

DECODING HAPPINESS AT WORK

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By Never Grow Up®

www.WillNeverGrowUp.com

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It Does Not Matter

It does not matter how you read the book. In what order that is. As long as you do. That is why there is no chronological order to the posts and articles. Everything as they say is connected.

Foreword

This little book is a compilation of some of our best blogs. A lot of these have also found their way into various leading Human Resources magazines or leading online publications.

Adapted and curated into ‘snackable’ bytes, each of these snippets are but pieces of a larger puzzle that offer you quick and practical advice on how to manage yourself and your teams better. This is a tribute to organizations with evolving work practices and the people that drive them.

A big thank you to our clients, well-wishers and partners who have backed us in our journey. The biggest shout out, however, goes to our fantastic team, our dark knights, the people who make things happen.

Happy Reading.

About Never Grow Up®

We are a new-age Work Culture Consultancy dedicated to the pursuit of happiness at work.

On any given day, you will find us working closely with human resources and communication teams across sectors helping them understand their people better, keeping employees engaged, working on creating a strong employer brand and making work life fun, balanced & full of dialogue. All this, in an attempt to build an admirable culture that attracts and retains talent while we turn Monday mornings into something people look forward to.

We believe that happy and engaged employees result into a more productive workforce, which in turn, means a positive impact on attrition and the company bottom line. With no two company cultures being similar, our 'people to customer first' approach helps bring about a sense of pride, encourages recognition, strengthens diversity and makes life at work awesome!

What Do We Do?

Talent Consulting

Qualitative Diagnostics | Value Driven Culture Building | Culture & Policy Benchmarking

Employer Branding

Thought Leadership | CXO Communication | Induction Programs
Reward & Recognition | Mental Health & Wellness Initiatives | Social

Happyness Quotient

A tool that gives you real time indication of happiness levels in your company

Technology & Content

Content Strategy | Online Talent Initiatives | Micro-site & App Creation | Technology Integration

Workshops & Interventions

Team Collaboration | Conflict Management | Running Innovative Sessions | Driving Diversity & Inclusion

Communications & Design

Brand Story & Policy Rollout | Internal Branding | Creative Campaigns | Newsletters | Recruitment Media Services

Corporate Social Responsibility

Engaging employees through turnkey CSR initiatives

Public Relations

Editorial Services | Release Dissemination | Media Relations

Office Quirkies

Unidentified Awesome Objects | Customized Merchandise | On Boarding Welcome Kits | Corporate Gifts

Wondered What Your Return on Employee Engagement Is?

Finding out is as simple as 1, 2, and 3!

1. Log on to www.WillNeverGrowUp.com
2. Click on the ROE tab
3. Answer three easy questions and get a free customized research report.

Like we said, pretty simple!



The Curious Case of Never Growing Up!

Growing up comes at a cost. Somewhere along the line, in trying to conform to our boss and society at large, we tend to lose out on our ability to effortlessly think out-of-the-box, to be able to marvel at and appreciate the simplest of things or to just have fun doing what we love. Questions like 'Why not?' become 'But why?' – Ideas fizzle before they are born while insecurities amongst colleagues creep up while reminding us to keep our head down and work because the long pending promotion might come our way.

At Never Grow Up®, employee engagement and getting deep into understanding what drives employees is serious business. Our take is that we are trying to peel off inhibitions that have evolved over the years at the workplace by creating a refreshing work culture that is engaging, real and alive. To be able to do that, we don't just practice what we preach, we live it. There are small things we do which we think embody all that we stand for.

Designations within our organization are just another example of us being ourselves. Every individual on our team gets the freedom to pick a cartoon/comic character that s/he associates with and that's not just on paper. It's there on all our visiting cards, email signatures and LinkedIn profiles.

What's in a name? Quite a lot, actually!

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The Right Blend

Never Grow Up® for Indian Management Magazine

According to a study undertaken by the Arcadis' Sustainable Cities Index of 2016, the Work-Life Balance statistics in India have been rated amongst the "worst".

We may be in denial about it, but everyone has phases of a failed work-life balance. Integration is the key, not just at work, but at home. This means promoting a work culture that not only aligns with company values but also with individual and life values. Facilitating a flexible way of achieving high productivity is also important.

As leaders, the responsibility to ensure that our team does not burn out rests with us. This means that sometimes, taking a people before process approach while monitoring the fact that instances do not become habits. This balancing act however is easier said than done.

"Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths."

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**Are You Giving Your
Team The Autonomy
To Be Awesome**

Autonomy at work has been known to increase productivity in terms of both quality and quantity, as well as ensuring that people carry out their jobs for the greater good rather than just for themselves.

Employers need to reconcile themselves with recruiting decisions they have made and learn to delegate rather than micro-manage.

Additionally, if an employer knows that the right resources are available then it's easier to come to terms with employee autonomy, and easier for employees themselves to embrace a sense of ownership.

Finally, it's important to acknowledge mistakes, and treat them as stepping stones to improvement, rather than a point for withdrawing responsibility from people.

Quick Tip: If you are one of those managers who 'breathes down my neck' to get things done, think again.

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Myths About Corporate Offsites That HR Needs To Get Over!

