



# MONDAY MOTIVATOR

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MANAGEMENT CONSULTING GROUP

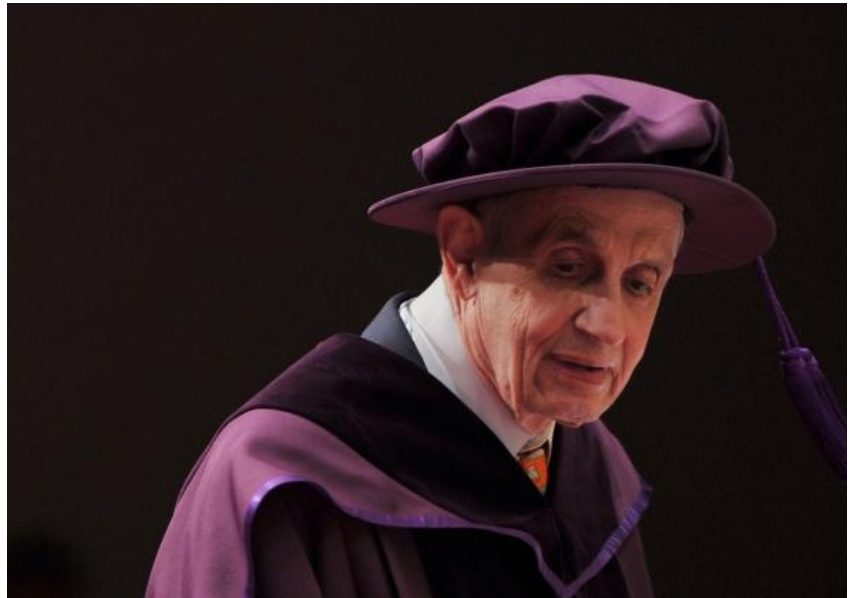
WILL ROBERTSON / JAY McDOWELL

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## What We Settle For

In 2001 Ron Howard directed a film project about the life of Professor John Forbes Nash, Jr, shown in the image below. Here he was conferred an honorary doctorate of science at the City University of Hong Kong on Nov. 8, 2011. John Nash, a Nobel Laureate in Economics ended up the focus of a book written by a Pulitzer Prize nominated writer in 1998 by the name of Sylvia Nasar. Russell Crowe starred as John Nash. The story begins in Nash's days as a graduate student at Princeton. In the story [\*A Beautiful Mind\*](#), Nash develops a mental condition called paranoid schizophrenia. The subsequent delusional episodes that came with this condition create the backdrop for a drama of wills. Nash believes in what he calls Game Theory while the universities he is associated with cite his mental condition as a reason to not take his views seriously. The story shows how Nash refused to settle for anything less than what he considered to



be the truth. Eventually he won out over the considerable force of an international body of intellectual leaders. He simply did not settle. For his efforts he has gone down in history as one of the most impactful thinkers to rise into the intellectual ranks of high academia.

A lot of people tell us they plan new goals and set new expectations when the year is about to wind down and a new one is about to begin. These same people will tell us their goals did not work out exactly the way they had hoped. We ask why this is.

Is it possible that people settle for less than their goals a little at a time? And are their situations where this simply cannot happen due to the failure it creates? Let's take a look at two realities and compare the demands of reaching goals with no excuses.

## Mountain Climbing

You may not recognize these two men and you would not be criticized for it either. Only a few know who these two are and what they did. First let's look at the story of what they did. On 29 May 1953, Sir Edmond Hillary (on the left) and Nepalese Sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay (on the right) became the first climbers confirmed to have reached the summit of Mount Everest.



This is no small feat. Mount Everest is 29,029 feet above sea level. They were part of the [ninth British expedition to Everest](#), led by [John Hunt](#). *TIME magazine* named Hillary one of the [100 most influential](#) people of the 20th century. Hillary was a New Zealander who went on to become world famous for his accomplishment. There was a book published about his feat. If you can find a copy I highly recommend you read it. It will give you a whole new perspective on what it means to have zero options for failure. Born July 20, 1919, Hillary passed Jan. 11, 2008.

