



Samantha Sim

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The phrase "nice guys finish last" has been a saying long associated with relationships and romance. But, according to a recently released study, from Texas' Baylor University, nice guys actually finish first... in the workplace.

Researchers found that employees who possessed personality traits of honesty and humility scored higher on their job performance rating from their employers. Honesty and humility were defined, in the study, as those who exhibit high levels of fairness, greed-avoidance, modesty and sincerity.

Joyce Laveist, manager of R. Hiscott - a Toronto beauty and theatrical supply store, says that honesty and humility are very important personality traits she looks for when interviewing potential employees.

"Honesty is definitely important. Humility is too, but in a sales [environment] you also have to be confident," she says. "I like people with personality."

However, she says that it can be tricky for employers to gauge, in an interview, whether interviewees actually have these traits.

"When you interview people they show only one side of their personality," she says, "Once [they're hired] and get comfortable, they become relaxed and show the opposite of what they said in the interview."

The study specifically followed 269 employees in 25 different companies across 20 different states that work in the health care industry. However Sandra Miles, president and CEO of Miles Employment Group Ltd. - a Vancouver-employment agency, says that these personality traits are valuable in all industries.

"It doesn't just apply to health care. I think they're [applicable] globally," she says. "A lot of companies are defining what their values are and these traits are important for their employees to have."

On the other side of the spectrum, Miles says that employees should be careful of developing certain traits that are considered big "turn-offs" and will lower job performance.

"[Employers really dislike] an unwillingness to learn and this, 'I should just be able to do what I want to do, whenever I want to do it' attitude," she says.

Not only do humility and honesty help boost employee-job performance, says Miles, they also help to maintain a good morale amongst colleagues. She says the key to

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employee-retention is for employers to build a corporate culture that includes trust and honesty.



"People stay [in a job] because they like the people they work with," she says. "If employees see a colleague acting unfairly, they're not going to be able to trust that person."

There will always be times when the performance of your co-workers makes you feel like the value of your hard work and ethical standards is moot. But in the long-term, it's better to make friends than enemies when you are starting off in the career world.

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