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NEXT STEP

WHY YOUR ORGANISATION SHOULD PROBABLY CELEBRATE MORE

If your organisation is celebrating a big anniversary—like we are at Next Step with our three year anniversary—you shouldn't neglect to mark the occasion. But what about small successes or successes outside your company? Or employee birthdays and milestones? Does your organisation tend to go overboard and celebrate every other special day (think: International Lefthanders Day) in its own special little way? Or is the mildest form of excitement frowned upon in your circles?

Employees need to feel the love

Head of Human Resources at FedEx Bangladesh, M A Mannan says, "Employees want to be appreciated. They need managers to help them feel valued. No employee seeks to be mediocre." According to him, management needs to develop a culture of bringing its employees together, and they must make time for celebrating employees to create a work environment that is both positive and reinforcing.

Even if your organisation is facing tight financial times, celebrations provide a cost-effective way of fuelling engagement and higher levels of performances. Mannan advises that managers dedicate a budget solely for the purpose so that occasions can be celebrated at ease and with minimum worries regarding funds.

Apart from just motivating employees to continue delivering excellent results and be even more productive with the next set of projects, celebrating can also unify the team around a positive outcome. If your organisation has its share of lone wolves, employees who struggle to get along, show them how they helped to achieve a common goal.

Maintain your employer brand

Monjurul Alam, Head of Human Resources at AFC Group, believes that occasions and success must be celebrated because it is important for effective employee relations and positioning the organisation as a great employer brand.

At AFC, they celebrate big events on the organisational level, but teams have programmes on their own—be that getting dinner of coffee together. "We celebrate significant national and international days, if it's been a good year in terms of profitability, and people's successes—be that a team's or an individual's, big or small," he says.

When you show your employees that no achievement or new initiative is too small to



celebrate, you're essentially setting off a wave of good vibes and inspiring employee and client loyalty. Be it word-of-mouth, positive press, or praise from industry people, it's going to shine the spotlight on your organisation. M A Mannan suggests that companies reflect the company's values and business strategy throughout their celebrations. Acknowledging the milestones you've crossed and the achievements that your employees have made sustain and enhance your ability to keep moving towards your vision.

Make a mark in your industry

For the third year anniversary of our automobile publication Shift, Executive Motors

Limited made a wonderful gesture by bringing in cake for the team. As John Coleman of marketing and advertising firm The VIA Agency says: "Don't forget to celebrate the success of those outside of your own company. Industries are microcosms that inevitably involve a lot of horizontal movement from one company to another. Creating a fun sense of camaraderie where competition is friendly makes passing the torch something that's bittersweet—instead of just bitter." Think about Madchef's Friendship Day post that gave a nod to competitors Takeout.

This can subtly point out your organisation's contribution to the industry and community, gives your existing marketing pro-

grams a boost, and balances the ups with the downs. Express gratitude for the upticks and ensure that you are identifying and promoting when your organisation is in a good place and enhance the time you spend in an optimistic state of mind.

You don't need to formally schedule a celebration with your HR department weeks in advance, but a practice of celebration allows everyone to let loose once in a while. Camaraderie within and outside an organisation ensures that employees and partners stick around for the long haul.

WORDS AND ILLUSTRATION:
AMIYA HALDER

3 YEARS OF TELLING OTHER PEOPLE WHAT TO DO

Marathons begin with hundreds of participants. The first few kilometers are easy until heat, dehydration, fatigue, light-



ning, open man-holes, Godzilla, alien abductions ramp up the intensity and cut down on the runners. It's tough to continue for the long run. Few make it through.

Three years ago we started the first English weekly career supplement. The first forecast we received stated how we would run out of content in six months. Which is frankly impossible. This is a country full of innovative, hungry young people that take on challenges without backing down. No matter what, no one sits back. Highlighting the dreams, worries and achievements of these productive people means we never run out of content, and more importantly, inspiration.

So three years and counting,
Ehsanur Raza Ronny, Editor, Next Step



Two and a half years working at the same place, one might expect a 20-something year-old to start getting restless. But from dreading to show my face in front of the boss because classes ended at 5 p.m. whereas he's been in the office since 12 to genuinely looking forward to coming in at the end of the day, I realise I really love what I do and it'll never feel like just work. The best part of the job? The people. The Next Step team has grown in the past years and they are what keeps me coming back for more. If there's one thing I've learned during my time here, it's that the best motivator is people who are as excited about your work as you are.

