

# Life Training - Online

The Source for Personal Development and Excellence Training



## The Power of Nice

*This week, Life Training Online is reviewing [The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the Business World With Kindness](#), by Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval, the seventh of fifty-two books in the [52 Personal Development Books in 52 Weeks](#) series.*

Can being nice truly have a positive effect in the cut-throat business world of today? Lynn Thaler and Robin Koval, boldly affirm that this is the case. According to them, not only can nice guys (and girls) finish first but they are a lot happier and healthier to boot.

In the modern business culture that seems to follow the law of "survival of the fittest", Lynn and Robin were able to take their fledgling company and turn it into one of the nation's fastest-growing advertising agencies with nearly a billion dollars in billing – "not with pitchforks and spears, but with flowers and chocolates."

This week, let's take a deeper look into this new and popular business bestseller. Will we be able to discover if kindness really has any merit in our world today? Stay tuned to find out...

***The Power of Nice*** is the seventh of fifty-two books in Life Training - Online's series [52 Personal Development Books in 52 Weeks](#).

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## The Power of Nice: Chapters 1 - 3

This week, Life Training Online is reviewing [\*\*\*The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the Business World With Kindness\*\*\*](#), by Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval, the seventh of fifty-two books in the [\*\*\*52 Personal Development Books in 52 Weeks\*\*\*](#) series.

A common thread that runs through much of our business world today is a “me vs. you” mentality. In a culture that believes such maxims as “nice guys finish last” and “no good deed goes unpunished”, the Power of Nice is bringing kindness back into the mainstream.

Thaler and Koval, in their extensive experience in the cut-throat and competitive world of advertising have noticed time and time again the power of nice. It wasn't intimidation or fear that brought about their extraordinary success but instead it was those simple acts of kindness like smiles and compliments that made all the difference.

### The Six Power of Nice Principles

For all those who want to implement the Power of Nice into their lives, the authors explain six Power of Nice principles that, when followed, will transform how you work and live. Here's a summary of them:

1. **Positive impressions are like seeds**

Any time you do something nice for someone, it is much like planting a seed. These seeds, with time, begin to swell and grow — most often, without you even being aware of it. And almost with mathematical certainty, you will begin to see the fruits of these seeds creating many opportunities for you down the road.

2. **You Never Know**

When dishing out your pleasantries, it doesn't pay to be selective. It's not just your boss's wife with whom you should be nice, you should make it a habit to be nice to everyone because you never know who they might be.

3. **People Change**

Much like you don't know who someone might be, you never know who they might become. If at your office you are only cordial with your co-workers and superiors but not to the guy who takes out the garbage because to you they "have no power", then you're limiting yourself. People change. You never know who that person may be in five, ten, or twenty years from now.

4. **Nice must be automatic**

You can't fake niceness. People have an amazing ability to ferret out deception, so don't do it. Being nice must be a part of you. So make sure you practice it on a regular basis. At the shopping center, with your mailman, in the checkout line. Practice being truly sincere and kind at all times, then it will become a part of you.

5. **Negative impressions are like germs**

If you think that you treating someone badly because "they don't matter" has no ill-effect, think again. Your unkindness can spread like a bad case of the flu to others who are in ear or eye shot of your rudeness. For example, how do you feel about that someone who you notice is being rude to a waitress? Don't their actions make you think less of them, even though they hadn't directed them at you?

6. **You will know**

Just because no one might have noticed your rudeness or bad behavior toward someone, or that you'll never see that person again so no one will know, remember that you will know. Being nice isn't about constantly carrying around a forced smile or scheming about what you'll be able to get from a person if you show them kindness. It's about living it completely in your everyday life.

### **Bake a Bigger Pie**

We are taught that the best way to get ahead in life and to find success is to take as much as you can for yourself. We focus on beating the competition and grabbing our share of the pie first so that we're not left with the crumbs. Living in a free-market society seems to propagate this. The authors response? Bake a bigger pie.

**This is what Covey refers to as Win-Win** — finding that solution where all can benefit. The beauty of this is that when you help others to get a slice of the pie, what often is the case is that the pie ends up being bigger for both of you — bigger than it would have been if you just took it for yourself. This is true synergy and can only happen when you work in cooperation with others.

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## The Power of Nice: Chapters 4 - 6

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### Sweeten the Deal

Research done by such notable psychologists as David G. Myers and Ruut Veenhoven have shown that people who are in a good mood are more likely to help others. And there's nothing better to raise someone's mood than with a sweet word or gesture.

Simple acts such as offering a client candy during a presentation or engaging in a little humorous banter with your co-workers can do a lot to improve another's mood and create an environment much more conducive to open cooperation.

