



**CO-WORKERS ARE
PEOPLE TOO!**

JOSHUA GOODLING

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Several years ago, when I was building a new website for my speaking, I wanted some references and quotes from people who knew me, so I wrote to one of my previous managers and asked him to write me a short paragraph or two for my site. This is part of what he wrote:

"Joshua realized that work is not just a place to do a job, but it is also a place where a group of people are more or less forced to spend a lot of time together. He did everything he could to make the job more fun and if possible, to bring a smile to anyone he encountered during the course of the day. Joshua always understood that clients and co-workers are, first of all, people with the same problems and needs that everyone else has."

From that statement, I have taken my title for this booklet, **"Co-workers Are People Too!"**

I have always felt very strongly about the way people treat other people. In fact, I believe that the vast majority of problems in our work places today are because people have the greatest lack of respect and concern for other people.

You may question that statement; "How could just the way people treat their co-workers cause the majority of problems for a company?"

Well, when employees treat others with disrespect, with anger, and with selfishness, they make the working environment harsh and uncomfortable. When workers feel uncomfortable and upset with others, they end up hating their jobs.

What happens when people hate their jobs? We could list many things, but here are a few:

- Good workers will be more apt to leave and look for other employment, where the working environment is better.

- Employees who have bad attitudes will be rude to clients and customers and fellow workers.
- They will also feel less willing to cooperate with others, causing disruption of work.
- Bad attitudes spread. One rotten apple soon spoils the entire bunch.

So, does this mean we're just supposed to sit there with a smile on our face and let people walk all over us while we say; "Have a nice day!"; No, that's not at all what it means. We can be firm in our beliefs, do our best job possible, say "no" when necessary, and still be nice and friendly about it.

The story is told that Jefferson Davis once asked General Lee for his opinion about a certain confederate officer who was under his command. General Lee gave nothing but glowing reports about that officer's military actions and work. Later, one of General Lee's assistants expressed his surprise at the

General's comments. "That officer says nothing but bad things about you!" said the assistant. General Lee replied; "President Davis wanted to know my opinion of that officer's abilities, not that officer's opinion of me!"

That is the hardest part about treating others kindly and with respect. There are always those who are such lousy workers, who lie, cheat, and steal their way through the company, that they don't deserve to be treated kindly. But life isn't really about getting what you deserve. **Life is what YOU make it.**

Let's look at this from a hypothetical perspective here. Suppose a co-worker says something bad about you, or "steals the show" on a project you both worked hard on. Our first tendency is to get mad and think we have to get even. So, when our big moment comes along, we take our chance and retaliate for what they did to us. Then, they are mad at us, and are looking for a way to get us back for our retaliation.

Then, suppose we're meeting with some managers and one of them mentions an open position, and says that he is thinking of offering it to that person. We know that person would be great in that position, but we're mad at them, so we offer some excuse why they shouldn't get the position. The manager offers the position to a person less qualified, and they take it.

Then, a major client calls with a problem, and the person less qualified isn't able to handle the pressure, and they make the client mad about something, and the client takes their business elsewhere. Several thousand dollars are lost, just because we were mad at another co-worker.

While as I stated, that was just an illustration, it is not at all unthinkable or impossible. And as long as there are people, there will be those who act with disrespect and rudeness to others. However, if we would just stop and think for a

moment before we act in those ways, we'd save ourselves and our companies a lot of unnecessary trouble. In today's society treating others with kindness doesn't come with any regularity. People are so wrapped up in their own little worlds, they don't have the time or the care for others. It is really a sad situation for our corporations and places of employment to be in. We spend eight or more hours a day, 5+ days a week with these people. If there was just an atmosphere of kindness and respect in our office or workplace, what a difference it would make in people's lives.

I don't really think many people stop and think about the results of their actions and the way they treat other people. Like so much in today's world, we are focused on instant everything. All we care about is what is right now, not thinking about how that instant action may affect other things down the road. However, **Every choice we make affects the rest of our life!**

And then, there are thousands who have never considered putting others first in their work or in any part of their lives for that matter. They don't realize the value and importance of such a way of living. Sure, it doesn't come naturally at all. We are pretty much programmed to put ourselves first. Our focus is mainly on ourselves. What a vast difference it would make in our companies and work environments if we started putting others first, and we stopped for a second to think before we say something or act in a selfish way.