Offsites – all about having fun, or just an excuse to conduct a team meeting in a different space with fancy and luxurious surroundings? While theoretically, most people agree that offsites are bonding sessions to integrate the team and allow everyone to have a good time with their colleagues, in many cases, business discussions do end up happening. Thus, important to have no business agenda for an offsite.

Work discussions can always be conducted in the nearest conference room! Aside from this, though corporate hierarchy does exist, offsites are a good opportunity for team members to interact with senior leadership in a less formal setting. All this said and done, it's unrealistic to expect immediate results from a team offsite. Patience is a virtue, remember?

Over time, efforts will bear fruit, but it's important to know that offsites alone are insufficient for high levels of employee engagement. Plan the offsite at a good time, conduct them regularly, and back them up with employee-friendly policies and fair R&R initiatives, and you will surely see an upward engagement curve!

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People, Productivity And Pink Slips

Employee value, judging people's potential, who to choose between two equally competent employees during a phase of downsizing – are all factors that cannot be measured by a single equation or algorithm.

The risk of investing in a good workforce is one worth taking. When employees are approached with a 'people first' mindset, providing them with the right work environment, scenarios and the optimum push, becomes the way.

Once this happens, employee productivity grows, and potential is easier to evaluate. Uprooting employees will not necessarily increase turnover drastically. Observe. Engage. Challenge. Give people a reason to show that downsizing would simply lead to great loss of assets, besides a loss to them ofcourse.

Our Take: Bring in sensitivity and empathy into the process, to ensure you are fair while firing someone. Offer support for a period of 90 days to get back on track.

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Myths That Stresses The Stress

A report from the Economic Times states that “46% of the workforce in firms in India suffer from some or the other form of stress”. No, you do not need a drink. What you really need is a detox and alternatively, a nutritional meal chart. The more organized you are, the more confidence you will gain to prioritize and solve your own problems.

Take a day to unwind and build up your optimism levels. Learn something new on a regular basis.

Keeping your mind healthy is equally important. Unable to decide what will suit you the best? Rewind. Rejuvenate. Recuperate. Do something that will help you Unplug!

Every individual suffers from stress at an unpredictable intensity. The solution lies in talking to people. Getting professional help is one option. Most important is to educate yourself right about what stresses you out.

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Are You Glued To Your Job For The Right Reasons?

In the professional realm, 'security' features as one of the most important motivators, for people to stay at their current jobs. If you find yourself in a situation where you know that you are getting paid fairly and can also foresee a considerable scope of growth at your current firm but despite these points, you have ceased to find any true meaning in the work you do or that your dissatisfaction with the management has reached a new irreversible low-point, sit back and think.

Don't hesitate to place an analytically justified monetary value on your talent and skills, because if you won't, your employers will.

If you have proved yourself as a hard-working talent worth retaining, your organization will happily direct your endeavors towards a cause or section that interests you more.

A mutually agreed upon initiative to have open discussions and sessions with the concerned individuals could help lead to greater understanding, and a more positive work experience.

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To Be Or Not To Be

A culture that reflects the values and vision of a company while maintaining a constant focus on employee engagement is key to attracting the right people and retaining talent for the long term.

Hiring right wins half the battle, because you ensure a rich culture at the outset, by building your team in a certain way. Encouraging change is not as straightforward, because it is a long-term process, but it is as, if not more, important.

As the company accumulates people it needs to be ensured that culture is developed and nurtured along the way, not just at the start. It is the people themselves who foster this change and identifying advocates for continuing cultural growth, is of utmost importance.

When employees encourage development among their peers, interpersonal communication is sound and relatable.

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Leveraging HR Tech For Better People Management

A group of diverse individuals coming together in the same room, working towards a common goal is indeed a beautiful sense of accomplishment for any organization.

Advocating that teams indulge in doing activities together beyond the workplace is a wise approach. The feeling that comes from a pat on the back after a successful pitch, a thank you note for going out of their way, or even a surprise work anniversary celebration!

Being transparent with people and telling them exactly how their role makes a difference to the entire company while investing in Performance Management Systems does help determine conscientious appraisals.

More so, a workplace that allows creativity to prosper, encourages experimentation with stereotypes to produce better results, and helps in nurturing an individual's overall personality, is always more welcoming.

Pushpa!
I Hate Monday
Morning
Reviews!

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Culture That Goes Beyond The Colour Of The Collar

While today, there is a lot of talk on optimizing on diversity, bridging gaps and crossing borders, one divide still remains: the one between the white collars and blue collars. Think about it. Is the work culture in your organization only for the "educated"? Ideally, it shouldn't be.

So, how do you transcend your work culture for your blue-collar employees? A simple step could be to translate your corporate mission, vision and values into parlance that your workers speak. To enable these employees to feel more secure in your organization, you could also implement policies that ensure positions in other departments in the event that they might lose their jobs due to automation.

Finally, financial stability is the biggest motivation for the majority of your wage-workers as their whole family depends upon them. Make sure that you provide a competitive compensation and benefits plan like insurance. Reward your daily wagers for extra hours, adherence to safety standards, regularity as well as commendable performance. Ultimately, motivating blue-collar employees and making them realize that they are a part of the big picture is the key to a successful organization.

