



The Happiness of Workers

Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be.


Abraham Lincoln, *President of the United States (1809 - 1865)*

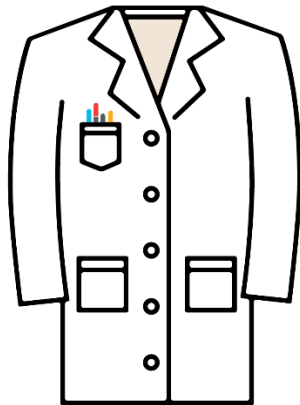
Employers appreciate that happiness, or job satisfaction, is a fundamental factor to increased productivity amongst employees. What they struggle to establish is how to inspire such happiness in the workplace. Should they pay more? Dangle the proverbial golden carrot? Throw an extravagant annual party; no expense spared? Or research methods to create better engagement amongst teams? Actually, the question they *should* be asking is

this: “Does success lead to happiness, or does happiness lead to success?” Can I satisfy my employees solely with extrinsic rewards, or do they need a level of intrinsic satisfaction to perform well? If so, how can I deliver it?

When wearing colored socks is considered the zenith of frivolity, implementing any kind of structural change in an organization will probably seem radical to the management. But if the changes benefit the organization and are working towards a workplace environment full of happy and productive employees, then even in a resistive environment a way must be found to implement change.

This was the task faced by Berend van Duijvenvoorde, an employee at the Netherlands’ Ministry of Economic Affairs. He was on a quest to introduce agile working and Scrum into the IT department. It was a tall order. As we all know, government agencies aren’t exactly the most flexible organizations, nor do they particularly like change. And this was the case with Berend’s employers. They were in the middle of a large reorganization. So, when Berend suggested a change to the departmental practice, they were less than keen.

Berend decided on a middle ground. If he couldn’t introduce a whole new agile work practice, he would create a test lab—drip feeding his team with new practices, to see how they would react. The first thing Berend did was to call on a colleague in another department, who had access to white lab coats.  He persuaded him to lend him enough lab coats to distribute amongst his team. Of course, his team thought him slightly mad when he presented each a lab coat.



On the first day of the experiment, Berend made sure that his team had a central table in the dining hall at lunchtime. Of course, they were the center of attention with their white lab coats on. On sunny days, Berend called stand-up meetings outside the office; lab coats on parade. Prior to the experiment, very little notice was taken of Berend and his team. Yet now, that white coat had changed everything.


Berend and his team continued to experiment in evolving the working practices of the IT department, but now they were noted by the bosses of the organization. Their regular team meetings and presentations were attended by the department head and their reports read thoroughly. Berend finally achieved his mission to introduce agile and Scrum disciplines to the department. In fact, the whole culture of the organization started to change. And all because a white lab coat made his team stand out.

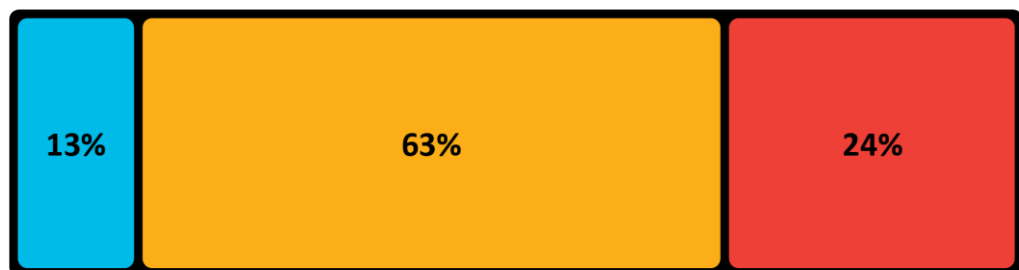
One of Berend's team commented during the test lab experiment, "I've been working here for 25 years. Until now, I didn't know work could be that much fun." Sometimes it's the simplest things that make us happy and more engaged!

"I've been working here for 25 years. Until now, I didn't know work could be that much fun."

Do Employees Always Go the Extra Mile?

Sadly, not all of us get to put on a white lab coat and feel engaged at work. A 2013 Gallup survey suggested that employee engagement levels are low worldwide. In fact, just 13% of worldwide employees were actively engaged.

