

Happy Workplace (สุขในที่ทำงาน)

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ความรู้สึกรู้สึกมีความสุขกับการทำงานกลายเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญในการจัดการสิ่งแวดล้อมและความปลอดภัยในองค์กร การลงทุนเพื่อสร้างบรรยากาศให้คนทำงานมีความสุขถือเป็นการลงทุนที่ให้ผลตอบแทนที่คุ้มค่า การสร้างบรรยากาศให้เกิดความสุขในการทำงานเป็นประโยชน์ทั้งคนงาน และนายจ้าง โดยเชื่อว่า คนที่มีความสุขหรือองค์กรที่มีบรรยากาศแห่งความสุข จะมีพลังอันยิ่งใหญ่ในการสร้างสรรค์ผลงานในทุกมิติ เช่น การเพิ่มผลผลิต การเพิ่มคุณภาพ เพิ่มยอด ความพึงพอใจของลูกค้า สร้างสรรค์และนวัตกรรม สามารถปรับตัวได้ดี มีความยืดหยุ่นสูง ลดความสูญเสีย ลดการขาดหรือลางาน ลดความเครียดของคนงาน ลดอุบัติเหตุและโรคจากการทำงาน เป็นต้น วิธีสร้างบรรยากาศแห่งความสุขในงานมีหลากหลายวิธี และได้นำเสนอในบทความนี้ และสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้กับธุรกิจนานาประเทศไม่จำกัด สมาคมอุตสาหกรรมได้นำหลักการสร้างบรรยากาศให้เกิดความสุขในการทำงานมาประยุกต์ใช้ในประเทศไทย โดยความร่วมมือกับกระทรวงสาธารณสุขเมื่อปี พ.ศ. 2543 ในมิติตรงกันข้ามศาสนาพุทธสอนไว้ว่า ความสุขไม่มีในโลก มีแต่ อนิจจัง ทุกขัง อนัตตา แต่อย่างไรก็ตาม ชาวพุทธส่วนใหญ่ยังคงมุ่งปฏิบัติธรรมเพื่อหวังความสุข โดยทั่วไปเชื่อว่า เมื่อใดที่ทุกข์ลดลง ความสุขจะเพิ่มขึ้นเอง

Abstract

A feeling of happiness derived from work becomes a very important factor of environment and safety management in a company. Investment in a happy workplace program is profitable. Happy at work is crucial both to the employee and the company. Happy people and happy company can create a lot of good things such as increasing productivity, quality, sales, customer satisfaction, creativity, innovation, adaptation, flexibility, and decreasing loss, absenteeism,

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stress of workers, accidents and occupational diseases. Many ideas to make a happy workplace have been presented in this article which can be applied to various types of businesses. Happy workplace program has been implemented in Thailand by both the Federal Thai Industries (FTI) and the Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health since the year 2000. In an opposite facet, there is no happiness at all in Buddhism. The truth is that there are only three main conditions in every individual life. They are anitjung, tucka, and anatta. However, most of Buddhists in Thailand are still practicing for happiness of life with the belief that reducing tucka means increasing happiness.

Key words: Happiness, workplace

Happy workers can do happy business as well as happy workplace attracts and helps employers hold on to their best employees by keeping them happy, interested and productive. (Jobsite Company, 2006; website and Herman Miller, 2006: website).Happiness has not been the number one word when business people think of effectiveness, efficiency, and increasing returns on investment. The word happy somewhat “mushy”and therefore inapplicable when people are talking diehard dollars. In fact, happiness may be one of the most important contributors in the process of elevating a good business to great levels, and transforming an ailing organization into a lucrative one. (Marques, J., 2006: website)

A. What is happiness at work? (Positivesharing Company, 2006: website)

Simple, it is a feeling of happiness derived from work. It is that feeling you get when you:

- enjoy what you do
- do good work and feel proud of it
- work with nice people
- know that what you do is important
- are recognized for your work
- take responsibility
- have fun at work
- are motivated and energized

There are few important points to note about happiness at work:

- Happiness at work is a choice. Nobody can force or press people to be happy, no matter how genuine that person concerns for others. If anybody creates a mood where it is right to be happy and wrong to be unhappy, people will rebel against that and actually become less happy.

- Happiness at work is different for everyone. One man's happiness is another living hell. We are all different, and the same things will make some people happy, and others unhappy.

- Happiness at work is long – term. It is never about blowing off what must be done, in order to have fun and be happy

instead. It is not just about being happy here and now. It is happiness for tomorrow and next year and 10 years from now.

- **It is not eternal.** There will always be boring tasks, less – than – nice people, bad days. Being happy at work does not mean that you are always happy. But hopefully, you are happy more often than unhappy.

- **It is not just fun and games.** It is nice to laugh and have fun at work, but it is not just about that. We are talking about serious happiness here, that goes way beyond frivolity and silliness.