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Valuing Your Values During Appraisals & Performance Reviews

The way regular processes and functions, decision making, and resolving every-day dilemmas are handled, reflect the values of an organization. Emulating these values needs to be ingrained into the daily tasks of your workforce.

This requires effective communication, where values are more than just buzzwords – they are traits worth embracing and living up to. Even if two different employees are equally competent and show similar potential to grow, the key differentiator is how well they live up to company values and how seamlessly they incorporate them into work processes. It is important to translate organizational values into specific, relevant behaviours.

Values then become the perfect way to assess people, their contribution to the organization and their growth curve as professionals. Of course, this assessment must be done in proper perspective because different departments give priority to different values based on their roles in the company and which values fit into their job roles the best.

Our Take: Start with your managers and EXCO and see how much they believe in your values. Trigger them as influencers and see the magic flow top-down.

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Is Your Organization Learning?

One never stops learning. Yes, it's difficult to make time, but micro-learning as a method is fast becoming the new way.

With mobile phones being the go-to gadget for millennials, learning on-the-go in any free time available has become the norm, making continuous learning more feasible for today's workforce. Virtual reality is another option, engaging and interesting in its approach, while still achieving the objective at hand. Workplace learning has never been so accessible!

Research shows that well-trained employees need minimal supervision and guidance. Besides building skills, it also enables people to take on work independently. This means as a manager, you have to spend less time hand holding people and can focus on the more important things that need your attention.



The Benefit Of Doubt

Never Grow Up® for Forbes India

According to a survey conducted by Glassdoor, it was found that almost 79 percent of employees gave more importance to the perks and benefits a given company has got to offer as opposed to their salary.

The most-valued benefit of most employees is the provision of healthcare and health insurance along with post-retirement pension and health benefits. The right kind of benefits need to be decided keeping in mind the culture and finances of the organization rather than just rolling out populist benefits that may look attractive.

A great office space with comfortable seating, free lunch, and snacks, flexible working hours, flexible deadlines, unlimited leaves, the absence of dress code, etc, frees up a lot of mind space which employees can then redirect to more productive things at work.

While a good pay package can help in acquiring good talent, research shows that it is unlikely to retain them unless there is a real investment in positive culture and values which create career pathways and allow people to build something that they are proud of.

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Negotiations On The Leadership Path

When was the last time you asked for a raise? Purely financial negotiation can be little hurdles you manoeuvre as you climb up the professional ladder. It all starts with the basics, when as a fresher you enter a company and get your bearings – assess the work environment, make friends with people, get comfortable with your job role. After this, as you climb a rung on the ladder, you begin to expand your repertoire and step out of your comfort zone.

The more responsibilities you take upon yourself, the more you need to negotiate, with people and with tasks. And before you know it, you're going up the ladder on the path to leadership. This is if your negotiating skills incorporate a problem-solving and solution-oriented mindset, why is it difficult to ask for what you deserve?

Patience leads to great things, one of which is assuming a role of leadership. That's the bright light at the end of the negotiation tunnel.

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Building A Progressive Start-Up Culture

The culture of an establishment comes from its people. The entire team resonates this culture and to ensure that it is healthily built, there are four steps to pave the way.

One - Treating employees as equals – everyone's opinion counts. It's important to let people know that they are a part of the decision-making process.

Two - Define your start-up culture – S.P.E.L.L it out. What is it that defines you as an organization? What is your culture? What do you expect from the team as a whole? The answers to these questions need to be laid out clearly.

Three - No short-cuts, please – big efforts count in the long run. Getting the job done is important, but even more important is getting the job done well.

Four - Walk the talk – practice what you preach. When you actually live the culture you wish for, you become a role model for your employees.

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Beyond Engagement

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Happiness is extremely subjective. What makes one person happy, does almost nothing to the next person. However, there are certain parameters that can be used to measure happiness at work in particular.

Aspects such as job security, mental and physical health, role-fit and sense of ownership, all contribute to the overall happiness of an employee.

Assessing these factors can give the company an idea of whether or not people are happy. When happiness is unlocked, innovation, creativity, ownership and togetherness, all tie in, making the organization as a whole, significantly more productive.

Conduct a happiness survey and you might realise that all employees might be engaged at work, but not all of them are actually happy.

