susan Butcher's story about her lead dog Granite. Granite was a dog that loved to be in the lead in a race. He led for Susan when she won in '86 & '87. Later that fall Granite became seriously ill. Vets said he'd never run again but Granite was determined to get back on the team. At first Susan let him run with the puppies and then later the yearlings. It wasn't good enough, Granite wanted more. When the team would go, he'd be barking and jumping so one day Susan put him back in lead for a short training run. Granite seemed to be his old self. Later Susan ran Granite in lead for the Portage 250. It was a close race between Rick Swenson and Susan. Swenson caught and passed Susan's team. Susan said, "Granite saw Rick go by and he just took off. He was literally towing the rest of the team. Nobody was helping him pull and he was keeping up with Rick. Granite never stopped charging. We passed Rick and won the race." With that performance, Susan felt Granite was

ready to run Iditarod again. He led for Susan's third victory in '88.

When Joe Redington Sr. began promoting the idea of Iditarod, people were skeptical. Freedman also shares the story about Joe going to area banks seeking funds for the \$50,000 purse he had promised. Some of the bankers told Joe he was crazy for thinking Iditarod could be a success. When Joe heard, "You don't even know if anybody will get to Nome." He replied, "Well, they used to get there, why can't we get there again? Dick Mackey, one of the organizers of the first Iditarod in 1973 said, "Nobody knew what they were doing. Wives and sweethearts were down at the starting line in tears because here we were going off into the wilds, never to be seen again. It was that kind of attitude." Joe Redington Sr. believed in the concept of Iditarod. Thanks to that belief and Joe's attitude, the Iditarod is what it is today.

These stories show Joe Redington and Susan Butcher's lead dog Granite displaying a positive mental attitude in the face of



adversity. You will find the true content of your character by how you respond to challenge. It's your attitude, not your aptitude that determines your altitude! Attitude is everything - believe and succeed. Attitudes are contagious, make sure yours is worth catching!