[http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1869094.Nothing\\_Venture\\_Nothing\\_Win](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1869094.Nothing_Venture_Nothing_Win)

## Business Settling

Have you ever wondered how anything gets done when major corporations put their customers on hold for long time frames then can't solve the most basic problems without bumping them up to another level? How did we get to a point where customers are second only to the checks they write? All of us have experiences with this reality and the reason it exists is because of what we call Business Settling. In the business sense we are talking about how a company and its customers settle one small step at a time into a world with less and less care for the customer and more focus on the shareholders, company owners, investors or other interested parties.

In this study we find that unlike climbing Mount Everest, there are plenty of areas for compromise. First it's all about doing away with someone who can actually answer the phone when a customer calls. Then it's all about adding layers of choices that the customer must wade through just to get a phone to ring on a real person's desk. Finally it's become okay to ignore that

phone call and let “it” go to voice mail. Such is the new reality of the modern business climate. To be fair there are companies who go out of their way to avoid such behavior but they are few and far between. Notice we emphasize IT and not the customer.

What’s happening is what we call business settling. Change is inevitable we are told. To keep prices down we have to take such measures and besides, it’s only a two or three minute wait to speak to a real person anyway so what’s the big deal? Try calling any government agency and you start to get the point.



If it were just phone calls that would be, perhaps, tolerable. But it’s more than that. Businesses increasingly become absorbed into their own corporate world where there’s less and less accountability for individual performance. People get paid on time with little chance they will be called to task over how their jobs are done. After all, the corporation is responsible. The problem is a corporation is a make-believe entity. Some human sits at the head of such an enterprise and from there company policy is drafted, communicated, implemented and measured. By the time the corporate culture reaches the customer contact event company policy takes over and the customer is left wondering why a bill arrives requesting a check and on the bill it says “do not write on this bill ... messages are not read. If you have a question, call our customer service number.” And the circle begins again.

Our point here is that with a new year just around the corner what can we all do to examine our business settling trends? At what point do we put the customer at odds with our accounting, stating that in order to keep prices down and create profit for the shareholders, we have to cut services that don’t put that much of a strain on the bottom line? Let’s look for new ways to enhance the customer experience by reducing the areas for compromise.

Pretend your company and your management team are about to climb Mount Everest. To quote Sir Hillary when asked about modern day methods for scaling such stratospheric heights:

If the going is tough and the pressure is on, If the reserves of strength have been drained and the summit is still not in sight, then the quality to seek in the person is neither great strength nor quickness of hand, but rather a resolute mind firmly set on its purpose that refuses to let its body slack or rest.

### Edmund Hillary

In summary, we have three weeks left in December to examine how we got this far and what will be required to get us to the next level. Would your business benefit with a detailed examination of “company policy?” And if you are an entrepreneur running a small to medium company might you benefit with coaching or consulting in the areas of sales, marketing, customer service, communications, leadership, time management, team building or team performance surveys? Both Jay McDowell and Will Robertson are here to help and if necessary, the rest of our team brings their special disciplines to the project as well. Call us to set up a complementary consulting session to start your year off on a record setting pace that delivers all the value you have worked so hard to create. 800-242-1900 or 949-713-2030

Until next week this wraps up your current edition of the Monday Motivator. We’ll have a new one for you next week. As always, feel free to share this with your associates, teams, friends or employees. We enjoy supporting you in your quest to go from good to great! Let’s meet now and cover a check list of what we can do to take your company to the next level.

We have some good news for our subscribers / readers. After nearly a year of mutual management consulting support Jay McDowell and I are announcing that we will publish this business journal jointly from now on. Jay’s background and experience brings an operations focus to our coaching and consulting work while my background and experience brings a sales and marketing focus. Together we will offer up topics that will support management, sales, customer service and operations.



Jay McDowell



Will Robertson

We are open to your suggestions on topics you’d like to see in the coming year. In addition we will start posting a weekly video blog in January of 2017 to accompany the Monday Motivator Journal. It will be posted on YouTube and a link to the video content will be included with every edition. We hope you like it as well. Until next week we wish you a great week of applied performance strategies.