

Confident Communication for Female Professionals



Also by Preston C. Ni

Communication Success with Four Personality Types

How to Communicate Effectively and Handle Difficult People, 2nd Edition

Seven Keys to Life Success

Wealth Building Values, Attitudes, and Habits

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Ten Tips for Presentation Confidence and Reducing Nervousness

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"Women hold up half the sky."

– *Chinese Proverb*

*"In the long run, we shape our lives,
and we shape ourselves."*

– *Eleanor Roosevelt*

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Are You Too Nice? Seven Ways to

Gain Appreciation & Respect

“To be beautiful means to be yourself. You don’t need to be accepted by others. You need to accept yourself.”

— Thich Nhat Hanh

Leo Durocher once remarked: “Nice guys finish last.” Do nice people really finish last? Sometimes. It depends on the type of "nice" one exudes. Some nice people command appreciation and respect, while others are used and abused. If you consider yourself a "nice" person, which type are you?

Here’s a quick self-assessment quiz:

- Do you have a hard time saying “no” to others’ requests, even when they’re unreasonable?
- Do you often find yourself under-appreciated and taken for granted?
- Do you believe you’re being taken advantage of at work or in your personal relationships?
- Do you let people give you thankless tasks they don’t want to do themselves?
- Do you often go along with what others say and want, even if you feel differently deep down?
- Do your kindness and self-giving often go unreciprocated?
- Are you afraid of being rejected if you don’t go along with certain people’s whims and demands?
- Do you take care of others first and yourself last?

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, you could be too nice, at least in certain areas of your life.

For an informative analysis of the “nice” personality type, [click here and download a free excerpt of my publication “Communication Success with Four Personality Types.”](#)

To be sure, there’s nothing inherently wrong with being nice. The world is a better place with more kind hearted and generous people. At the same time, it’s important to be nice in a way that’s healthy for everyone involved (especially you), so that you’re not consistently holding the short end of the stick. Below are seven keys to gaining appreciation and respect.

1. Practice Self-Respect — Know Your Individual Rights

Many researchers (Lefcourt, Ng et al.) state that having a sense of internal locus of control over our own lives is one of the important conditions for mental health. A healthy sense of control comes from exercising your right to set your own priorities, say “no” without feeling guilty, protect yourself from harm, choose healthy relationships, get what you pay for, and create your own happiness in life. At times, it’s simply wiser to take good care of yourself first, so you can in turn be better (and truer) with others. If your life is your own to choose, then with each moment you have the power to make a good decision. No one can take this power away from you unless you allow it. Know your individual rights, and practice self-respect.

2. Change Your Attitude About Having To Be Nice All The Time

“The difference is too nice - Where ends the virtue or begins the vice.”

— Alexander Pope

There’s a big difference between being nice because you want to, versus being nice because you have to. The first comes from your heart, while the second feels like a

burden. “Nice” people often associate not doing something for someone with erroneous negative thoughts and emotions. For example:

Negative Thought #1: “I’m selfish if don’t help my friends all the time. “

Negative Emotion #1: Guilt

Negative Thought #2: “She won’t like me if I don’t go along with what she wants. “

Negative Emotions #2: Fear of rejection, fear of negative outcome.

For “nice” people, it’s important to know that no one should be expected to be nice all the time. It’s neither reasonable nor real. If negative thoughts and emotions arise as a result of you being selective about your niceness, simply talk back to them with self-confirming responses:

Self-Confirmation #1: “If I allow myself my own time, I can take better care of myself as well as others.”

Self-Confirmation #2: “If I treat myself with respect, I will attract more respectful relationships in my life.”

Whenever reasonable and appropriate, practice self-confirmation when you feel obligated to be nice. Each time you do so, you remind yourself that **YOU ARE IMPORTANT TOO.**

3. Distinguish Being Kind To People From Having To Do Things For Them

There are two ways to be nice: Being friendly and courteous to people, and doing things for them. We can practice the first with just about everyone, as long as they don’t violate our boundaries. As the saying goes, “A smile costs nothing but gives much.” While we’re courteous with people, we can at the same time be selective about what we want or don’t want to do for them. In communication we call this being soft on the person, and

firm on the issue. Steve Jobs reminds us: “Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life.” Distinguish being kind to people from having to do things for them. Choose your giving wisely.

4. Don't Try To Please Everyone, And Don't Try To Please Any One Person All The Time

No one can please everyone all the time, so please don't even try. People who receive your thankless and unreciprocated giving on a regular basis are also more likely to take it for granted. There's power that comes with exercising your right to set boundaries and say “no.” While there are many ways you can say “no” diplomatically (see tip #5 below), you're saying “no” nonetheless. With my [private coaching to clients learning assertiveness](#), I often remind them that it's more important to be respected than to be liked. Nice people often don't get the respect they deserve, while those who are respected have the luxury to be nice. Again, there's power in saying “no” and setting your own priorities. Gain respect first, so that your generosity, when you do offer it, is truly appreciated.

“At home I am a nice guy: but I don't want the world to know. Humble people, I've found, don't get very far.”

— Muhammad Ali

5. Know How To Say “No” — Gently But Firmly

To be able to say “no” gently but firmly is to practice the art of communication. Effectively articulated, it allows you to stand your ground while keeping the peace. For more on how to utilize this skill, see “Seven Ways to Say No and Keep Good Relations” on page 39.

There's more to this excerpt!

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