

MONDAY MANNA

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IS THIS A GOOD TIME FOR A RESTART?

By Rick Boxx

A calendar year has 12 months, but during the summer months many of us experience a notable change in work demands and schedules. Businesses often find employees distracted with their children being home for the summer, taking their annual break from school. Many workers are eagerly anticipating holidays for times of much-needed rest and relaxation. Either way, they receive a break from the daily demands of work.

In some cultures, such as in Europe, during the summer months work staffs can take extended holiday breaks from their regular work routine. "Business as usual" slows or comes to a sudden halt. With this slowdown in the pace and momentum of the work, business teams become shorthanded temporarily. A question then becomes how to use this time most usefully.

In a general sense, the conclusion of a school year or time for staff holidays can serve as an excellent time for a restart. This might involve meeting with your staff as they are available, casting vision for the coming months. It becomes a time for reenergising and refocusing your team. These "down times" can prove to be as important as the periods of concentrated productivity.

Offering your team an opportunity to remember why they are there can help your organisation be more productive in the future. The Bible gives a humorous description of people who lacked any focus for their activity: *"The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there"* (Acts 19:32). While the context was not about people in business, it could describe corporate teams who have become so busy they have forgotten their overall mission and goals.

There is a temptation to insist on being busy for the sake of being busy. This brings to mind the boss who ran through the office shouting, "Don't just stand there! Do something! Even if it's wrong!" Sadly, this can result in a waste of effort and energy, and unintended lack of productivity.

As a passage in the Bible's Old Testament states so well, *"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.... A time to plant and a time to uproot...a time to tear down and a time to build...a time to tear and a time to mend...a time to be silent and a time to speak"* (Ecclesiastes 3:1-7). There is a time for moving forward – and should be a time for pausing to review how far we have come and where we hope to be going.

We see this theme, the recognition of times when starting over is necessary, recurring in the Bible. For instance, after spending many years building an ark and then experiencing the great flood, Noah needed a restart. We see him receiving it in Genesis 9:1, *"Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.'"* This signified the time for mankind's literal restart.

Your organisation might not have just endured a great flood – or a major calamity – but a lull in the usual work routine should be welcomed. If you sense it is time for a restart with your team, don't wait. Schedule a meeting today! Review questions like, "Why are we here?" and "Where are we going?"

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

Does your organisation usually experience a time during the year when staffs are depleted by annual holidays, or workers restructure their days to accommodate children at home because the school year has ended? How do you or your company usually respond?

What in your view is the value of a "restart," taking time to slow down and re-evaluate the work you have been doing as well as your future plans, goals and objectives?

Have you ever experienced something similar to what was described in the Bible, where people were obviously confused, even to a point where, "...the people did not even know why they were there"? If so, what did that feel like?

If you sense it might be time for a restart in your business – or even for a restart in your life personally – how do you think you could go about doing that?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Proverbs 10:4-5, 12:27, 14:23

Ecclesiastes 3:17,22

Acts 21:34

Ephesians 5:15-17