 In other words, around 1 in 8 workers feel committed to their role and are likely to be making a positive contribution to the organization they work in. The majority of employees (63%) surveyed, were actively disengaged. How can you be actively disengaged, you ask? The scenario is common: your motivation levels are low; you're uninspired and therefore unproductive; and worse still, your negativity is rubbing off on your team. That sucks for you, your team and your organization!



Actively engaged

Actively disengaged





"Worldwide, 13% of Employees Are Engaged at Work."

Gallup, "Worldwide, 13% of Employees Are Engaged at Work"

But isn't employee engagement, just another word for job satisfaction? Absolutely not. Job satisfaction is just one of three components—satisfaction, motivation and effectiveness—that together form engagement. Unfortunately, many organizations still don't discern this

point of view, and consider satisfaction and engagement to be one and the same. This must change if organizations of the future want to reap the financial rewards of an engaged and motivated workforce. In 2010, Laura Sheffield wrote, “Employee satisfaction is the minimum entry fee that needs to be met in order for an employee to be fully engaged.” But surely it’s possible to be engaged without having job satisfaction? Yes it is. But it’s a recipe for disaster. When an employee is engaged, without having job satisfaction, there is a risk they will burn out. This often happens when workers are pushing themselves to produce great things, in an environment where there has been little or no cultivation of individual happiness.

Happiness Levels Are Higher

Whilst engagement levels are low, the happiness levels of workers register higher. A survey carried out by LinkedIn and the Adler Group quoted, “Over 72% of employees were ‘somewhat’ or ‘very satisfied’ in their jobs.”     A statistic that demonstrates how it’s perfectly possible to have job satisfaction, without feeling totally engaged.



Very satisfied

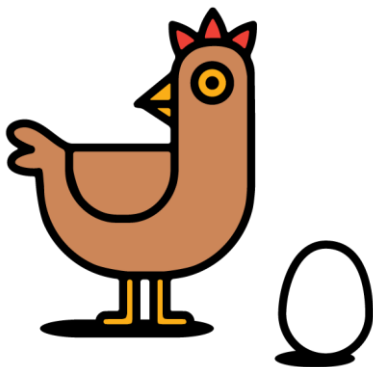
Very unsatisfied

Our higher satisfaction levels could be induced by extrinsic factors, such as pay level, the hours we work or the flexibility of our role. Or we might be satisfied by one-

dimensional influences, such as we get on with our colleagues and love to chat, we get to leave early to pick up the kids, or we get a free lunch! It's the, "It's just a job after all" scenario. We feel no motivation to be productive, 'to go the extra mile', or bring value to the organization; in this scenario, engagement rarely kicks in. This type of employee, could be referred to as a 'slacker'. The situation is a common problem identified in many organizations; although the 'slackers' are satisfied doing the minimum and getting paid for it, this type of attitude is certainly not appreciated by co-workers, who are looking for a supportive and motivated team environment. [Devi Clark, "Fascinating Facts about Job Satisfaction and Motivation All Over the World"]

Happy When Engaged or Engaged When Happy?

Like the 'Chicken and the Egg', we have to ask the question, "Does engagement lead to happiness? Or does happiness lead to engagement?" 🐔🥚 Actually it depends on who you ask...



Kevin Cruse, author of Employee Engagement 2.0, believes that one must be "fully engaged, to achieve inner happiness". Being engaged, means being committed to the goals of the organization and feeling an emotional tie to

the company; we are happy to go that extra mile. An engaged employee is generally one who takes the free lunch back to her desk, chats only during a break to colleagues and comes in early, or skips lunch, if she needs to leave early to pick up kids. Research suggests that when we are truly engaged, it's not just our work-rate that improves; the benefits cross over into our personal life too. We feel a sense of purpose and are able to develop meaningful relationships with family and friends.

