

Thank God It's Monday!

By Elizabeth Harrin | Wednesday, July 15, 2009

If you like management books with stories, like [Fish!](#) and [The One Minute Manager](#), then [Thank God it's Monday!: How to Create a Workplace You and Your Customers Love](#) is the kind of book you'll enjoy.

It follows the story of Roger, CEO of a company that isn't doing so well, and Kathy, a CEO in the same sector whose business is booming. Kathy shows Roger that doing things the TGIM way makes everyone happier and more productive. Job done.

It's not a book specifically aimed at project managers, but as we spend a lot of time leading people, driving through change and working with disparate, dysfunctional teams, there is a lot in here that is relevant. At some points it sounds as if Emmerich is talking directly about project managers and project success:

You are as good as your word. You make or break your reputation based on what you commit to and when (and how) you deliver the goods. Relationships are built on trust, and trust comes when commitments are kept.

It's an easy book to read, and it doesn't take long to get to the key concepts, which are essentially around setting shared goals for attitudinal change, measuring progress against targets, celebrating success and challenging those who don't make the grade. Emmerich writes:

Create a vision for every important project... Tell your team members who report to you that you want "Every project to be a work of art that you can write home about."

There isn't much in the book about saying 'no', and in fact one of Emmerich's principles is to do as much as possible for other people. Her model for a successful workplace reminds me of that of servant leadership, so saying 'yes' is important. If you find yourself running out of time and having to say 'no' to certain things, phrase it in a positive way:

Never say, "I don't have enough time" again. Replace it with, "I'm choosing to prioritize here."

It's a very positive, upbeat book that made me realise I need to stop whining about the small stuff. However, for a UK reader it's all very cheerleader-ish, with lots of high fives and whooping. We don't high five in my office. We rarely shake hands. If we want to do something nice for someone we'll get a round of tea in or maybe (on special occasions) bring in doughnuts. I know changing the culture of a team or organisation is what the TGIM approach to work is all about, but if I tried to set up a hoopla team people would think I meant a crack group of experts skilled in throwing rings at a stick at the village fete.

Still, putting that aside there are some useful elements in this book to take into account for project teams, especially those Storming and Forming. You want to set behavioural expectations early: how people interact with each other in a project environment, rewarding behaviours that help project success and challenging behaviours that hold the team back. And Emmerich is very keen on measuring things, which is what all good project managers should be doing anyway. We measure time, quality, cost, tolerance, appetite to risk, deviance from scope.

This last point is where project teams can benefit the most from the TGIM approach. You don't want to be a project manager who sucks her teeth and says, "Not sure we can fit that latest change in," or, "You really don't want to do that." You want to be the project manager that delivers great results.

Measure your progress, stay accountable, and get results regardless of all obstacles. Set your own unreasonable goals. Don't wait for someone else to request it of you. Those who have great success in life are driven by goals beyond what others expect of them.

Mondays in my office aren't too bad anyway, but it's good to have reinforced the fact that it's up to me to set the tone – for myself, for my team and for my projects. I want to be a TGIM manager, even if you won't catch me whooping as I settle down in my desk at the start of each week.

I interviewed Roxanne Emmerich, author of Thank God It's Monday! on – you guessed it – Monday. [Read the interview here.](#)

Want to win a copy of [*Thank God it's Monday!: How to Create a Workplace You and Your Customers Love?*](#) Send me a message with the content: I love Mondays! If it's your name out of the hat then I'll contact you to ask for your postal address details.