

MONDAY MANNA

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IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE TIME TO CELEBRATE

By Robert J. Tamasy

In the business and professional world, we concentrate on goals, new products and services, sales quotas, and profits. We pursue these things with great energy, determined to hit our marks. But what happens when we succeed, when we achieve our intended results? More often than not, we simply establish new goals and objectives, sales quotas and bottom lines. Then we quickly move on.

Many organisations and leaders, consumed by their missions and objectives, sprint past major milestones and victories without pausing long enough to celebrate and appreciate what they have achieved. Imagine three mountain climbers scaling a huge peak who, just as they reach the summit, spot another lofty mountain in the distance. Rather than enjoying what they have just done, they rush back down Mt. Almost-Impossible and head toward the next challenging mountain.

This sounds foolish, doesn't it? But this is often what we do. Rather than following the adage, "Take time to smell the roses," we charge off toward the horizon in search of even greater accomplishments. When I was the editor of newspapers and magazines, I struggled with this temptation. We had worked hard to assemble the latest edition, overcoming many hurdles and obstacles along the way, but once it was off the press, our attention would soon turn to planning, writing, editing, and designing the next one.

That was why I always made an effort to hit the "pause" button, allowing our team to appreciate what we had accomplished before shifting our focus to the next set of deadlines. We needed time to celebrate.

As my friend Rick Boxx, also a regular contributor to "Monday Manna," stated in one of his daily email messages, "Celebrations are an important part of the journey. They can rejuvenate staff, recognise star performers, and solidify a team." Camaraderie can be built during the struggle, pooling our respective talents and skills to accomplish a common goal. But the same camaraderie – some people call it esprit de corps – is solidified and strengthened when we can jointly bask in the glow of a job well-done.

We see a good example of this in the Bible's Old Testament book of Nehemiah. The Israelites had achieved their own "mission impossible," working hard to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, as well as reconstruct and inhabit the homes in the city. Even though they had faced strong opposition, the rebuilding was finished in an incredible 52 days. It was definitely time to celebrate. Which they did.

In Nehemiah 12:27 we read, "*At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the Levites were sought out from where they lived and were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate joyfully the dedication with songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, harps and lyres.*" The people of Israel would face many other difficulties in the days ahead, but they recognised the importance of celebrating what they had done.

King Solomon, reputed to be the wisest and most accomplished of ancient Israel's kings, understood the value of celebrating: "*Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labour under the sun during the few days of life God has given him – for this is his lot*" (Ecclesiastes 5:18).

In your workplace, embrace opportunities for celebration. It will keep your team energized and motivated.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

Is "celebration" part of your workplace vocabulary? When was the last time you were able to take the time to celebrate the completion of an important goal or project?

How does it feel to be a part of such a celebration? If your organisation is more like those that plunge into the next project rather than pausing to rejoice over what has been achieved, what do you think it would be like to be given the opportunity to celebrate work well-done?

Why do you think it is difficult for some to hit the proverbial "pause button" so they can enjoy the excitement of the moment of victory? What kind of impact can it have for the people involved if they do not receive opportunities to celebrate significant achievements?

What steps might you – or your team – take to ensure that they can indeed "stop to smell the roses" and celebrate, rather than quickly moving on to the next daunting challenge?

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

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Ephesians 2:10

Colossians 3:17, 23-24

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18