

## LEADING WITH KINDNESS: REAL LIFE EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS SUCCESS WITHOUT BRINGING DOWN OTHERS

In today's society, we are too often taught that the only way to get ahead is to be as cutthroat as possible. We learn that tearing down others is the equivalent to building ourselves up. However, what if an alternative existed to this traditional school of thought? What if in helping others, we could also reap the benefit? What if feeling good about ourselves was just as much of an accomplishment as earning a profit? Would you change? Personal and professional examples within the chapters of "The Power of Nice" prove that kindness in the workplace doesn't have to be just a fantasyland, and that it can exist.

The Kaplan-Thaler Group is one of few modern day marketing and advertising agencies that boasts a culture of friendly productivity. As one of the nation's fastest-growing agencies, with clients such as Wendy's, Aflac and Swiffer, the group is living, breathing proof that you can be successful without walking all over your competition, or better yet, your allies. With research backing them every step of the way, Kaplan-Thaler and Koval set out to prove that it pays to be nice. Nice people not only make more money, but they live longer, are healthier, and are luckier in love. Isn't it only common sense then that we should make an effort to be kind?

Kaplan-Thaler explains that kindness in the workplace sets off a chain reaction. Be kind to a neighbor and they will share that kindness with someone else. Something as simple as a laugh shared with a co-worker in the morning can create a feeling of comfort in the office that in turn increases productivity, encouraging employees to share their ideas. Taking the time to mentor a junior employee can pay off when said employee becomes a high-ranking executive and remembers your small act of kindness. Pooling resources with a competitor can lead to greater profit for everyone when your shared idea takes off. Sharing and encouraging can actually lead to increased achievement in the long run.

Couple these life lessons with their related "nice cubes," step-by-step instructions that Kaplan-Thaler includes at the end of each chapter on how to incorporate a little extra kindness in your daily life, and quickly find yourself on the path to success. Kaplan-Thaler is capable of changing your worldview with her inspiring words, instructing her readers to take that extra moment to try to find the good even in the bad. In 120 short pages, she incites a sense of recognition in her readers, encouraging them to evaluate areas of their own life that could use improvement.

While Kaplan-Thaler uses a plethora of real-life personal successes to illustrate how kindness can rule the world, she also expresses that her intent lies in hoping to empower a new generation of leaders. As she expresses often, in today's world, nice has an image problem. All too often people see kindness as weakness. But to Kaplan-Thaler, "nice is not naive," but rather, "nice is the toughest four-letter word you'll ever hear." Hard work, intelligence and talent are all essential ingredients, but acting with integrity, compassion and class is what will set you apart from the rest.

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