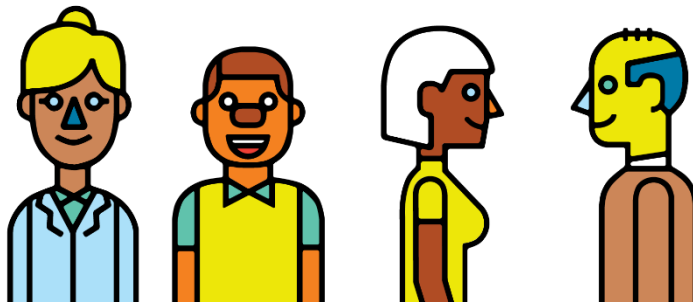
Charles Rogel, on the other hand, believes that employee satisfaction lays the foundation on which to build engagement. But the factors that drive the subsequent engagement are totally disparate to those which drive the initial satisfaction. Employee engagement is driven by a sense of meaning, autonomy, growth, impact and connection, and to a large extent, it's up to the organization to influence it. If bosses want to retain good employees, have less workers off sick and maintain a high level of productivity and quality, introducing factors to engage teams is fundamental.

Happiness and satisfaction may lead to higher engagement, and engagement may lead to more happiness and satisfaction.

Our own conclusion is that reality is far more complex. Nowadays, organizations need to satisfy, engage and motivate their workers to a happier production line. Happiness and satisfaction may lead to higher engagement, and engagement may lead to more happiness and satisfaction. But there's no guarantee either way. You can't please all of the people, all of the time...!

The Cultivation of Happiness and Engagement

Great managers and leaders must work towards the cultivation of both happiness and employee engagement in their organization. To cultivate happiness, we need to focus on the individual, to show gratitude and to ask for feedback, then act on that feedback. 🧑🏫🧑🏫 To cultivate engagement, we need to focus on interactions between team members and management, and to introduce the factors which will give their role a sense of purpose. 🧑🏫🧑🏫



This is such an extensive topic that, for this chapter, we're just going to focus on methods to improve the happiness factor in our organization. The good news is there are lots of ways we can cultivate happiness in the workplace. Games and practices which are simple, quick, and fun and don't cost as much as an annual party blow-out. Yet have exceedingly better happiness *and* engagement results.

Success Leads to Happiness or Happiness Leads to Success?

In our opinion, it's probably both. But there are varying opinions on the subject.

Shawn Achor, in his book *The Happiness Advantage*, says "We now know that happiness is the precursor to success, not merely the result." He has a point. After all, we are pretty complex beings and extensive research has proved

that our state of mind has everything to do with how well we perform. From leaving the house in a good mood and having a great day, to using positive affirmations to achieve what we want in life.

“The very good news is there is quite a number of internal circumstances [...] under your voluntary control. If you decide to change them [...] your level of happiness is likely to increase lastingly.”

Martin E. Seligman, *Authentic happiness*

Batting for the ‘success leads to happiness’ team is Phil Rosenzweig, author of *The Halo Effect*, who poses the question, “Does employee satisfaction lead to high performance? Probably, but [...] the reverse effect is stronger.” So as complex as we human beings are, is being more successful in life, the basal factor to being happy? Or is this just an illusion based on our modern-day need for material substance? It’s absolutely subjective. For some of us, the simplest things in life make us happy; we need little and live fully. Some just need to be great at something to feel happiness and contentment. For others, happiness is based on success and material belongings. And some poor souls don’t know what they want to make them happy!



When we stop trying to change what can't be changed, we can start to accept that happiness is a path, not a destination. 🧑 We have to let happiness take us along the path of progress. Jonathan Haidt, in *The Happiness Hypothesis*, surmises, “We can call this “the progress principle”: Pleasure comes more from making progress toward goals than from achieving them.” Yet, this concept doesn't wash with everyone. For those who live for material substance, wealth will always feel like their one true link to happiness. 🌈

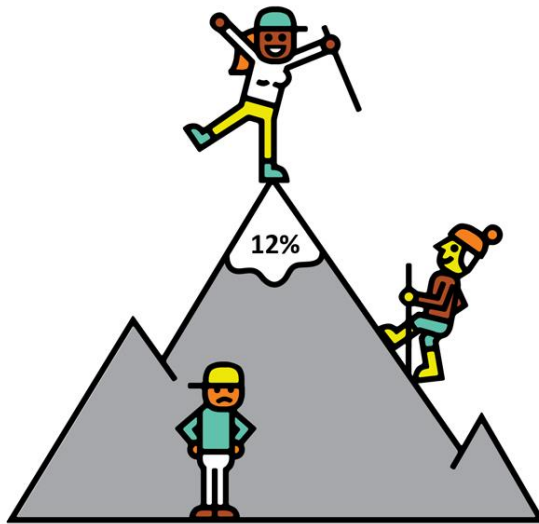
“Economies can blossom and grow, only if people are deluded into believing that the production of wealth will make them happy.”

