

# How Kind Words Transformed My Relationship with My Boss



I was at a new job where there had been tension in the team before I started. Although I didn't know the details, there was still some tension in the air and it made it harder for me to "click" with my colleagues and my boss.

One day a person wanted to make payment using his American Express card. My boss had recently activated this function on the eftpos terminal, but when the person tried to pay it wouldn't work! He had to go to an ATM nearby and withdraw the money.

My boss became very upset with herself. She ripped the declined receipt out of the eftpos terminal and said, "I can't believe I didn't check that! I should have put 5 cents through on my card to make sure it was working properly."

I said to her, "Look how hard you work and how much you get done each day, and this is just one small thing that you didn't check. That function was meant to be enabled and none of us (the other staff) even thought to test it to check that it was working properly."

I could see her soften and relax. And from that day forward our relationship changed. I felt that she paid more attention when I spoke to her, I felt that she showed me more respect and she reciprocated this kindness. And all it took was a few kind words.

So what inspired me to suddenly share this with you?

Mike O'Connor has written a blog called "The Year of Speaking Kindly" where he challenges himself to speak only kind words for a year. You can read it [here](#).

What might the benefits of this be?

O'Connor writes... "Once people get used to the idea that we're not into saying mean stuff, or gossiping, about others behind their backs, the amount of negativity they talk around us will slowly but surely decrease. I've seen this firsthand in my own experience. It works like magic, just watch. The reason for this is simple. It most certainly isn't as much fun, or as comfortable, to talk badly of others unless everybody present is doing it. If even one person there doesn't join in the 'fun' then others are far less likely to take part. Thus, our decision to stop speaking nasty and our family, friends, colleagues or even strangers' eventual reaction to us not reciprocating with similar behaviour will positively affect us and them, as well as our respective relationships."

Don't these benefits sound great? So why not set yourself a kindness challenge and see what positive results you derive from it! Further motivation and information can be found in my book *Create Calm at Work*, *Create Calm in Life*.

**Best wishes,**

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