

Reprinted from the Christian Science Sentinel, December 9, 1996.
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Prejudice in the workplace overcome By Elise L. Moore

Some years ago on my first day on the job, my new boss called me into his office to say that he'd wanted to hire the other candidate, who had the right education, more experience, was older, and male -all of which was true. But the district manager had overruled the local manager in hiring me. Now that the district manager had returned to his out-of-state office, my boss bluntly told me that he did not want me to succeed. He would not train me. He would not give me the list of customers in my territory, provide product information, or answer questions. And I was not to bother him at all. He then suggested that I resign immediately.

This job had come to me as the result of much prayer. I was undisturbed by the tirade. I felt completely assured that God had placed me in this position and would provide the means for me to perform the duties it entailed. Instead of reacting, I immediately began appreciating the Christlike qualities that this man was expressing. He was certainly honest, forthright, capable. I instantly liked the strong qualities of divine Truth that he manifested, and I admired him for them.

At the same time, I was unintimidated. I knew that divine Principle, Love, governed me and provided all that I needed to know, and this man didn't. I calmly thanked him for his honesty and assured him I would do the job without bothering him.

In the weeks that followed, communion with God directed each step. Ideas came concerning where to find product information, current and potential customers, and so forth. Opportunities appeared for me to interact with other sales representatives who were willing to share invaluable product and application information. All that I needed was provided as I followed the direction of my heavenly employer, God.

In six months, I made not one sale. But I was not discouraged, nor did I doubt. Each day was full of the confidence that God's plan was unfolding and of the joy that comes from faithfully doing my job and trusting God. At the end of six months, the orders began to come in. I knew the territory so well that I even became the first woman Sales Representative of the Year for that district, which included nearly a quarter of the United States.

Meanwhile, my boss did hire the other candidate when the next position opened. He spent countless hours with him, trained him thoroughly in product knowledge and applications, and went with him on customer visits. During all this time, I treated my boss with genuine warmth and respect, expecting (and receiving) nothing in return. After nearly a year and a half, my boss appeared at my desk and proceeded to apologize. He said that he was going to have to fire the other fellow because of nonperformance. He acknowledged that he had done everything possible to help this man and had done absolutely nothing for me. Yet I had succeeded. He asked me to forgive him.

I was stunned. I told him in all sincerity that there was nothing to forgive him for. Nothing that he had done (or not done) had impeded my progress.

From that point the obstacle in his thought regarding me was removed. We became good friends and supported one another openly in business opportunities. This mutual support continued after I was promoted to another office, and as long as I worked for that company.