If you make the effort to "sweeten" your surroundings with smiles, gestures, humor and small gifts, you will see that these "little" things end up returning back to you — many times over. By small and simple things, great things happen.

### Help Your Enemies

Turning the cheek is probably one of the more difficult things to do in life. It's human nature to want to get even with those who have wronged us. But in actuality, helping your "enemies" can become very valuable to you.

Much of life isn't strictly Me vs. You. We live in a world that requires that we cooperate and work in teams with people. And although we might be technically "competing" with someone else, it's cooperation that beats out competition 9 times out of 10. When you can creatively figure out how to work with your competition, you open up the door to a synergistic [relationship](#). Cooperation fosters creativity and

creativity is always improved when multiple heads are involved.

Today's adversaries may just be tomorrow's allies...

### **Tell the Truth**

Honesty is essential to success in any undertaking. With the fabulous examples of WorldCom and Enron, we see the real merit behind dishonesty — that there is none.

Telling the truth is one of the best ways to get ahead in the world. Because trust is so important in any relationship — be it personal or professional — if you have someone's complete trust, your circle of influence with that person will have no bounds. In the work place this translates to greater responsibilities and ultimately greater positions.

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## The Power of Nice: Chapters 7 - 10

This week, Life [Training](#) Online is reviewing [The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the Business World With Kindness](#), by Linda [Kaplan](#) Thaler and Robin Koval, the seventh of fifty-two books in the [52 Personal Development Books in 52 Weeks](#) series.

### **"Yes" Your Way to the Top**

When I first started [reading](#) this chapter, I thought the authors were originally supporting being a "Yes Person", a person who doesn't know how to say "no". But after reading a bit deeper, what they are actually recommending is maintaining a positive [outlook](#) in all your actions and relations. Because being positive can have a huge impact on your entire life — from your productivity to how you get ahead in life.

Part of being positive is assuming people have the best of intentions for you. Even though you know that they are trying to knock you down, if you approach such criticism as constructive it will keep your mood high and disarm the person giving it. The example that they use in the book is, say someone tells you that they hate what you're wearing. You could respond in one of two ways: Say something nasty back or thank them for being concerned about your appearance. Despite their intentions, you need to train yourself to interpret each encounter as something positive. This will have huge positive effects on your life.

### **Shut Up and Listen**

Great communicators are not always the ones who are eloquent of speech. Most great communicators are that way because they are in fact, great listeners. If we are constantly going on and on about our accomplishments and our opinions on some matter we will never understand the other person. We may be good speakers, but without the ability to listen, we're poor communicators.

Effective listening also requires "putting your head on the other person's shoulders"

and listening with the intent to understand. This is what empathy means. When people realize that you truly understand them, they'll be so much more willing to open up to you.

### **Create a Nicer Universe**

There are different ways to get ahead in life. Being ruthless is one of them although it's fortunately not the only one. What the intent of this book is and what the authors hope that you get out of it is to realize that being kind and considerate is another way — what they feel to be an even more effective way — of achieving success. Not only will being nice get you further ahead in your career but you will also feel better about yourself on top of it.

Realize that even the smallest action of kindness can have a multiplier effect that can cause miracles to happen — in your job, your relationships, and with yourself. These small acts indeed help you to become healthier, wealthier, and most importantly happier.

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## The Power of Nice: Final Words

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As we come to the end of this week's review let's see if we can answer the question first posed to us on Monday: Does kindness really have any merit in our world today? I'd have to 100% agree with the authors on this one that it absolutely does.

Looking back on the book, the authors related a number of personal experiences where kindness paid off in the form of monetary and professional rewards. And it may seem as though they're overly focusing on using kindness solely for one's personal benefit. However, to give them the benefit of the doubt, they do mention that you can't fake kindness. It must be genuine in order for it to have a positive effect in your life.

And that's where we come to the Catch 22. Unless you are genuinely seeking to bring happiness and joy into other people's lives through acts of kindness, you will not reap the personal benefits that those acts will bring. In other words, there aren't a set of kindness techniques that you can simply follow and you'll achieve wealth and success.

I'd have to say that for the most part, I like this book. The authors didn't present anything new that we haven't heard already but if you're looking for a concise book that extols the benefits and need for kindness in our world, then by all means read it.

The only criticism that I do have is the ridiculous price (\$17.95) for an itty-bitty 119 pg. hard-cover book. Don't make the same mistake I did. Buy it on Amazon instead of full price at the bookstore. Or wait till it's out in soft cover.

Next week we'll be reviewing a book that I've been waiting for to come out since I

first heard about it last year. It's the new and updated edition of [The Now Habit: A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play](#). If you struggle with procrastination (as I do sometimes) will this book be the answer? Stay tuned to find out...

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