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# Reflection

## PART 3: KNOW YOUR COLLEAGUES

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My prior article in this series focused on **celebrating project wins** - when our teams achieve milestones such as production deployments. I firmly believe we let too many of these events pass by with the attitude of "business as usual". We need to be better about stopping, reflecting, and celebrating our accomplishments.

Along those same lines, I also believe we need to take time to separate ourselves from the work and celebrate those that we work with. I was fortunate to attend Sunday's MN Vikings home opener at US Bank Stadium this past weekend. For this particular game, we chose to take several of our employees, including a new delivery lead that will have his first day this coming week.

As I sat watching the game, enjoying some great stadium food and drink, it struck me how important it is to not only

celebrate the project wins but also make the time to socialize and collaborate with your colleagues in a non-work setting.

Understandably, it has been very hard this past year and a half and, in many ways, continues to be hard for in-person collaboration and team building to occur. We still must try and find ways to make it happen. Strong teams come from trust and trust is built over time. One great way to accelerate the building of that trust is to connect on a human level with your co-workers.

Regardless of if they work in the cube right next to you or a cube across the globe, it's imperative that we understand the person behind the email, the human behind the chat message. Nothing will create empathy more than understanding your colleague's world. Empathy leads to trust and trust makes great teams (and really good human beings).

If you are in a leadership position, use that to your advantage and schedule non-work team building events. If you are part of the employee group, volunteer to help coordinate and execute these types of events. Do them often - every month of possible. Get to know your team and use that knowledge to get better and stronger.

So, do you know your co-workers' children's names? What kind of car they drive? What their hobby is that they have passion for outside of work? If not, time to start asking!

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