

Chapter 9

Key Strategies for Happiness in Workplace: A Pragmatic View

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ABSTRACT

Well-being and happiness in the workplace are crucial for fostering a productive workforce. Happiness in the workplace is multi-factorial, comprised of psychological well-being, job satisfaction and harmonious human relationships. Research studies reveal that employees who experience higher levels of happiness and well-being are more productive, creative, and better at problem-solving. Positive well-being practices have been shown to increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover rates. Moreover, these practices contribute a lot to reduce job stress and burnout. Testing happiness or well-being assessments are also critical to promoting employee satisfaction. Regular assessments can provide newer insights, allowing employers to identify areas where interventions or modifications are needed and to measure the impact of implemented strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Happiness is the preponderance of positive emotions in an individual. It is the key to success in every domain of a person's life (Lyubomirsky & Diener, 2005). Research studies suggest that positive effect leads individuals to think and behave in ways that lead to building resource for goal achievement (Lyubomirsky, 2001; Elliot & Thrash, 2002). Neuro-cognitive studies show that happiness enhances our

brain to produce more Dopamine and Serotonin which in turn have some positive effects on memory, learning, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills, (World count 2021).

Happiness, encompassing pleasant moods, emotions, well-being, and positive attitudes, has garnered increasing attention in psychological research. Happiness at work goes beyond mere job satisfaction; it also includes factors such as work engagement, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment. If we take a comprehensive study on individual happiness at workplace, we can realize the fact that happiness has a significant role in both individual and organizational productivity (Fischer, 2010).

The World Happiness Report 2024 explored happiness across different life stages. Contrary to the portrayal of aging in Shakespeare's 'As You Like It', happiness research paints a more complex picture that has evolved over time. Historically, we believed and grew up with the view that happiness zenith in youth, decreases in middle age, and then recovers. However, from 2006 to 2010, youth happiness has sharply declined in North America, making young people less happy than older adults. A similar, though less pronounced, trend is observed in Western Europe. In contrast, happiness has increased across all age groups in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and East Asia, while it has found low in South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa. The report analyzes these trends by separating the effects of age from generational differences, revealing that those born after 1980 generally report lower happiness levels. Additionally, happiness inequality has risen in most regions from 2006 to 2010, except in Europe. In case of older adults, highlighting dementia as a major concern in aging and discussing strategies to enhance the well-being of those affected. Finally, the report specifically examines India, where happiness increases with age, particularly for men (World Happiness Report, 2024). Irrespective of gender, psychological wellbeing, in terms of self-acceptance, autonomy, positive relationships with others and personal growth positively influence subjective happiness (Warrier et al, 2021).

The growing focus on workplace well-being hints at a significant shift in how society perceives and addresses worker health (Lockwood, 2007). This interest is driven by research demonstrating that well-being can enhance worker engagement and productivity (Waddel & Burton, 2006). Work, inherently, contributes to physical and mental health, with evidence suggesting that employment can counteract the negative effects of unemployment (Schwartz et al.). However, many workers seek more than just satisfactory conditions; well-being encompasses more than productivity, job performance, or satisfaction (Dodge et al., 2012). It involves optimism, a meaningful life, prosperity, and flourishing (Hoffmeister et al.). Well-being can manifest in various ways, from meeting basic needs through safe employment to expressing virtues and character strengths, achieving self-actualization in work, and integrating spirituality into the workplace (Kaufman, 2015).

DIMENSIONS OF WELLBEING

The Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual (BPSS) model expands on George Engel's 1977 Bio-Psycho-Social (BPS) model by adding a spiritual dimension to the existing biological, psychological, and social components of well-being. The BPSS model emphasizes a holistic approach to general wellbeing, recognizing that well-being is influenced not only by physical and psychological factors but also by social interactions and spiritual beliefs. This model suggests that optimal well-being involves balancing these four dimensions, acknowledging that spiritual fulfilment is as important as physical health, psychological stability, and social support (Keyes, 2013).

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