One important thing to remember is what has been called "the Golden Rule" – **Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.** That applies to all of us whether we are a janitor, a secretary, a manager, or a CEO, the way we treat others will affect not only our own lives, but the lives of many people. It kind of has a trickle-down effect. If we ruin someone's day, they will be more apt to ruin someone else's day. If we brighten someone's day, they are more apt to do

the same to others. So, remember, attitude is everything, and always treat others with kindness and respect.

Within his 35 years with the United Nations system, Kofi Annan came to be known as an evenhanded man with an ability to see parts and the whole at the same time. It is this quality that made him one of the more popular executives in the United Nations. He recalls an unforgettable lesson learned in Ghana at age seventeen: "One day our headmaster walked into the classroom and put up a broad sheet of paper with a small dot in one corner. "Boys," he asked, "what do you see?" All of us shouted in unison, "A black dot!" Then he said, "So not a single one of you saw the large white sheet of paper? Don't go through life with that attitude."

So, stop looking at the negatives in everything, and start focusing on the positives. Thank your fellow employees when they help you. buy lunch or something for someone

who does a good job, show some courtesy and respect, and go out of your way to be kind.

Dr. A. D. Williams was an American football player in the NFL who played for the Green Bay Packers, the Cleveland Browns, and the Minnesota Vikings. He once said, "**There are over 7 billion people on this planet. Imagine what 7 billion humans could accomplish if we loved and respected each other!**"

No matter how educated, talented, rich or cool you believe you are, how you treat other people ultimately tells all about who you REALLY are! And, who you are is far more important than what you have, and it always will be.

Always remember - co-workers are people too!

Of course, if you are one of those people who seems to love being miserable, there is an easy solution for that:

1. Think and talk only about yourself.
2. Always expect to be appreciated.
3. Be suspicious and jealous of everyone.
4. Never forget a criticism.
5. Trust no one.
6. Demand agreement with your views on everything.
7. Do as little as possible for others.

But, I seriously hope you'll not follow that route, because it only leads to misery, disappointment, and loneliness!

Always remember - life is what you make it. And you get out of life, what YOU put into life! We can make this entire world a MUCH better place when we all work together to put others first and make a difference!

A MESSAGE FROM JOSHUA

I hope that this short booklet will be a helpful tool in your life.

When I was four years old, I was diagnosed with Rhabdomyosarcoma, a deadly type of cancer. In fact, the doctors told my parents I had only one week to live, and my chances of survival were zero! That was almost 50 years ago, so I always tell people "It's been a long week!"

After over a year long battle with the cancer and treatments, the cancer was gone. However, it left me with many physical problems and difficulties I would face every day for the rest of my life. My vocal chords were partially paralyzed, my growth was stunted, I had lost my hearing in one ear, and there were other problems that would surface in the days, weeks, and years ahead.

So, Yes, I was still alive, but I had a very difficult life ahead of me. I would have to face people laughing at me because I was short, I talked funny, and I was different. I would be turned down for jobs and overlooked for other opportunities because I looked too young or people didn't know if I could handle it. I would never have a girl friend or a wife (at least not yet). And I would have to deal almost daily with the side effects of cancer and its treatments. Let's face it - my life wasn't going to be easy.

So, I had two basic choices. I could feel sorry for myself and just give up, wasting my life. Or I could remember that the Bible tells us "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good..." (Romans 8:28), and that God has promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5). I soon learned that no matter what happens, God is in complete control. And I learned that the closer I walked with Him, the happier I would be, and the more I would see His hand at work in everything in my life - even the cancer!

God never promised us an easy life. However, He does promise us, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13), and the closer we walk with Him, the more of His strength we'll find in our lives each day!

The greatest love story you'll ever find is found in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." God loves you and wants to know you. I know in today's world, there are a lot of misconceptions about God, but I know from my own experience how great a friend He is to those who love Him and learn to trust Him.

Jesus Christ spent His entire life on this earth living for others, and we should follow His steps! Get to know Him - you'll never regret it.

Visit my website or email me if you have any questions.
Have a Fantastic Day!
Joshua Goodling

ABOUT JOSHUA

Joshua Goodling is a terminal cancer survivor, speaker, and author. At the age of four, He was diagnosed with a terminal cancer, and given just one week to live. The doctors said his chances were zero! That was almost 50 years ago, so it's been a LONG week! Joshua's life is a testimony of how truly amazing and powerful God is, and how He has a perfect plan for each of our lives. Joshua uses the lessons he has learned in life to inspire and impact the lives of others.

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