



**What if the 'do as you would be done by' golden rule is wrong?: How changing just one belief can help you do better and be happier, at work and in life.**

*Kerry Hoodland*

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Please note: there is now an omnibus edition that gives you all six books in the 'What if' series for the price of three. Click on the author name above and look for 'What if there's an easier way to do better & be happier, at work & in life'.

About this book. There's an old saying that 'seeing is believing' but research into the way our brains work tells us that the truth is the exact opposite. Believing is seeing. If you want to know how important beliefs are, imagine a row of seven dominoes laid out so that, when you tip the first domino over, the rest fall without further effort required. Then label the first domino 'believing', the second 'seeing', the third 'feeling', the fourth 'thinking', the fifth 'choosing', the sixth 'behaving' and the seventh 'results'. Now, think of a time when you tried to change your results by changing your behaviour. Chances are that, even if you succeeded, it took a huge effort of willpower because you were up against the power of your unconscious brain which was still operating under the same first-domino belief that it was using before you started trying to change. And that means it was still seeing, feeling and thinking the same way as before. More to the point, it means it's still trying to complete the domino sequence by getting you to choose and behave in the same way as before. When we change at the level of our beliefs, on the other hand, it's like tipping over the first domino; the rest fall naturally. And the change process feels effortless because, although our unconscious brain is working hard, the beauty of unconscious brain effort is that we're not, well, conscious of making it. Although we are stuck with brains that work on the basis of believing-is-seeing, we have the power to swap beliefs that create negative experiences for beliefs that create positive ones.

In this book I challenge the belief upon which the golden rule is built; the belief that other people share our values. I argue that, in our multi-religious, multi-cultural, modern world, it's not only a mistake to assume that the people around us want us to treat them the way we want to be treated ... it's also presumptuous. I also argue that there's a practical problem with following the golden rule, which is that it assumes that we know how we want to be treated when all too often we don't. After finding fault with the golden rule, I then consider George Bernard Shaw's riposte to the golden rule, which is: 'do not do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Their tastes may not be the same.' But since 'doing as they would be done by' is not without its challenges, after offering some tips on how to work out how someone really wants to be treated, I propose that we put limits on how far we're prepared to depart from our own ideas of how people should be treated by taking a 'principles first, values second' approach to our application of the 'do as they would be done by' modern-times alternative to the golden rule. And finally, I suggest three ways in which we can make it easier for the people around us to work out how we really want to be treated so they can apply the 'do as they would be done by' alternative to us. It is my contention that changing just one belief [the belief that other people share our values] can create a domino effect that leads us into thinking more carefully about how other people might want to be treated and taking that into account in the way we treat them. All of which enables us to do better and be happier, at work and in life.

So, why not come with me on a short walk along the road less travelled to see how things might look if you changed just this one belief? This is a very short book which is a quick and easy read that will, at the very

least, give you food for thought. And, you never know, it might just create a domino effect that helps you do better and be happier, at work and in life.

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