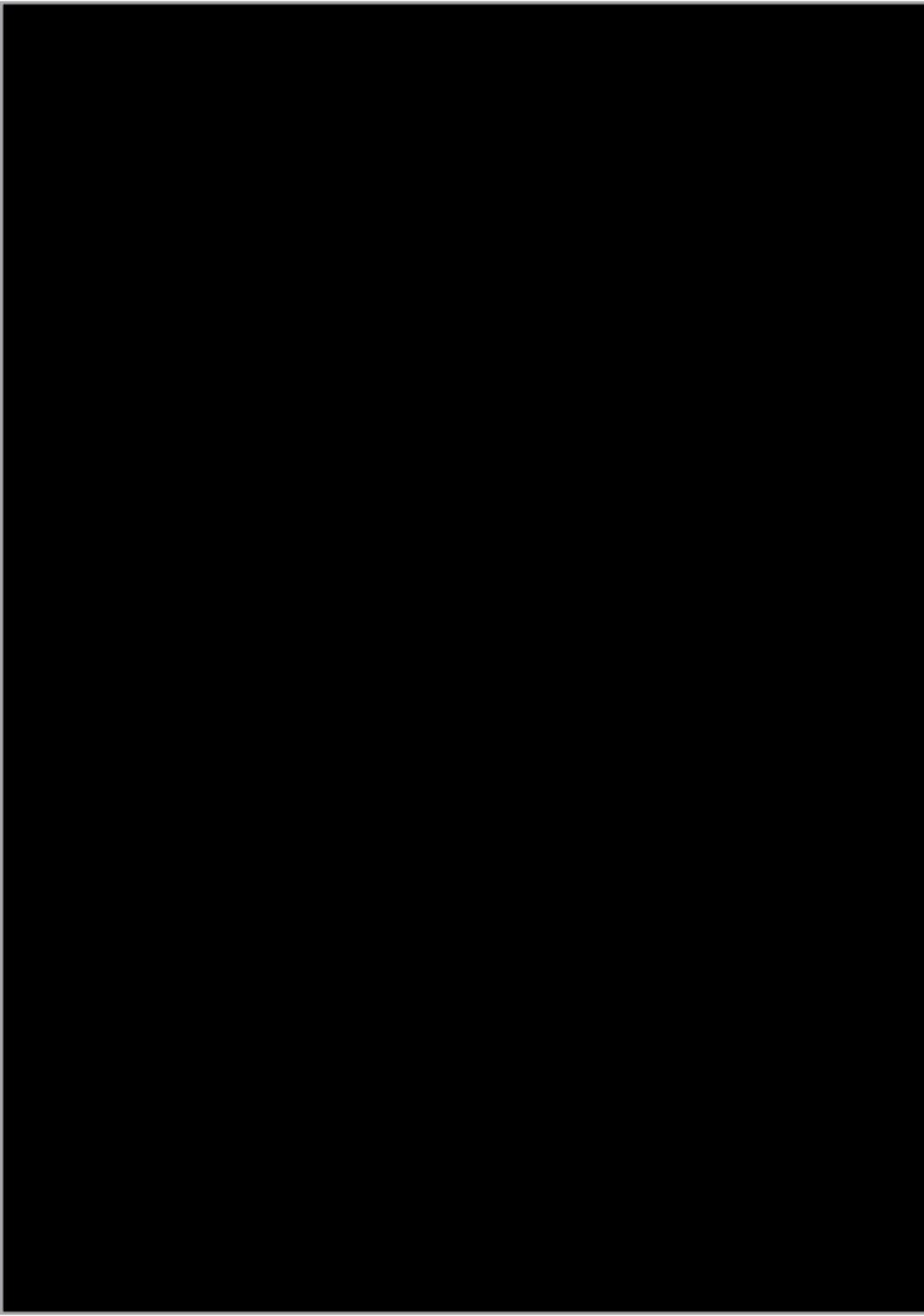
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What's Your HR Tech Away?

The HR space is evolving at breakneck speed, and with it, the technologies should as well. Cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality solutions have come a long way.

Employee surveys can be made interesting and engaging so that people actually answer questions in an honest and sincere manner, aiding in understanding from the HR perspective, recruiting can be carried out using tech tools and social sourcing can be streamlined. Of course, any decision should be taken after considering whether or not it's feasible and necessary – look for the best software-organization fit.

In an increasingly invasive data-driven HR world, leaders should always have a higher degree of empathy towards the people you work with. If as an organization, you love data, also make sure you teach your managers to be great at understanding people and not just treating them like a bar code.



**Ja Simran Ja,
Jeele Apna
Weekend!**

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Lunch Hour- The Key To Productivity

Eating right and at the right time – An age-old mantra that has been neglected in the pursuit of excellence. If an empty mind is a devils workshop, an empty stomach is a havoc-inducing weapon!

An empty stomach can make us irritable and keep us from the task at hand. Take away our ability to focus, mess around with our concentration levels, and ensure that all systems go on a strike unless it has been satiated! It may seem like a lot of effort but taking a few steps and investing in your physical and mental well-being can genuinely work wonders.

Ensure that you plan your breaks and meal throughout the day. Avoid skipping meals as this will eventually lead you to binge more and make unhealthy food choices. Choose the right snacks in between meals and ensure that your diet balances what your body needs.

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Memoirs Of A Team Offsite

How would you really define what happens at an offsite? What would you say are some of the parameters that organizations use to define a successful 'offsite'? Is it the hours spent travelling only to get into a bigger conference room or is it not about the destination, but the journey? Being more practical as opposed to institutional.

Making it more of a relaxing and a team bonding outing as compared to a two-day workaholics conferencing and soft skills training led by an 'oh so sought after' celebrity soft skills trainer. There have often been multiple moments when organizations strive to create perfect moments at official offsites. But what often gets overlooked is the fact that organizations, every once in a while, need to emphasize more on enhancing the work experience of the employee, without pushing targets.

Take a break and quickly reflect on what an offsite should possibly be like. Or, maybe, what it should definitely not be? Beer anyone?

