Projects are ever changing; they can be stressful and bring about many challenges. We always tend to comment or make note when someone misses a deadline, but does the same hold true when something good happens? One important factor that is often overlooked during the lifecycle of a project is celebrating success and the people accomplishing that success. I don’t mean waiting until the end of the project, but celebrating during and as often as necessary.

As many of you may know, projects vary in size. Some are short term whereas others are long term. Whatever the size, I recommend taking care of the team. Why? Because not only can this be used as motivation, but more importantly as recognition. Everyone likes to be recognized for their efforts. I believe rewarding the team helps everyone effectively stay on task. In fact, for some of the teams I’ve managed, it’s helped them to collaborate better. Celebrating often is important because most people are doing multiple projects and this can be stressful. It’s the Project Manager’s job as well as Upper Management’s to be the team’s cheerleader to get them to the finish line.

When should successes be celebrated? For any project this can be done many ways. You can give recognition at the beginning of each team meeting. You can send out cards or notes anytime someone on the team has completed a critical task. You can have a small team celebration after each project phase. This is just to name a few. The list can go on and on.

Here are a few ideas to help celebrate success:

**Informal Rewards** – these are no cost and can have the greatest impact. Can be done individually or by group.
- Personal notes
- Cards
- Caught doing something great card
- Note from senior manager

**Low Cost Rewards**
- Bring in food to team meetings (doughnuts, snacks, etc.)
- Certificates
- Candy bars (these can be given out with cards or personal notes)
**Other Types** – these depend on approval from management
- Gift certificates
- Cash bonus
- Promotions

There will always be projects and you will always need a team of people to complete them. Ensuring that your team is celebrated during the project will bring in more benefits than not. Even if there’s not a budget for low cost rewards I guarantee a personal note goes a long way. Knowing the right tools and your team will bring about enthusiasm and collaboration while working towards a shared goal.

~Tosha Miles