



NAPOLEON HILL

Principle 3: Pleasing Personality

Your personality is your unique trademark. It determines your success or your failure in selling yourself. It consists of more than 30 factors, all under your control. The most important factor is your mental attitude, which must be positive to attract others to you.

Other important factors include flexibility, ability to control and direct your enthusiasm, and sincerity of purpose. Check yourself against these obstacles to an attractive personality: interrupting others, sarcasm, vanity, being a poor listener, insincere flattery, finding fault, challenging others without good cause, giving unsolicited advice, complaining, and attitude of superiority, envy of others' success, and poor posture and dress.

If you're not liked, there is a reason, and you can correct it.

Points to Ponder: Principle 3

1. A Positive Mental Attitude is the right mental attitude in any given situation.
2. If you have sincerity of purpose, it will strengthen every one of the other aspects of your pleasing personality.
3. There is a right moment and a wrong moment for everything.
4. Courtesy is your most profitable asset -- and it is absolutely free.
5. Emotions are nothing but reflections of your mental attitude, which you can organize, guide, and completely control.
6. Developing an attractive personality takes daily action towards improving pleasing traits and eliminating displeasing traits.
7. Your personality is your greatest asset or your greatest liability because it embraces everything you control -- your mind, body, and soul.
8. A smile helps your looks, makes you feel better, and costs nothing!
9. Three little words, "if you please," carry great power.
10. To be happy, make someone else happy!
11. What is an attractive personality? A personality that attracts!
12. No one may have a pleasing personality without the foundation of a sound, positive character.
13. Make up your mind to be happy! The only difference between happy and unhappy people is attitude!

Unlimited Opportunities and the Golden Rule

More women at Mary Kay Cosmetics earn over \$50,000 per year than in any other company in the world. The company was founded in 1963, when Mary Kay Ash retired after 25 years of work in direct sales. She created her own company because she wanted to fulfill two dreams: to provide unlimited opportunities for herself and other women and to manage people by following the Golden Rule. Both these ideas have turned out to be steppingstones to extraordinary success. Here are some specific leadership principles at the heart of the Mary Kay Ash success story. (The full discussion of these ideas is found in her book, *Mary Kay on People Management*.) When she was in sales, she remembers waiting for three hours in a long reception line to shake hands with the company sales manager. When her turn finally came, he never even looked at her. Instead, he looked over her shoulder to see how much longer the line was. Now, whenever Mary Kay meets people, she imagines them wearing a sign that says: Make Me Feel Important! And she does everything she can to fill that need.

Mary Kay worked for employers who even after several years insisted on being addressed as "Mister." She never thought such formality was necessary, so in her business it's first names and a relaxed work atmosphere. She meets every new staff member of her firm personally and says, "If you call me Mrs. Ash, I'll think you're angry with me or don't know who I am. So, please call me Mary Kay." She adds, "I don't want you to think of me as the chairman of the board; think of me as your friend." And she maintains an on-going open door policy.

A popular saying at Mary Kay Cosmetics is "People fail forward to success." Mary Kay frequently tells the story of her own first beauty show, which was a miserable failure. She sold only \$1.50 worth of merchandise. After leaving, she drove around the corner, put her head on the steering wheel and cried. All her savings were tied up in the new company, and she feared it was doomed. But then she reviewed what she herself had done wrong and realized she'd never asked anyone for an order! So instead of despairing, she refused to give up and learned a vital lesson from that failure-she "failed forward to success."

Mary Kay also believes in "praising people to success." She praises people whenever she can and finds it causes them to respond as a thirsty plant responds to water. One of her marketing executives acknowledged his employees, who'd worked overtime to prepare for the company's national convention, by throwing a "Hats Off to You" party for them and their spouses. Everyone wore a funny hat, but the manager, instead of giving a speech, spent the evening making the rounds, tipping his hat and lauding each person for his or her fine performance by describing specifically the things they did he especially appreciated.

Mary Kay Cosmetics gives each of their beauty consultants a ribbon for their first \$100 show. She maintains that a 40-cent gift given with \$100 worth of recognition is much more effective than a \$100 gift given with 40 cents worth of recognition. Mary Kay publishes a company magazine called *Applause* in which she gives recognition to outstanding performers. She encourages her area directors to publish newsletters for the same purpose. She often says to the directors, "Have you ever noticed how wonderful *Applause* is when your name's in it, and how it's not quite as interesting when your name is not included?"

To people who claim her recognition-oriented motivational techniques wouldn't work with men, she retorts, "Did you ever notice the stars on a linebacker's helmet, or the medals on a soldier's uniform? Men are willing to risk injury and even death for praise and recognition!"

Mary Kay recalls that when she was having lunch with her sales manager, every time a pretty waitress walked by, his eyes would follow her across the room. She felt insulted and thought, "The waitress's legs are more important to him than what I have to say. He's not listening to me. He doesn't care about me."

Mary Kay listens. She gives undivided attention to people who enter her office. When she's talking to someone in a crowded room, she tries to make that person feel the two of them are the only ones present. She looks directly at the person and says, "Even if a gorilla were to walk into the room, I probably wouldn't notice it."

A popular feature of Mary Kay's national meetings, demonstrating her commitment to listening, is a "We Heard You" panel. The panel consists of a group of company officers, such as the presidents of administration,

operations, manufacturing, marketing, and research and development. During these sessions they listen and respond to whatever questions the sales consultants and directors from all over the country have on their minds. When Mary Kay was just starting the business, her personal life and her health were in the pits. But she had to conduct three skin care parties a day to make a living, so she was determined to "go in there with a smile." She learned from this period that she could generate her own enthusiasm and need not be a victim of temporary bad circumstances or moods. She points out it's easy to be enthusiastic when everything is going smoothly. But the real test of one's mettle is to maintain enthusiasm under adverse conditions. She tells her beauty consultants: "You've got to fake it until you make it." That is, act enthusiastic and you'll become enthusiastic.

Mary Kay Ash's methods have proven effective-people often succeed in her organization beyond all their past accomplishments. In fact, the ultimate award given to top salespeople is a large, diamond-studded bumblebee. The bumblebee is their chosen symbol because aerodynamics engineers "proved" many years ago that the bumblebee cannot fly! Its wings are too weak and its body too heavy. Fortunately, the bumblebee doesn't know that. At Mary Kay Cosmetics, people are taught to spread their wings and fly further than anyone ever thought they could.

Recharging Batteries

One day a man came into the company reception area and took a seat without asking for anyone. The receptionist approached him and asked, "Sir, can I do something for you.

"No thanks, ma'am," he replied. "I just came in here to recharge my batteries. You know, I call on offices all day long, and the people are often unfriendly. Sometimes, they're downright ugly. But when I come in here, everybody is happy, smiling." He paused, "It's like coming into the sunshine; I just feel good all over."

Mary Kay says, "It's like coming into the sunshine. I like that -- we want everyone who comes into contact with us to feel our warmth."

Mary Kay Ash received the Napoleon Hill Foundation Gold Medal Award for Entrepreneurial Achievement in 1983.