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Celebrating Festivals At Work

United we stand taller and diversified, we grow stronger. Celebrations foster team-building in the most obvious manner, bringing individuals closer; giving them the opportunity to interact across cultures and traditions.

But then, there is also the question of who decides what gets celebrated and what doesn't? Some celebrations are state-specific, while some are community specific. It's time to turn the tables and indulge in the festivity of 'celebrating employees' and not focus on key festivals. Because this is one celebration that transcends all boundaries and barriers. One that can be placed above Baisakhi, Easter, Ugadi, Paryushana, Navroz; or even Bihu!

Our Take: You either choose to celebrate every festival or none at all. When you celebrate a festival at work with pomp and fervour; one that covers the 'majority' but choose to ignore the ones that a 'smaller bunch' choose to celebrate, you also somewhere create unconscious biases among employees on what is and is not important. Thereby somewhere, alienating an audience. We have a national anthem but not a national festival except maybe for the T20 cricket finals!

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The Evolution Of The Annual Employee Engagement Survey

Long gone are the days of tedious employee engagement surveys which everyone shied away from.

Digital platforms for surveys not only make it easier for people to answer questions in a fun, engaging way but also make it easier for HR to assess because all the data is now accessible, up-to-date and categorized under filters for easy searching. It's important to let employees know that their opinion counts to a large extent and is valuable.

Reaching out and allowing scope for feedback provides employees with a sense of ownership and also gives employers an idea of what makes people happy at work. Happiness is the new Satisfaction.

Our Take: Make your surveys fun and relatable. They have and remain to serve as the best tool to keep up with the pulse of your workforce. So, as the times and people change, and the work culture evolves, make sure your most useful engagement tool- the surveys evolves too. Think you already know the pulse of your organization? What you might gain insight into can make you skip a beat!

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The Secret To Fair And Meaningful Appraisals

Appraisals are often dreaded by both - employer and employee. Neither do employees clearly know the process followed for appraisals, nor do the employers know what sort of inputs to give before, during and after the appraisal phase. There are some ways to ensure that appraisals become fair, effective and transparent.

One way is to ensure that assessment criterias are aligned with the organization's values. Once such definitive criteria are set, there are no surprises with respect to the outcomes.

Another way to avoid unexpected outcomes is giving feedback regularly throughout the year so employees know what they are doing right or wrong.

All in all, appraisals should not simply be that time of the year when people just go through the motions. The purpose should be fulfilled.

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The Glass Ceiling: Beyond The Myth Versus Reality Debate

While being unfathomably strong and bullet-proof, the glass ceiling can also be viewed as weak, flimsy and utterly brittle – something that can be conquered and prevented from becoming worse. How is this possible if it has so long reigned supreme?

Transparent policies are one way – when everyone in the company has knowledge of all the processes, they can call out the management on any biases that may crop up.

Once transparency is established, there is no option but to carry out merit-based appraisals, solely relying on competence and capability. Ultimately, with good mentorship that nurtures talent irrespective of gender, the glass ceiling will be shattered, one fierce blow at a time.

Our Take: The glass ceiling is something we don't speak of often but it is real and we all know it. Acceptance of this fact is the first step. Asking a team of people outside the HR team to review existing policies could be the next.

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**Is The HR Team
Driving Engagement
In Your Company,
Ready And Engaged?**

Is the HR team as engaged as it tries to make the employees? Perhaps as an employer, the first step should be to accommodate the HR team – take the opinion into consideration and see what they think should be the next initiative.

Implement the initiative thereafter, but do not forget to acknowledge the team for it. When the HR team is informed and appreciated for their efforts bearing fruit, it motivates them to be involved and proactive while rolling out the initiative.

Next, you need to assess and review the initiative by involving the HR Team as well as the other stakeholders. When the HR Team is convinced about why certain actions were taken, it becomes easier to convince other internal stakeholders too. These three steps are of utmost importance, because, remember, the people driving engagement, are people too!

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Work From Home

Whether you're a start-up with a very distributed workforce, a multi-national organization with global teams working together or an agency that has only freelancers onboard, virtual teams are your reality.

It's not uncommon today to work on the same project with team members who are miles or even oceans apart, living in different time-zones and still delivering on the same timelines. It's also not uncommon to hear about the many problems that arise out of working apart. But are there any really tried-and-tested ways to ensure that distance doesn't become a barrier?

Turns out that working in a team actually present with you, not only aids communication with regard to work but also makes you more socially involved and thus happier at work.

A need for a culture that does not make remote-working seem like a problem but rather an opportunity that allows the team to collaborate effectively by using innovative and efficient ways. Moreover, if you have certain teams working out of co-working spaces, it automatically increases your scope to the network as an organization while also increasing visibility greatly.

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The Art of Effective Team Meetings

Team meetings simply cannot be about making a presentation which you think will flaunt your PPT skills. Instead, team meetings are an investment of organizational resources leading to certain outcomes albeit in terms of agreement, denial, solution, understanding, insight or learning.

The plan is simple. Have an agenda, ensure that there is a meaningful takeaway for everyone. It's also best to set some rules right when you start so that conversational tangents can be avoided and people who tend to sway away, can be reeled right in.

