

# Treasure Hunt

Today's Monday Motivation has homework – you're to go on a treasure hunt.

We all like treasure hunts. Now that we're no longer eight years old, we may call them different things – shopping excursions, yard sales, eBay – each treasure hunt we undertake is a chance for us to find something valuable – particularly something that has lain uncovered for some time.

So here's your homework – and mine – look for something valuable in yourself, your company, and your family.

Here are the rules of the game:

- 1. The treasure must be something that is ordinarily overlooked.** This includes talents that have been moved to the back burner, financial opportunities that we've overlooked (like 401K funds, stock investing, savings plans, IRAs) or business ventures that we should have taken earlier (businesses that we always told ourselves that we could do, if only we had more time). It might also be family members that don't achieve a lot of recognition (many families have one member who gets all the glory and another member who is usually overlooked), or co-workers who have a lot of insight to offer (but who you may never have listened to).
- 2. You must start to put the treasure to good use.** It's not any good if you identify a valuable talent, but never use it – and it's not worth a lot if you've got a million dollar idea, but never even get 93 cents out of it.
- 3. You must either: write it down in a journal, email to yourself, a blog or a memo, or tell someone else about it.** I prefer if you tell someone else about it, particularly your spouse – but if you don't have anyone to tell, then at least write it down somewhere you'll see it and remember it.
- 4. You must reevaluate your treasure in three weeks' time, to see if you're valuing it correctly.** Most of us will find that we can easily identify value when we look for it, but we really need to go back and examine that treasure, to ensure it's worth what we thought it was. It may be worth more!
- 5. Your treasure must not remain hidden.** Hidden treasure is great in a pirate story, but it's not worth much otherwise. You must keep your treasure where everyone can see it. This means you need to develop your talents, or start working on that business, or tell your friends about another person's abilities, or –

well, you get the idea. You must make certain your treasure doesn't remain hidden.

Years ago, I used to talk with a man who would tell me wild stories of buried Spanish gold hidden in the mountains. He hasn't found any of that Spanish gold, as far as I know (of course, he may be hiding it from the IRS if he found it), but he still looked for it.

I doubt he'll ever find those lost caches of gold, if they really do exist – but this much is true – he'll never find that buried treasure unless he takes the time to look for it.

Much as his endeavors, each of us has hidden treasures that we can uncover – and most of us will be surprised at how very much treasure is out there, once we look. We may not find that Spanish gold, but we will certainly find precious and important treasure within ourselves, our families, our companies, and our friends. Whether we profit from that treasure ourselves, or help another person to find it, we can gain vast worth from our treasure hunt homework.

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