

# 7

# Steps to a Healthy Workplace



We'd all love to be part of a healthy workplace environment – right?

'Healthy' is such a great word. It conjures ideas of being happy, effective, productive, innovative and sustainable.

But as we all know, creating a healthy workplace culture does not happen by chance. It takes vision and discipline.

Here's 7 simple steps that will help guide you to consciously engineer a happy, healthy workplace environment.

The first step to creating a healthy workplace environment is to ensure everyone knows why they are there. We must develop, articulate and share clear messages around purpose.

A consistent understanding of purpose must exist at these key levels:  
**Organisational** - how are we making the world a better place? What are we contributing to the industry or marketplace?

**Team** – how is this group contributing to the purpose of the organisation? What's our contribution?

**Individual** – what's my role? How do I contribute to the purpose of my team and the organisation as a whole?

## 1 Clarify Purpose

We all have professional strengths. And, thank goodness, we each have different strengths.

A smart leader knows that designing roles and allocating tasks based on the strengths of individuals leads to great productivity, feelings of responsibility, innovation and overall organisational success.

Here's an awful statistic. Gallup research says 75% of us **DO NOT** get the chance to do what we are best at each day at work.

By contrast, we know that leaders who focus on the strengths of their employees have almost total (99%) engagement. Engaged employees do better work, contribute positively to the workplace culture, are less likely to take time off and stick around for longer in their role.



## 2 Play to your Strengths

The Monday to Friday, 9-5 workday is dead – it just doesn't know it yet.

We live in a very different world to the one in which the traditional workday was established. So why are many organisations still defaulting to it?

Today we are more connected. Business is global. Workstations are mobile. Our homes are bigger. Coffee tastes better.

We are increasingly aware (and respectful) of the individual differences we have for how and when we are most productive – our work styles.

Companies that take advantage of these factors, and encourage flexible work arrangements, are winning. Their employees are healthier, less stressed, more productive and highly engaged.

## 3 Find a Balance





## 4 Have Fun

Healthy workplaces hum. Within them exist the sounds of collaboration, joking, information sharing, laughter and even small talk.

Unhealthy workplaces are silent. They are laden with the burden of secrets. The cough of a colleague three cubicles away rings through the air like an awkward indiscretion.

Work actively to open up the airwaves within your team and organisation.

Raise the volume of your workplace.

Get out of your chair and walk to a colleague's desk to have a chat, rather than send an email or make a phone call.

Hold meetings in a public area.

Chat about your weekend. You kid's soccer match. The movie you watched.

Get your workplace humming with the sound of communication.

Happiness is the balance between pleasure and purpose in our life.

Workplaces can often become heavy on purpose and light on pleasure.

It's easy to see how this happens. The company exists for a reason - to provide a service or develop a product. It has to be purposeful.

Sure. That's true. But we must remember that the people creating that product or providing that service are human beings first, employees second. They have an innate need for a balance between pleasure and purpose - even when they are at work.

So encourage it. Facilitate it. Make it ok for your employees to find pleasure in the workplace.

Oh, and as an added little bonus, they'll be way more productive, collaborative, creative and loyal.

## 5 Open the Airwaves



One of the (many) things we can learn from professional sporting teams is their wonderful ability to celebrate success.

Often, their panache for doing so gets them on the front pages of the paper – in all the wrong positions...but that's another story.

They celebrate success because they care about what they do, their goals are clear and they enjoy spending time together.

Celebrating success breeds success. It makes all the effort worthwhile and enhances the desire to do it again next time.

Of course, in order to celebrate success you and your team need to know when you've experienced it. That's why Step 1 - Clarity of Purpose - is so important.

Sporting teams have an unfair advantage over professional work teams here. Their goals are so clear. Black and white. Win this game, series or championship.

We have to work a little harder to clarify the goals so we know when it's time to celebrate. But when we find it, we need to celebrate loud and often.



## 6 Celebrate Success

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## 7 Perform Health Checks