When you're conducting a meeting, you need to listen as much as talk. Asking for feedback and opinions from everyone is a great way to ensure engagement and participation. A team meeting, in its truest essence, is a conversation that engages, leads necessary transformation and drives success.

**Work Is What
Pays For My
Weekend!**

#TGIF

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Communicating Correctly During A Crisis

A constantly changing environment can affect the morale and productivity of employees. Mergers and acquisitions, repositioning and transfers, change in leadership, management being reshuffled no matter what the situation, communicating right with a consistent effort to your employees is crucial.

While most of the time it feels like a crisis situation lands out of nowhere, it is possible to create some contingency plans and processes to follow in case of an event that could lead to chaos. Apart from this, before your employees start getting information through different forms of media, communicate the right message in the correct tonality. For assurance, keep things simple, honest and transparent. Share as much as you can while sounding genuine.

An occasion of crisis can also be an opportunity to build trust and infuse your company's values amongst your employees. This could be done by ensuring that the senior management is seen walking the talk.



How To Instill Job Security Into Your Organizational DNA

Job security is a growing priority for employers as it give the employees greater confidence at work and also ensures that companies retain people. But how should one go about doing this?

Communicating honestly and regularly to give the employees a sense of transparency in the company and assurance of a job done well. It's equally important to instill a sense of ownership in them, by engaging and encouraging in decision making roles.

Appearing confident through stormy times, creating an atmosphere of openness and offering continual and sincere reassurance, also helps. Last but not the least, make work their 'happy place'. This will empower them and ensure that they are highly invested in the job.

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Steps To Building Workplace Citizenship

"A team is not a group of people who work together. A team is a group of people who trust each other" – Simon Sinek.

This quote sums up beautifully what teamwork in fact is. Encouraging inter-team interaction is imperative to developing a workforce with a strong bond and trust between them.

To enable people to bond across barriers, it's important to encourage their exploration of emotional intelligence. The bottom line is not just performance, it is the behavior that individuals cultivate in themselves and that organizations nurture, that eventually leads to good performance.

In addition to interaction, employees want to feel a sense of ownership and belonging to the company. Without this, work gets done not through sincere passion, but just as a compulsion – leading to reduced productivity.

Regular feedback but not to the extent of micro-managing is crucial as well and gives employees a sense of autonomy. Workplace citizens are what build the organization – they should be a high priority.

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Building An Emotionally Intelligent Organization

While you do need intelligent people at work who are able to learn fast, adapt to change easily and resolve problems effectively, that is not all you need. What any organization can truly benefit from is an emotionally intelligent workforce. Here's how you can build an emotionally intelligent organization.

Your hiring process works as a great control point as it can manage the influx of the right people for your organization. Instead of just looking at only educational qualifications and indicators of a high-functioning intellect, the hiring process needs to be tweaked to look for indicators of emotional intelligence like self-awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, listening skills and empathy.

Unlike your IQ score which cannot be changed much after your teenage years, your EQ score can actually be improved a lot. Incorporating role play, simulations and other active learning methods into the EI training programme helps. Besides reinforcing positive behavioural changes, frequent feedback is a necessity for a successful training endeavour.

Positive behaviour picked up due to training has to be transferred onto the work setting. Processes around self-monitoring, mentoring and coaching will aid the new emotionally intelligent culture to prevail.



Factors That Attract An Employee To Choose Your Company

Thinking of putting up a “HIRING” sign outside your office door and expecting a long queue to respond? What will ensure that you are not an option but a choice?

Individuals today are well aware of the plethora of opportunities that the industry can offer. The job profile, salary package, even the office ambiance matters. The way an office looks is also a decision making factor.

No employee would prefer staying in the same position for years, everyone wants to grow. Ensure to explain all that the job encompasses. Elaborate on all the good, easy as well as the hard parts, and the challenges. Flexible hours and work from home options prove to be an added bonus. A workplace becomes more welcoming when employees feel valued and assured; ensuring that the employees not only choose your company but also stay for long.

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Doing Away With The Stereotypes In Benefits

“The key concept is that motivation is less about employees doing great work and more about employees feeling great about their work”
– Lisa Lai, Harvard Business School.

It is vital to assess your organizations' values and culture, the beliefs you stand by. Chart out a sales performance curve by calculating each salesperson's performance against their sales targets, and then create a histogram of the data.

Helping employees understand the context of the work that they are entrusted with and explaining how it matters in the long run is what makes a difference.

As for the nature of benefits, a study explains that one of the most common carrot used in organizations as a part of compensation is the bonus. Also, in order to encourage and recognize star achievers working on a commission basis, commissions can be extended to every target achieved over and above the stipulated numbers.

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CSR Initiatives That Make Your Employees Proud And Happy

CSR campaigns need to go far beyond sponsoring an event or donating a large sum of money. It is important to focus on employee giving, community partnerships, local involvement, philanthropy and volunteerism.

CSR initiatives must be employee driven and lead by employees with minimum involvement of managers. Research shows - Companies that implement CSR practices successfully are known to have positive employee relations including recruitments, employee morale, engagement and productivity.

Volunteerism improves an individual's psychological well-being and this can only lead to employees feeling happier and a sense of pride in the work they do.