- Daniel Gilbert, *Stumbling on Happiness*



For now, let's just say the happiness of workers is complex! Made up of intrinsic and extrinsic factors; along with our state of mind, or mindset. Despite the complexity, the simple fact is, happy workers are more productive. Research carried out by the University of Warwick showed that happy employees work harder and were around 12%

more productive. 🏔️ [University of Warwick, “We Work Harder When We Are Happy, New Study Shows”]



In answer to our first question, how do employers inspire happiness in the workplace and engage their employees? Here’s our 12-step guide.

12 Steps to Happiness (All Backed by Science)



Thank someone and be appreciative toward your colleagues, every single day. Gratitude is the best attitude and showing your employees and coworkers how much you appreciate them, goes a long way to making them feel happy and it doesn’t cost a cent. In fact it takes little effort on the part of the giver to say thanks for a job well done and to recognize an employee’s role within their team. Yet this small token of appreciation plays an enormous part in

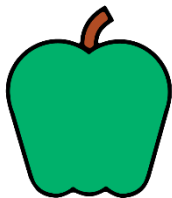
the motivation of the receiver and in turn leads to an increased feeling of engagement and connection with the organization. According to biochemist, turned Buddhist monk, Matthieu Ricard, even taking 10 seconds a day to silently give gratitude to your coworkers or the people you see on the train each morning, can dramatically start to improve the world, through increased happiness and positivity. Give it a try!



Give something to another person or make it possible for others to offer gifts. You can show your gratitude and appreciate your employees by using a Kudo Box and Kudo Cards. It's very simple. Decorate a box and make sure it has a hole to drop in the Kudo Cards. You can also use a more public space, such as a wall or window. Tell your team that when one of their colleagues does something they appreciate, they write it down on a Kudo Card, post it in the box, or stick it on the wall or window. The cards are then distributed to their coworkers daily, or during meetings or retrospectives. You can also reward your employees with small gifts, just enough to incentivize them, but not enough to make them feel they got paid for being productive; as research suggests that extrinsic rewards can make us perform worse!



Help someone who is in need of assistance, or enable colleagues to help each other. Some people find it easy to speak up when they need help; others find it harder to speak up, squirreling away their uncertainty and becoming less and less productive every day. If you are in tune with your team, if you make yourself accessible, it will be easier for them to speak up when they need help. You can use methods such as pair working, personal coaching or regular one-on-one sessions to help out team members who are struggling on certain projects. Encourage experienced team members to also make themselves accessible to their coworkers. Sometimes it's easier to discuss a problem with another team member, instead of asking management for help.

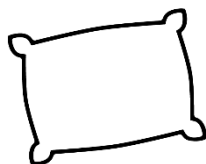


Eat well and make good, healthy foods easily available for everyone. A healthy diet stimulates the mind and body to be more productive. Promoting a healthy diet and lifestyle to your employees will set standards in your team. And of course, you have to practice what you preach. There's no point in promoting a healthy diet if you eat junk food every day! Why don't you use part of the budget you have for team rewards to stock your office with a daily helping of fruit, a water machine and healthy snacks, such as nuts and dried fruit? You could also promote a monthly lunch,

where the team have to prepare one of their favorite dishes and bring it in to share with the team. You'll find that rather than bring in junk food, the team will be motivated to show off their most delicious and healthy dishes.



Exercise regularly and make it easy for people to take care of their bodies. Studies show that exercising makes us happier. It's the miracle cure for most of our modern-day ailments, including stress and depression. Therefore, it's safe to suppose that healthier teams are also happier and more productive. Corporate offices can install in-house gyms and promote a regular exercise regime. For small businesses installing an onsite gym isn't an option, but you could consider offering staff discounts for the local gym or organize regular team activities. Find out what type of exercise your team enjoys and get them involved in the organization. On a daily basis, make sure employees are getting up from their desks at regular intervals and practicing stretching techniques. Put posters around the office, ring a bell, put some music on; whatever it takes to get them moving.

