

Seven Secrets of a "Thank God It's Monday" Workplace

By Roxanne Emmerich

Scene 1

A suburban bedroom in any American city. Faint dawn light in the sky outside. The alarm clock sounds. A woman's tired hand reaches from beneath the covers to slap it into silence. The woman sits up grumpily, runs a hand through her hair, then suddenly grimaces.

WOMAN: Oh crap...it's Monday.

Scene 2

A suburban bedroom in any American city. Faint dawn light in the sky outside. The alarm clock sounds. A woman's hand reaches from beneath the covers to turn it off. The woman sits up, runs a hand through her hair, then suddenly smiles.

WOMAN: Thank God...It's Monday!

Most of us at some point in our lives have starred in Scene 1, hating the Monday morning alarm clock like it was a weekly colonoscopy, grumbling "OCIM" when it goes off. We had lived for the weekend, and now it was gone. Five more days would have to drag by in THAT place before we'd enjoy life again.

Not all of us have had the good fortune to star in Scene 2. But I'm here to tell you that more people are in that role than you probably think—people who spring out of bed on Monday morning, not because they are gluttons for punishment, but because work doesn't FEEL like punishment to them.

They are people who work in kick-butt, "Thank God It's Monday" workplaces.

So what's the difference between the OCIM workplace and the TGIM workplace? It all boils down to seven habits that can change everything about the culture of your workplace (not to mention the first words of your week).

The Seven TGIM Habits

To transform your workplace into a Thank God It's Monday workplace, develop these seven habits and encourage those around you to do the same:

1. Show up fully and commit with all your heart

Buddhists call it *mindfulness*—being present in the moment and attentive to the here and now. We Westerners are just awful at it. At work, we think of home. At home, we think of work. We bring our laptops to our kids' soccer games and bring lunch to our desks.

Take one day and see if you can catch yourself being elsewhere. If you're like most people, you'll do it...well, pretty much all day every day.

Time to stop that. The first step toward a TGIM workplace is being present and accounted for at work. Thinking about being elsewhere leads to resenting where you are.

And while you are at work, commit to work with all your heart. While at home, commit to home. This is what I call throwing your heart over the bar—committing 100 percent to the moment and task before you.

2. Communicate clearly

Use powerful and positive language about what you will do and the attitude you expect from others.

Remember the last time you were given an assignment with murky instructions? I'll bet good money you do. It's an awful feeling. Vague policies and unclear expectations can make people feel irritated, unsafe, disengaged. They click into survival mode instead of focusing on how to help the company succeed.

So if a TGIM workplace is your goal, take the time to make your communications clear on every level.

3. Go beyond the job description

When was the last time you called home and said, "Honey, you're not going to believe it. Today...I was average!" Nobody calls home to say they did what was in their job description. You call home when you've done something great, produced monster results, made someone's day.

Going beyond the job description happens when you pitch in and help others at work, help accomplish a greater good without expecting it to be part of your evaluative performance. It means being a better team member and willingly sharing the load. If you're caught up on your tasks, help someone else who is crunching for a deadline.

You know what? You're going to find that instead of an extra burden, you actually feel more a part of things than ever, and that can be fun and exhilarating.

4. Don't tolerate dysfunctional behaviors

When people gossip about others, you may as well have them bring baseball bats and beat each other. At least that will heal. If a happy and functional workplace is your goal, there are few more productive places to put your energy than the absolute elimination of gossip.

Once you establish a zero-tolerance policy for talking behind another person's back, give each other permission to address conflict head-on, out loud, courageously and honestly. Create a trusting and open environment and watch the dysfunction ebb away.

5. Clean up your messes

Relationships are built on trust. Without that foundation, there is no basis for a relationship.

We breach the trust each time we don't do what we said we would do. But here's the thing—that breach can be healed quickly IF you come back and clean up the mess.

A cleanup has two parts—acknowledgement and commitment. Acknowledge that the results are not okay, then make a commitment to put things right and prevent a recurrence.

When Dan misses a deadline, he owes it to his team to say, "I'm so sorry I missed that deadline. There's no excuse. It shouldn't have happened. I'm putting a tickler system in place to remind myself earlier in the process so it won't happen again." Acknowledgement and commitment.

When Sharon makes mistakes on a project, she should say to her boss, "I can see that I made mistakes in this document, and I *know* that's not acceptable. I will put a reminder at my desk to checklist each document before I submit it to make sure I have each of these as accurate. I want you to be able to trust me."

We all make mistakes. It's part of the human deal. The important thing is to clean up after yourself.

6. Live a life of profound service

Wayne Dyer, author of *There Is a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem*, says you can't be depressed when you're being kind to others.

He's right, you know. Once you place yourself in the service of those around you—your family, your colleagues, your customers—every moment becomes imbued with purpose and significance, and you feel GOOD.

This is an idea with huge potential to transform your experience of work. As you drive to work, begin thinking about how the work you do is serving others, contributing to their success and happiness. Transform your interactions from simple business transactions to a profound exchange between two human beings. This is the essence of true service, and the key to a workplace that draws you happily back, Monday after Monday after Monday.

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7. Celebrate

Every project consists of little steps, little victories along the way. Recognize and celebrate them in ways large and small. Build a system of celebrations and rewards—quarterly, weekly, daily—and follow through like your company's life depends on it. Because it does. Train your managers to start meetings with each person sharing one success, followed by applause. Create rewards for meeting quarterly objectives. Recognize progress and celebrate the daylights out of it. Thank people for the work they do.

Acquire these seven habits and spread them through your workplace, then be sure to notice the first Monday your hand reaches for the alarm—and you smile.

SIDEBAR

Start the TGIM juice flowing

- Find at least three things today that you can do to be remarkably helpful to a person, things that they would NEVER expect. At the end of the day, see how you feel when you look in the mirror knowing you rocked someone's world—and yours at the same time.
- Listen to the needs of others. Don't turn down a chance to help someone in a jam whose priorities are clearly in the best interests of customers and the company.

Notice that you generate a sense of self-fulfillment by doing a little extra. You'll find work far more satisfying, your relations with coworkers and customers become closer and more authentic, and you'll feel good about yourself.

Roxanne Emmerich is renowned for her ability to transform “ho-hum” workplaces into massive results-oriented “bring-it-on” environments. To discover how you can ignite the passion of your employees, catapult performance to new levels, and boost the morale of your company subscribe to the [Thank God It's Monday](http://www.ThankGoditsMonday.com)TM e-zine at www.ThankGoditsMonday.com.