

Role Call

3/3/2020

Yes, you read that title correctly. And, no, I did not make a spelling error. You undoubtedly remember your teachers doing a roll call in class each morning. I (Sarah) was curious where that term came from...I am happy to report that I did *not* go down a rabbit hole- I valued my free time (and writing this blog) more than satisfying my at-times-unnecessary curiosity. Instead, I did a quick (less than 5 minute) Google search and learned the following. A roll is a list of names; the term “roll call” historically described written documents that could be *rolled up*. So, a roll call is a scroll with names on it.

But, enough about word origins. Instead of talking about a list of names, I want to talk about the list of *roles* that you have. So, I am legitimizing the term “role call.” That’s right, we’re making it a thing. Because I’m confident that you have a *long* list of roles, some of which you may not even recognize as “official” roles. That doesn’t mean they *aren’t* roles. It just means you aren’t necessarily aware of the fact that you wear these additional “hats,” so to speak.

Consider the following: it’s Sunday afternoon. You’re making lists for grocery shopping and errands. One of your children has a science fair project due on Friday. He needs to create a poster board describing his project, which will be an erupting volcano...he has no idea how to create a working volcano, mind you. Your other child has karate tomorrow and brings her normally white uniform to you...the shirt is covered in fruit punch and the knees and hems of her pants are grimy with dirt. Just then, you notice that the family’s pet fish is sitting on the bottom of the tank listlessly. This evening, while your husband is tackling yard work, you’re planning to make dinner. Oh- and you need to write the family’s events for the week on the board in the kitchen, so you and your husband know who is responsible for what when. You also want to tidy up since it’s tough to do that during the week.

Big sigh. That sounds exhausting...and sort of like a typical Sunday afternoon. Now for the fun part. Let's do a role call for this scenario. Read it again and see how many roles you identify.

Here's what we came up with:

1. You're a mom, which is a HUGE job in itself and one that encompasses so many other roles and responsibilities.
2. You're a wife and partner...given that your marriage *is* a partnership, we'll roll these into 1 category. Just like being a mom, there are various roles and responsibilities that go along with being a wife.
3. You're orchestrating and managing things for the family. Another quick Google search and I learned that the household manager keeps the household running smoothly. In a home without other household staff, this person may also have other responsibilities.
4. You're the personal assistant who (at least this week) is managing the family's calendar, running errands and doing shopping.
5. You're the personal chef (at least for tonight) who is preparing dinner.
6. Since there is no science guru at home, you are the chief researcher, helping your son find legit information about volcanoes and learning how the heck to make a volcano.
7. At this point, you're in special project manager territory...I mean, you'll need to create a supply list, buy materials, develop a timeline to help your son meet his deadline and help your son construct and test his volcano.
8. Oh- you're also a copy editor, since you'll be reviewing your son's poster board.
9. Changing gears, you're a laundress who will be pulling a MacGyver to successfully treat and wash your daughter's karate uniform.
10. You're a housekeeper since you're going to be tidying up the home.
11. Don't forget about the pet fish. You're now the on-call veterinary technician and will take care of the fish once you have some guidance. Back to being chief researcher...
12. And, this week (as every week), you (and your husband) will be a chauffeur for your kids, getting them to and from everywhere.

Okay...we came up with 12 roles in that scenario. Is that surprising? How many roles did you identify? We'll admit that some of these roles may involve other roles on the list. For example, as a housekeeper, you may cook meals and do laundry. But we think that when you're functioning in a particular capacity, it's important to formally identify each and every one of those specific roles. Why? It will help you have a clearer picture of which (and how many) "hats" you wear and how much you *actually* have on your plate. Keep in mind that outside of the first 2 roles, which are relational in nature, every other role on the list is actually *a job for which people are paid*. Don't get us wrong- being a mom and being a wife are incredibly demanding...they're likely the most demanding... but they aren't jobs for which people get paid.

So, now it's time for *you* to do your very own role call. We know that you are so much more than a [*fill in the blank with whatever role pops into mind first*]. We know that you are busy! We also know that you probably beat yourself up for not getting things done or for dropping the ball or feeling tired or getting overwhelmed. But what if you are [*not getting things done/dropping the ball/feeling tired/getting overwhelmed*] because you are filling a lot of roles that that you don't even realize. There's no way for you to plan and schedule and create a life that's organized and has minimal stress (because stress-free is impossible) if you don't know what is actually on your plate.

To help you with identifying all of those hats that you wear in life, we made a free printable **Role Call** handout. Check it out but be prepared to be in awe of yourself. We think you'll be blown away by all that you do AND all the roles you fill that you don't even take credit for. Maybe it's time to start patting yourself on the back...it's always a good time to recognize your Momcomplishments!