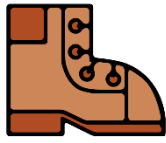


Rest well, sleep sufficiently, and enable colleagues to refresh their minds. Getting a good or bad night's sleep, or working long hours without taking sufficient breaks,

affects how well we think, react, work, learn, and get along with others. It's important to promote a healthy rest regime in your organization, because when we improve the rest time quality of our employees, we also improve the quality of work produced within our organization. It's also important to recognize that working overtime does nothing to increase productivity. For workers on shifts, or doing regular overtime, productivity actually diminishes with every extra hour they put in. Be an advocate of rest breaks and monitor employees to make sure they are taking sufficient breaks during their working day. After all, you don't want any of your colleagues in burnout mode.



Experience new things, try stuff out, and let people run all kinds of experiments. Forward-thinking companies understand that real innovation comes not from the management, but from the employees. Unfortunately, statistics show that only one in five employees feel supported by management to be entrepreneurial. Allowing employees to experiment and take on new projects helps them grow as both a team member and person; as long as they are given the support of management and team. You could start an innovation program, such as Exploration Days, or ShipIt days. Give your team a regular day away from their traditional role, to develop ideas and experiments, with the aim to introduce some of them into the organization.



Hike outdoors, enjoy nature, and allow people an escape from the office and the city. Once you've created a social environment in the office, the next step will be to start organizing team-building and social events outside of the office. For a guaranteed injection of motivation, a trip to the countryside for a hike, or walk, is a great idea. Never underestimate the power of the great outdoors, the fresh country air does wonders for one's motivation and that of your team. It's also a great opportunity to get to know your team and chat through ongoing projects, away from the office in a relaxed environment. Tell your employees they can even bring their dog!

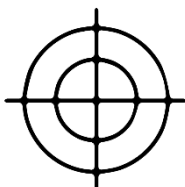


Meditate and get people to learn and adopt mindfulness practices. These days we're all so busy leading our lives and trying to be the most productive person we know, we sometimes forget that one of our body's most important tools, the brain, also needs care and attention, if we want to keep productivity levels high. That's where meditation and mindfulness come in. Both practices help the practitioner to be more aware of their surroundings, to live in the present and to see situations in a way that helps reduce stress. The techniques are being adopted by many forward-thinking businesses who understand they boost team productivity and happiness and help employees make

better decisions. Google has its own mindfulness program for employees and EBay offices have dedicated meditation rooms.



Socialize, relate to other people, and make it easy for colleagues to develop connections. You don't have to be best friends with everyone in your organization, but if you want to gauge how satisfied and engaged employees are, you'll need to know something about what makes them tick. One way to get closer to your team, is by using the Management by Walking Around technique. It's very complicated, you get up from your desk, walk around and talk to your team. But why keep socializing to office hours? You could organize a team lunch or after-hours activity. Another way to gather personal information about employees is to use the Personal Maps exercise. Ask each employee to spend five minutes mapping out their personal interests—hobbies, family, values, and ambitions. Each member can present the maps of her coworkers, and afterwards each team member will know a little bit more about what makes each of us tick.



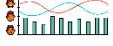
Aim for a goal and get people to understand and realize their own purpose. In any business, it's essential to have a master plan. But there's no point having a master plan if

