

Fighting a Case of the Mondays

By Clint Greenleaf | Tuesday, June 9th, 2009

If you're not an entrepreneur, you may be less than happy to come to work on Mondays. Frankly, it doesn't matter if you're a front-line player or the CEO -- we've all had our days (weeks, months, years) of being discontent in the workplace.

But Roxanne Emmerich doesn't think it has to be this way. In fact, she knows it doesn't, and the focus of *Thank God It's Monday!* is revealing the strategies behind a functional, happy, and fun workplace. (She's more than prepared for the eye-rolling and sarcastic comments that come whenever she brings up the idea of a fun workplace.) Her book is part parable, part anecdote, and part textbook, written from the standpoint of an industry veteran who has seen it all -- and she's not going to take your crap.

Emmerich's bottom line is simple logic: The more you love your workplace, the better your workplace. The better your workplace, the more your customers love your workplace. The more your customers love your workplace, the more successful your workplace. For her, attitude is everything. It's not about being touchy-feely or a boss telling her workers, "Be happy and get to work!" It's about communicating, taking action, initiating change, taking obstacles as challenges, and turning uninvolved employees into dedicated employees. But most importantly, it's about the celebration of positive change (following the "Hoopla" model, which is nowhere near as ridiculous as it sounds) when all of these elements work.

The book is separated into four parts: understand that you have a problem, work to change that problem, find a way to effectively better your workplace, and work to rid yourself of the obstacles to a better workplace. The focus throughout is on you as an employee or employer. What are you doing wrong? What can you do to make it better? Why are you doing something one way rather than another? She challenges you to push yourself: Don't ever take "no" or "I can't" as an answer, and strive until you -- as an individual -- reach your ultimate goal. The company is built on individuals and that is where the focus lies.

What's most clever about the book is the parable approach. Reading about one company instinctively makes you want to compare it to your own company. You recognize the types of employees and problems and attitudes that you and your people have. You read it to find your "aha" moments. "Aha, I'm doing this" or "Aha, I need to do that." (And occasionally, "Oh crap, I shouldn't be doing that.") Emmerich expertly guides the reader through a closer look at his or her workplace and then provides the tools to make all employees contribute equally, be enthusiastic and work towards tangible results.

Not just for CEOs who want a great culture, this is a recommended read for employees at every level, because as Emmerich says, *anyone* can work toward making Mondays at the office the best day of the week.