

Pick-Up Your “Wake-Up” Call

I was at a hotel counter when a gentleman walked in hurriedly and asked for the manager. The manager came out of his room and the gentleman said, “I requested a wake-up call for this morning but nobody called me! Now I am late for my appointment. I want you to take the responsibility for this mistake”. The manager excused himself, went inside to speak to his staff and came back – he said “sir, I was told that there were two wake-up calls made to your room but you didn’t respond to either of them. When rung for the third time, you have asked him not to disturb you”. The gentleman was genuinely puzzled, “Have I said not to disturb me? That doesn’t make any sense. I think you are trying to cover up your mistake. If I miss my appointment I am going to hold you responsible”. The gentleman walked out, but his anger has evaporated and it was replaced by confusion.



Time to Wake-up

Wake-up call is a practical tool used by many to shift their consciousness from one state to another at a set time. As adults we set the alarm of our bedside clock to *wake-up* on time in the morning. The sound of your alarm can vary from a highly abrasive startling sound to a softer tune of your favorite piece of music or the voice of a DJ in a morning radio show. Nowadays we can even choose the alarm to ring several times, thanks to the invention of the snooze-alarm! Travelers organize automated or live *wake-up* calls in hotels to make sure they catch their flights on time. Children, whether they like it or not, are woken up by their parents, with soft pats and shakes, to go to school.

Regardless of the nature of it, a *wake-up* call is useless **unless you choose to respond to it!**

Have you received any *wake-up* calls recently?

Although *wake-up* calls are generally state-changing (from inaction to action – from sleep to awareness), the most powerful *wake-up* calls are **life-changing!**

A life-changing *wake-up* call is a resounding signal about a change that is necessary in your life. Often you get this type of *wake-up* calls when crisis or challenging situations in your personal or professional lives are forming shape. Mentioned below are some of the types of real-life *wake-up* calls people may get.

- **A mild heart attack** is the life's way of alerting you to your poor eating habits, lack of exercise and work-life imbalance
- **Layoff of a work colleague** is a gentle professional alarm that alert you to the fact that poor work performance leads to negative consequences and these rules apply to you as well
- **Surviving a minor car accident** is an abrasive alarm going off about the need to take drunk-driving seriously and to change the negative drinking and driving habits before the damages are irreversible
- **Losing a big business account** is a siren to remind you NOT to take relationships for granted and to bridge any gaps you may have in meeting expectations of your clients
- **Being overlooked for a promotion** is a nagging alarm on the need to critically self-evaluate your performance at work and to make immediate positive changes in performance and professional relationships
- **Repeatedly unmet sales targets in the team you manage** is a shrill to change team management tactics and to immediately boost the energy and motivation of your team

We all receive similar *wake-up* calls begging for **attention**, **alterations** and **change of directions** from time-to-time. Like you do with your bedside alarm, you can choose to ignore, snooze (postpone responding), or respond immediately to these real-life *wake-up* calls. Your choice of response very much determines the outcome of your circumstances. Those who have been stagnant in their work places and have been left behind in climbing of the professional ladders will tell you about the numerous *wake-up* calls they have snoozed. Those who have hurt themselves and others in drunk-driving motor accidents will tell you about the *wake-up* calls, in the form of minor accidents, they chose to ignore. Those who have lost relationship, personal and professional, will tell you about the various tunes of alarm bells to which they did not pay much attention. Those who have lost reputations and positions due to plummeting performance and revenue of the teams they managed will tell you about the numerous warning bells they muted and defended rather than responding to immediately.

Pick up your *wake-up* call

You owe it to yourself, to your family and to your colleagues to respond to *wake-up* calls. There is a limit to the number of *wake-up* calls you will receive. If you keep on snoozing the alarm or totally ignoring it, calls will stop. This is when you notice that your family has given up telling you, that your boss has stopped having one-on-one discussions with you or that your friends have stopped calling you. At this stage you are heading for trouble. Therefore it is vital that you pick up your *wake-up* call on the first ring!

As human beings we linger and savor the situations of comfort and tend to dismiss and deny factors that may burst our comfort bubble. For example, if your sales team is not putting out the best performance possible and they are dragging the company revenues down, the first people to notice this may be your colleagues, your boss or even your competitors! But when you are comfortably enjoying your dream, hearing your alarm clock going off is a frustrating experience. That means you need to get up, get out of your zone of comfort and do something about it. But if you ignore the alarm, the results can be far more damaging and irreversible. So in this instance, as the head of the sales team, it is your duty to pick up the *wake-up* call at its first ring and do whatever needs to be done until the plummeting sales line is reversed. This may involve boosting staff morale, addressing administrative bottlenecks, infusing new blood to the sales team and providing technical and motivational trainings. The important thing is to give due attention to the *wake-up* call.

In your personal life, be conscious of and thankful for the numerous *wake-up* calls you receive. Turn the unpleasant shrieks of the alarm in to wonderful opportunities to reinvent yourself; take your skills and knowledge towards less-chartered and exciting directions; find a better fitting working environment - so you are not straining your health; and most of all live a happier, healthier and wealthier life that fulfills you.

Nuwan Samarapathi

Personal Development & Corporate Trainer

NLP - Master Practitioner & Coach (USA)

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