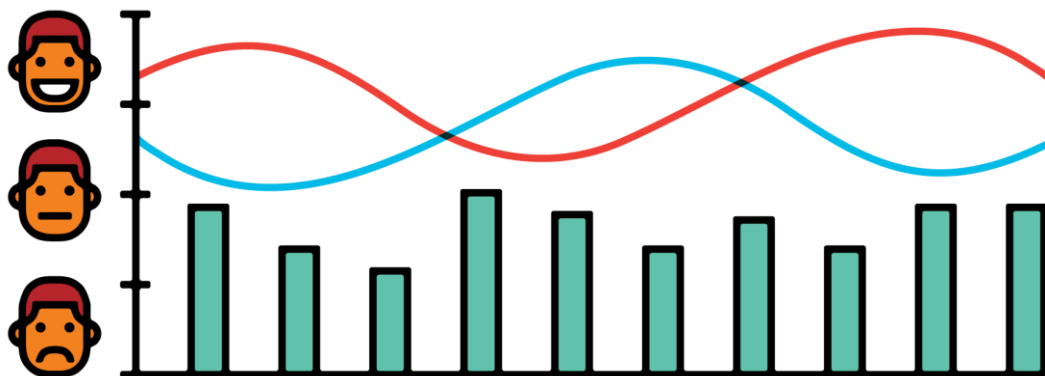
you're the only person that knows it. Getting your employees to collaborate in the goals of the organization, will give them a sense of purpose. And we have already discovered that having a sense of purpose comes from being engaged. Giving your team the opportunity to be a part of the game plan, will also help them to focus on the projects at hand. Google, along with many companies, including Happy Melly, use OKRs (Objectives and Key Results), as a way of getting employees to understand their goals within the overall company's purpose. Team members set their own objectives and key results. These results should have a direct impact on the goals dictated in the master plan.




Smile whenever you can, appreciate humor, and get colleagues to engage in fun activities. Smiling is such a powerful tool; some say it's a way to trick our brains into thinking we are happier. But there is a bit more science behind it. Facial feedback works when the brain senses the flexion of certain facial muscles. The zygomatic major is the muscle we need to produce a smile. When this muscle is flexed, it sends a signal to our brain to say, "Hey, she's happy about something!" So we don't only smile because we are happy, our brain tells us we are happy, because we are smiling! Happy people are also more approachable in business; we feel more relaxed around them and trust in their decisions, especially during times of change, as they are more likely to accept change, than resist it. So go on, smile! It won't just benefit you, it will benefit everyone in your organization.

Happiness Index

You can *generate* happiness by *measuring* employee happiness in a fun way. The **Happiness Index**  is an exercise that measures the feedback from employees on topics related to leadership and management. The idea is to ask a few employees for their feedback (regularly and often) on questions such as, “How happy are you?” (On a scale from 1 “very unhappy” to 5 “very happy”); what makes you feel best right now? What makes you feel worst right now? What would increase your happiness? The exercise allows employers to chart happiness trends over time, and during specific project and processes, which allows them to pinpoint the factors that are determining happiness. [7oas7er’s sliced thoughts, “Scaling the Happiness Index”]



Happiness Door

You can get fast feedback and generate happiness in a meeting, event or workshop with the **Happiness Door**.  The Happiness Door is a mix of an agile practice, called the *Feedback Wall* and the *Happiness Index*. Ask your workforce, team or audience, to consider how satisfied they were during one particular session or meeting, or what their thoughts are on a particular topic or project.

Get them to note down their feedback on a post-it note and to stick it on the Happiness Door. The higher up they position the sticky, the more positive their feedback. [Management 3.0, *#Workout: Happiness Door Increases Employee Engagement.*]

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What Now?

Now it's time to get happy.

- Do you really know your employees? Instigate a Personal Maps exercise to get to know individuals

better. Make a note of interest about each and use the information to engage in better conversations with your team.

- Say thank you on a regular basis to individuals and consider creating an easy way for others to give positive feedback to their coworkers, such as a Kudo Box
- Initiate a regular activity with your team: a monthly lunch, hike or mindfulness gatherings.
- A great mindfulness exercise that can become a daily routine, is to get your team thinking about their role within the organization and how engaged they feel. Ask them to give themselves feedback on questions, such as:
 - What did I do today to improve communication with my manager and peers?
 - What actions did I take today to learn and grow?
 - Whom did I thank today, and who recognized me?
 - Was I mindful today of our company's long-term goals?
 - How engaged was I at work today?
 - And your question to yourself might be: what did I do today to improve communication with my team?
- Encourage regular feedback by setting up a Happiness Door. You can start by asking for feedback on the team's general state of happiness. Make sure you action improvements based on their feedback. After this, you can use the exercise to get feedback on specific projects or transitional periods in your organization.

- Smile more often!

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Text: Louise Brace – Illustrations: Chad Geran – Ideas: Jurgen Appelo

MANAGEMENT 3.0

CHANGE AND INNOVATION PRACTICES