Amiya Halder, In-Charge, Next Step

JOB HOPPING WITH GENGHIS KHAN

Should you switch?

Back in the 1200s, Genghis Khan knew if he stuck to his daily routine of pillaging, looting and massacring the opposing villages, he would eventually conquer the world. He never varied from his career path of destruction. He definitely didn't contemplate opening up a noodles shop and later setting up a chain shop of painting family portraits. He didn't dabble in job hopping. But this is now and young people early in their careers tend to jump within two to four years. For some it is a fast track to corporate climbing. For others it could lead to creating an unwanted impression of fickleness. But sometimes, you simply need to switch. Here are the top four reasons why.

Horrible bosses

Genghis Khan was his own horrible boss and he loved himself. Ask his minions to hear some gory tales but then, none of them lived to tell the tale. But those of you reading this probably have at least one boss over you, a boss that has not yet murdered you.

What to do: A bad boss is usually not fixable.

No growth, no excitement

Genghis Khan loved the smell of blood in the mornings. He loved

his job. Each victory led him to expand his territory and name. Are you doing anything that has helped you grow your skills or reputation? If your job offers you no option to develop your skills or try your hand at something that adds value, then you are in the wrong place.

What to try: Look for the specific areas where you can contribute. If upper management is shown your expertise and dedication, usually they try to fit you in.

Boredom

Genghis Khan was like a Pokémon master except he wanted to conquer or kill them all. He knew where he was headed and he thoroughly enjoyed it. Do you?

Do you wake up in the morning and drag yourself to work? Perhaps check one last meaningless Facebook post before checking another before handing in your report? Do you often cry your snot-filled tears into a colleague's unattended shawl/jacket?

What to try: See if your organisation has scope for matching your interests.

Money

Genghis Khan had more money than he knew what to do with. It wasn't his main motivator. If your company isn't willing or able to give you what you are worth, switch. Many switch jobs in about a year for money because it usually offers a bigger increment. But if you have a good boss and challenging work, the money comes bigger when you stay longer with the company.

What to try: When you have a chance to develop your reputation, stay.

WORDS AND ILLUSTRATION:
EHSANUR RAZA RONNY



Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.



SECRETS TO MAKING YOUR UNDERLINGS HAPPIER

So what you don't have the Jedi mind tricks to will your underlings into working harder? Happiness researcher, psychologist and best-selling author Shawn Achor claims that the brain works much better when a person is feeling positive. In those times, people tend to be more creative and better at solving problems. But how exactly do you achieve that in the workplace?

Give them opportunities to grow

Financial incentives aren't enough to make for highly productive employees. Smart people need to improve. At Google, employee satisfaction grew 37% as a result of employee support and satisfaction initiatives. Provide opportunities for developmental support like training and mentoring programmes to develop skills.

People don't do well with repetition—they get bored and lose their sense of purpose when they see no change. Make sure your subordinates are aware of the different

types of career paths or job opportunities throughout the company

No, not bonuses this time either

People can't grow without being challenged so start giving your employees more responsibility. Let them design a plan or take the lead for a project. Anthony Smith, CEO and founder of the Customer Relationship Management software Insightly, says, "The best benefit you can provide to your employees is the opportunity to make a difference through their work and help guide the course of the company. Benefits such as clear and frequent communication on company happenings, individual and department direction, and big-picture company direction make all the difference in employee happiness."

Give monetary incentives, but above all, voice your recognition, be that with a post on social media, a casual compliment during coffee break, or more formally in a departmental meeting.

Perks and incentives

Perks don't have to be restricted to bonuses—it could be a ticket to the upcoming Harry Potter movie or a discount coupon for pizza at that swanky, authentic Italian place in Gulshan. If they take risks, reward them.

Chill out with the crew

Face it, we're working more hours and feeling burnt out because of it. People need stress relief and companies should focus on creating avenues for letting off steam as a team. While more breaks are great, plan an informal hangout for a change, like a group lunch instead of that same old canteen food. Talk to your underlings and find out how you can give your workplace a more positive and creative environment. If you can't show them the love, you're going to start losing devoted employees who submit to your every whim and fancy.

AMIYA HALDER