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Workplace Diversity Taking The First Step

Confronting the problem of diversity is fundamental to building workplace diversity. Shying away from the problem is not the answer. Today, Human Resources has been able to understand the fact that varied perspectives can add to the potential and productivity of an organization. But it is first introspecting one's own prejudices that help people to understand how to be more diversified.

What are the preconceived notions that you hold regarding various classes of society that prevents you from appointing or engaging with them? One real look at a corporate social responsibility activity and you will know how one single activity can bring together people from different walks of life. The importance of rethinking one's judgments and biases cannot be stressed enough. Only then will we welcome diversity with arms wide open.

What can you do? Start by sensitizing your managers and key stakeholders. Then, look at the policy framework and even your holiday list. Do you use sentences that start with s/he? Are you celebrating Women's Day at work but never invite men to a Prevention of Sexual Harassment at work training? Start right there!

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An Addiction To Connect

Technology has become as essential as air to many of us. It has become impossible for many of us to function without the internet and the feeling of being “connected” to the world.

Smartphones are becoming so personal and integral to our being that they have become an extension of us. They offer us quick and easy access to personal things but it is also crucial to remember that it is the people who we connect with that matter and not just the medium that we use.

While technology may help you stimulate your mind, your physical health is equally important. All the time that we spend on the internet may seem like it has passed by very quickly, but the fact is that it takes a toll on your mind. A better way to lose track of time maybe to go on a short vacation over the weekend, and truly give yourself a break. If internet and technology are becoming an addiction for you, there is a good chance that you are missing out on the other things in life. Schedule time off, make plans with your family, catch up on news and do all of this away from social media.

**Appraisals Ne
Aapko Charo
Taraf Se Gher
Liya Hai!**

**Apne Aap
Ko Boss Ke
Hawale Kar
Do!**

14

**Are You Paying
Attention To Your
Real Customers?**

Charity begins from home, good governance from the city, and good management from your own employees. If you have always wondered what the dire need for something like this is, here's a little something for you. Over the last few years, employees are increasingly behaving like consumers when choosing to join or stay with an employer.

An oversight that occurs in most organizations is that managers forget that employer brand value is a factor of the quality of your internal experiences and external perception.

Right from your internal communications strategy to talent management, from presenting your CXOs in a certain way to having people centric policies, paying attention to your employees is the key to the right and positive governance at the workplace.

01

Ways To Get Employees To Take HR Seriously

Being part of the HR department involves much alienation from the other employees of the company. But there are some ways you as an HR person can command a level of seriousness.

Being politically correct can take a toll on you and also leave the wrong impression on people. Sometimes you just need to be straightforward, both at the junior level and senior level employees.

You may be asked to recruit constantly, but you need to make it clear that it's better to take time, invest well and ensure a place for someone who will last long and well in the company.

Communicate more with the employees – yes, you cannot always please everyone, but do not let this make you shy away from interacting. Lastly, allow yourself to experiment. Spend some time in a department other than yours, in another employee's shoes.

44

Why Employees Quit?

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Managing Stress: Taming The Sneaky Monster Inside Our Heads

Stress, however small it is, builds up over time and ultimately leads to massive burnout, and thus should never be underestimated. Do not reach a point where your work habits become unhealthy and destroy your peace of mind, health, efficiency, and productivity.

One way to ensure that life and work go smoothly is to plan work in an organized manner. Yes, it's not possible to plan minute by minute, but to map out your day is crucial to a smooth flow.

Additionally, it helps to unwind and disconnect occasionally. To carry out a digital detox, free of distractions and disturbances, can do wonders for your focus and productivity and your stress levels. After all, it is the outside world that adds to the mental stress in a big way.

25

Reasons Why Your HR Initiatives Are Failing

As HR, the onus lies on you to find innovative methods to ensure that employees feel appreciated, motivated and committed. Here are common mistakes that HR initiatives could unwittingly be making.

Clarity Of Purpose Or The Lack Of It. As an HR programme gets laid out, it is common for the larger objective behind the initiative to get lost in the process. And at the end of the day, if employees are not on the same page as the HR, the point of an initiative can easily turn moot.

The key is to focus on the long-term impact of an idea. Be more inclusive, encourage active participation, make a list of all the possible “things that can go wrong” and strive to improve the durability of the programme.

More often, an HR initiative fails due to the lack of effective communication. Try new stuff and stay relevant while you take necessary action to carrying out the perfect HR initiative.

41

The Smart Way Of Investing In Talent

Never Grow Up® People Matters

Planning ahead lies at the heart of all organizational goals and it is the one process that determines all the individual elements that will be factored into the organization's framework in the future – including, of course, its right talent.

As a general rule, including more people in the decision-making process not only helps optimize the right talent you already have but helps your company gain foresight, and in some cases, an edge when it comes to determining its fate in the future. It works as an incredible, beneficial cycle – if one were to let it run, that is.

The right talent in a company can achieve so much more than fulfilling job descriptions or playing pre-defined parts in the organizational story. Previously unexplored perspectives come into view and when this talent becomes a part of the core strategy meetings, rest assured your company will be steered in the right direction and invigorated with new, fresh talent.