- **It is not about being ecstatic.** People don't need to run around in a constant state of bliss. They can also be quite, serious persons and be perfectly happy at work.

Happy at work is crucial both to the employee and to the company. People will spend more of their adult life on their job than on anything else. People's work will take up more of their time than their families, friends and hobbies combined. It would be nicer if that time is spent at a job that actually makes them happy. Mr. Soichiro Honda, the founder of Honda said that each individual should work for himself. People will not sacrifice themselves for the company. They come to work at the company to enjoy themselves. Also, studies show that happy people are more successful than others, which makes sense when you think about it, since happy people are more optimistic, outgoing, likeable, motivated and energetic all essential qualities for business success.

Happy people can create a lot of things:

- Higher productivity – happy people achieve better results
- Higher quality – because happy employees care about quality
- Lower absenteeism – people actually want to go to work
- Less stress and burnout – happy people are less

susceptible to stress

- Higher sales – happy people are the best sales people
- Higher customer satisfaction – happy employees are the

best basis for good service

- More creativity and innovation – happy people are more creative

- More adaptive – happy people are much more adaptive

and open to change

- Better performance and higher profits – for all the above reasons

Plato in his *Plato's Republic* believed that in order for man to be happy, he has to balance three parts of his soul: the appetite, the rational, and the spirit. Elizabeth Gaskell in her book on *North and South* believes that man can only be happy when he is happy at work.

Happy company will have the happy future. People don't have to choose between profits and happiness. The real choice is this:

Do they want their businesses to be rich and happy or poor and unhappy?

In a few years time, there will only be happy companies. Since happy businesses are so much more efficient than their unhappy competitors, they will beat them in the marketplace.

B. How can people boost their happiness?

JoAnna Brandi in her book “the Art and Science of Exquisite Customer Care” proposes eight factors for happiness. She said that people could boost their feelings on happiness by taking change of these eight factors: (Brandi, J.A., 2006: website)

1) Optimism

The power of optimism is not to be minimized – evidence shows that optimists live nine to ten years longer than people who are not optimistic.

2) Gratitude

Consciously, willingly and deliberately take moments throughout the day to feel gratitude, and to express it to others. People are always amazed at how powerful this inexpensive, quick and easy exercise is in creating a positive work environment and helping to transform the culture.

3) Forgiveness

Letting go of ill will toward others and oneself, surrendering resentments and regrets, making peace with the past clears the way for happiness to be felt more often and more deeply.

4) Improve your self – talk

It is important to transform your self – talk from negative to positive and energizing. Positive self – talk diffuses stressful situations, and when the brain relaxes it is more creative and better at problem solving.

5) Flow

A state of being where you forget about everything else is called “flow”. Being in a state of flow actually increases your happiness.

6) Savor

Savoring is about being “in the moment”. The great thing about savoring is that you can do it before an activity by happily anticipating what is to come, you can do it while you are enjoying the activity, and you can savor your memories afterward.

7) Reframe

Look at a stressful situation as if it were an actual photograph, and think about a dozens of ways you could reframe it. You can crop it, enlarge it, make it smaller. Whatever you do, you are creating a different view and perspective of the same picture, which can help you to transform negative feelings and responses to a situation into positive, happier ones.

8) Build on strengths.

Research shows that enduring happiness come from spending time in one’s strengths – having the opportunity to do the things one does well even better. Identify your strengths, then deliberately and

creatively build on them. Evidence shows that overtime, this skill works better at creating lasting happiness than antidepressants.

Positivesharing Company has proposed six happy practices. The six practices are described below. (Positivesharing Company, 2006: website)

1) Be positive – A positive attitude matters. No matter how serious or critical your business and your current situation, a positive happy attitude is sure to help. One company that has realized this since day one is Southwest Airlines. They focus intently on being happy and having fun, and one key practice in this regard is that they prefer to hire happy people. Their motto is “Hire for attitude, train for skill”. Of course qualifications matter, but it matters even more that you are a nice, naturally happy, positive person. If you have the right skills, but an unpleasant temperament, you do not get a job. The results speak for themselves: Southwest Airlines is the only large airline in the world that consistently turns a profit and currently employs 30,000 people. The lesson learned is that leaders who know how to enjoy themselves and want others to do the same are another great asset, that help creates a happy atmosphere.

2) Learn – It doesn't matter how much you enjoy what you do today. If you do the same tasks in the same way for a long time, sooner or later you will stop enjoying it. Learning is also important, so employees have the right skills – not just to do their job adequately, but to actively shine.

Rosenbluth International Company focused on learning from experienced employees, pairing each new hire with one of their best and

most experienced employees for several days. Of course this gave the best employees less time to work and thus cost productivity, but the upside more than made up for that, since new employees quickly learned not from manuals but from real experiences and felt included and supported from day one.

