



## Assume everyone else is playing by different rules

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For a second, I’ll assume if you’re reading this column that you’ve read my other columns. In those columns, readers have learned many sets of rules to follow to succeed in life. If you haven’t read my previous columns, I’ll assume you follow a personal set of rules that allow you to excel in many facets of your life.

So now what about other people? What are their standards? What rule book are they following? What drum beat do they march to? Chances are they are making it up as they go along. This makes them unpredictable and erratic.

Not everybody will possess your high standards of honesty and morality. Obviously, some people are kind and dignified--just like you--and are still

able to climb the corporate ladder, but there are equally lots out there whose rules are suspect.

If you assume everyone else is playing by different rules you won’t be far off the beaten path. You don’t have to assume that their rules are better or worse than yours, merely different. If you assume their rules are the same as yours or better you will be constantly let down, disappointed, disillusioned, saddened, and/or upset. If you assume their rules are worse than yours you will grow mistrustful, apprehensive, paranoid, suspicious, and/or skeptical.

Assuming their rules are different without assuming what those rules are keeps you open and receptive, cautious but expectant, approachable but not overly trustful, responsive but not gullible. It’s a bit like a martial arts

exponent:

- You are alert and prepared, but not muscle bound or aggressive.
- You remain flexible and fluid and can move like a cat and dodge whatever is thrown your way without ever adopting a belligerent stance.
- You are ready for anything by being grounded and centered.

As you move through life, just know that the rules you play by will benefit you regardless what rules others play by. Your rules will keep you disciplined, consistent, respectful, and honest. Sometimes you may feel surrounded and out-gunned by those who play by different rules, but be patient, because in the end, they will run out of ammunition and you won’t.

~ The End ~