22

DIY: Cooking Up Your Own Start-Up Culture

Start-ups are the norm today. Anyone with a decent amount of capital, a bright idea and the drive to be successful seems ready to start-up a business of their own. But the pressure to make your start-up a success and preventing it from the meeting of its doom is equally high. The opportunity to create your own start-up culture allows you to get things right from the start.

Having a small workforce when you're starting out can be an advantage as you get to involve more people in the process of developing a value system that will form the backbone of your culture.

Hire right. Ensure that your recruitment process will attract as well as retain talent that echoes your organizational culture and create an environment that is conducive to the culture you want everyone to adopt. You have the power to set the tone for your organization; the power to steer your start-up through the challenges of low morale, high employee attrition and damaged client relationships towards higher productivity, happiness at work, satisfied clients and success!

17

Why Does Every Employee Need A Mentor At Work?

Building a career and making it work is no easy task, especially now when the job market is volatile, competition is cut-throat, and ASAP is a way of life. However, there are times when we wish for some extra bit of wisdom and guidance. Benefits of having a formal mentorship programme are many.

It ensures that new joiners stay on track and work at progressing their career. Gaining from their knowledge and expertise, decision-making seems easier and since they have been in the organization longer, their feedback makes a lot of difference. The impartial professional standpoint that a mentor can gauge helps you view challenges is a different light altogether.

Having someone to guide, encourage and motivate you, someone to share difficulties, failures, and successes with, would provide the much-needed support at the workplace.

23

Employer Branding From An Indian Perspective

In the present job markets, where companies are competing to attract the best talent, creating the right image of your company as an employer is a challenge. Employer Branding thus becomes a two-fold process of both internal as well as external branding. The former for the present set of employees and the latter for prospective employees.

A strong employer brand can help your organisation stand out - Often considered as a combination of art and science, employer branding is all initiatives that will lead to attraction, engagement and retention targeted at enhancing an organisation's overall employer brand.

Advertise your workplace culture, values and goals to potential and existing employees, who will then willingly become willing to become your brand ambassadors.

Ek Comp Off
Ki Keemat
Tum Kya
Jaano
**Ramesh
Babu?**

43

Smells Like Team Spirit

The concept of diversity is interesting, primarily because it poses a duality of thought and the true challenge of diversity lies in accepting differences, both collective and individual. Most organizations today have the opportunity of making diversity at work an optimizable characteristic. However, does the organization have the power to make teams collaborate more effectively or is that really just up to the team members?

Organic diversity might lead to amazing team compositions and interesting team dynamics. Although, it may not be as carefully orchestrated as inorganic diversity, but it could often lead to situations where teams themselves have to understand and appreciate each other better in order to work efficiently.

While it's great to focus on team-building, it is only when people learn to see past their differences, that they really realize their true potential and are able to achieve more as a team, than what they could individually have.

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Time & Stress Management

Psychologically, the Perceived Stress Scale is a commonly used instrument for measuring the perception of stress in an individual. When the workload shoots up, take a quick break, before your brain shuts down.

But if you need some quick and instant relief techniques to destress at work, plan a quick lunch video date with Russel Peters, read, doodle or scribble or simply close your eyes and take a quick power nap.

The 20–20–20 rule

Move from your seat, take a walk, stretch, every once in a while. Eat a 20:20 cookie if it makes you happy! But every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break and focus your eyes on something at least 20 feet away. Give the poor laptop a break. Make yourself a cup of tea, or simply stand by the window and watch the raindrops falling outside the window. The change of scenery will definitely do you some good. Time and stress management indeed go hand in hand. Want to be able to manage stress better? Learn to prioritize your time.

Want to de-stress? Make time for everything on your to-do list. Why? Majorly because it helps when you uncheck the items off it. The mantra is simple. The trick lies in what route you pick to get work done. As for a permanent solution to de-stressing? The most tried and tested way is to cultivate a hobby!

34

Fighting Biases And Inequality At Work

Creating an organizational culture might begin with verbalizing and writing down a mission, vision and values statement but that's definitely not where it ends.

A healthy culture is rooted in equality, opportunity, camaraderie and fighting biases where every individual is valued, understood and appreciated for who they are rather than what they are. For an organization to be able to unlock the individual potential of each employee, they need to be provided with a level playing field of equal opportunity, value, trust, and security.

Whether it's between people of different genders, religions, socio-cultural backgrounds or between different strata of the organization distinguished as the blue-collars and the white-collars, the culture at any organization has to be one that can be disseminated to and internalized by every employee no matter their role in the organization or how different they are from one another. A culture of equality cannot simply be created but rather has to be lived every day.



Work Life Blend

Thanks to the long and irregular working hours, do your plans made in advance often go down the drain? Irregular work-load and hectic work routines taking a toll on your health?

As an organization, looking out for the welfare of your people becomes extremely crucial. Irrespective of the attrition rates or the ROI, if an employee is 'not happy' at work, it affects the overall productivity of the team as well as the brand.

Employees need space and organizations, results. The best way to achieve a truce and meet half-way is to incorporate a well-planned work-life blend. Help your employees prioritize their 'work requirements'. Don't let staying back late and working over-time become a habit.

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