

QUICK START CHECKLIST

5 TIPS FOR BOOSTING EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY



BY JACKIE DAVIS - ROOMSCAPE INTERIORS

According to happiness expert Shawn Achor, author of *The Happy Secret to Better Work*, when we are positive our brains become more engaged, motivated and productive at work.

Cultivating positive work environments results in the happiness advantage. Workplace happiness correlates to the success of a business:

- Sales improve 37% cross-industry
- Employees are 40% more likely to get promoted
- And, productivity increases by 31%

At RoomScape Interiors, we help businesses create environments that support their employees. Here are our 5 tips for creating workplace happiness that can improve employee productivity:

1. Strive for work-life harmony.

Employees become stressed when they feel there is an imbalance between their work life and home life. Though it may not be realistic to aim for having your time and energy split evenly between work and home, we often equate balance to 50:50.

Sometimes work may require more of your time and sometimes home does. There's an ebb and flow that should feel like no one area of your life is taking all your time and energy, all the time. Striving for work-life harmony may be more realistic. And, what is true is that work-life harmony is a 24/7 activity.

Stress at work gets carried home. Stress at home gets carried to work. Help employees maintain balance by providing tools and practices they can use at work and at home to minimize stress.

For example, help manage stress at the company level.

- Improve communications so employees don't feel as though they're being kept in the dark. Depending on the rumor mill for information creates tension, distrust and unnecessary stress.

- Provide programs that benefit employee health and wellness. Add programs that focus on physical and mental well-being. Build in time to play when employees are able to relax, communicate and bond with coworkers. Spending time with coworkers away from work makes collaboration more natural and easier.

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Offer employees paid time off when they've worked overtime or taken work home over a consistent, extended period of time. All work and no play make employees sick. They need time to decompress and manage their physical and mental health.

According to research by *Lancet*, the world's leading independent general medical journal, cited by Harvard Medical School, "People who work long hours may also spend more time sitting, sleep less, and have higher stress levels—all of which have been linked to a higher risk of stroke. Given the potentially devastating consequences of a stroke, people who often work overtime might want to make sure to eat a healthy diet and get enough rest."

2. Create a happier environment that supports employees' best work.

Be in tune to what appeals to all 5 senses: taste, touch, sight, sound and smell.

- Serve healthy foods in the cafeteria and vending machines.
- Provide proper cushioning for employees who spend a lot a time working on their feet.
- Bring in the sunlight or hang cheerful artwork that is pleasing to the eye.
- Blasting loud music doesn't work for everyone. Turn it down a notch or two.
- Avoid materials that emit unpleasant odor or fragrances that may trigger allergic reactions.

3. Respect the need for privacy.

There are times at work when it's necessary to make sensitive personal phone calls. Imagine how uncomfortable it can be when you call the Benefits Department and are asked to provide your birth date. You whisper but the agent can't hear you so you ask if you can provide your employee ID number instead. "No, sorry. I need both your employee ID and birth date to confirm your identity." You go into the stairwell and as quietly as possible give the agent all the information - only to find out that the person who sits on the other side of the wall has heard your entire conversation. Coworkers don't need to know your birthdate or medical history. Provide a space for employees to make private calls. This could cause the resurgence of the telephone booth!



4. Consider grouping standing desks.

Science supports using standing desks. When you can take a break from sitting and stand while working at your computer, health benefits include lowering your risk of weight gain, reducing back pain, and helping improve mood and energy levels.

However, not everyone wants to sit in a cube adjacent to someone who is using a computer at a standing desk. It may feel uncomfortable having someone looming over you while you're sitting at your desk trying to work.

5. Lead by example and unplug at the end of the day.

Turn off your work phone and computer and don't contact employees unless it's an absolute emergency.

You'll give employees "permission" to unplug as well. Feeling that they must be "on" and available at all times of the day creates the sense that they don't have control over their lives. With less control they are more prone to stress. And, we know that stressed-out, burnt-out employees are not happy, productive employees.

Give yourself a break too. Take time to relax!

For more information about how RoomScape Interiors can work with you to create a workplace that functions well for the business, your employees and you...

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