3) Be open – In most companies, most information is secret and employees are told only what they “need to know”. Why not turn that upside down, and make all information available to people, excluding only that which explicitly needs to remain secret?

One approach to this is seen at Motek, which makes warehouse management software. They have an internal, company – wide to – do – list listing all major projects, to which all employees have access. In addition, Motek’s customers and suppliers also have access to the same list. This open sharing of information means that Motek’s employees can make more and better decisions because they can get the information they need, resulting in happier more motivated people.

4) Share decisions – The more decisions that can be made by employees themselves, the better. The department store chain Nordstrom’s famously gives their employees only one rule to live by: Rule #1: In all situations, use your good judgment. There will be no additional rules.

General Electrics (GE) employs well over 100,000 people in a wide variety of industries. Their top performing production plant, the one in Durham in North Carolina, is organized according to the principle. Their organization consists of 1 CEO, 15 self – managing production

teams and various support functions (IT, finance, human resource, etc.). There are no vice – presidents, middle managers, controllers, etc., leaving the production teams themselves responsible for quality, training, production planning, maintenance and more. The employees have shown themselves to be more capable of that challenge, and new GE production plants will be organized according to this model.

5) Think and act long – term – Patagonia makes outdoor wear and has committed itself to long – term thinking. As an example, in 1996, It converted to using only organically grown cotton, out of concern for the huge amount of chemicals used in traditional cotton production. Organic cotton was then much more expensive and in very short supply, so on the surface this decision had the potential to hurt business. In order to make it work. Patagonia even had to support existing organic cotton farmers financially.

In addition, Patagonia has founded 1 percent for the Planet, an organization of businesses who donate at least 1 percent of net sales to environmental organization. This helps make employees proud of their workplace.

6) Care about people – Companies must care about their people. If they don't feel that the company cares about them, then why should they care about the company? One Danish company, the IT service provider, Service Gruppen, even puts their employees about their customers. In one case, an employee was treated badly and insulted by a customer, following which management promptly terminated the contract with that customer.

The creative Group (2006: website) provides some strategies to help you create a positive and supportive work environment in order to promote a happy and productive workplace. Here are some hints:

1) Heed staff needs

Solicit employee suggestions for enhancing your company's work environment. Ask for improvements they would like to see, as well as practical way to implement their ideas. It's also important to acknowledge you have considered their feedback, even if you are unable to address every request immediately. This process demonstrates you value your staff's opinions, care about their happiness and well – being, and aim constantly improves office policies.

2) Promote a proper balance

Employees with excessively light or heavy workloads are usually the least productive. Help your staff prioritizes assignments and delegate tasks so they have time to meet professional and personal obligations. Establishing management practices and personnel policies that allow for personnel days, and providing services on premises that save employees time, also will ease their anxiety.

3) Empower employees

Most people work harder and do a better job if they feel their opinions are valued and are trusted to make smart and responsible decision. Whenever possible, provide worker autonomy on the job – let them devise their own project timelines and coordinated team meetings, for example, providing staff more opportunities to manage their work and

also encourages them to get involved in additional aspects of the organization and grow professionally.

4) Hire for the long term

The way a company recruits, trains and rewards staff reveals a great deal its values. Hiring applicants with high aptitude and then training for career advancement goes a long way toward building loyalty and increasing retention rates. Company with work – friendly management practices are at a distinct advantage when it comes to attracting qualified talent. Implementing some – or even all – of these strategies can help create a productive, satisfying workplace, where employee turnover, recruitment and training cost are kept to a minimum.

C. Other ideas to make a happy workplace

All Business (2006: website) proposes some creative, action – oriented ideas to help you inject a little “fun” into your workplace as follow:

1) Allow for flextime – Giving your employees some flexibility in their work schedules shows your concern for their personal lives. In addition, allowing employees to work from home occasionally can be a great motivator, making the days in the office a lot more productive and less stressful.

2) Schedule exercise breaks – There is no reasons you cannot copy what many larger corporations are doing these days.... squeezing in dance breaks throughout the day during which employees step out of

their offices or cubicles to do a group stretch to music. Every week pick a new exercise and a new stretch leader to get everyone going.

3) Cultivate fun – Make your office an exciting place to be by holding frequent contents, celebrations, and team building activities. Surprise everyone by ordering in lunch or by starting out the day with coffee and pastries in the kitchen.

4) Lead with laughter. – Understand that taking is minutes to laugh will increase productivity, not reduce it. People think more clearly and operate more productively when they have had a break that clears the cobwebs from their brains. Laugh a lot and encourage your team to do the same.

5) Encourage mini time-outs. – Encourage everyone to relive daily stress by taking a few minutes to do something they enjoy. A small break in the day's routine can really reinvigorate a person's thought process. Take short break yourself and encourage others to take them. Do whatever helps you to disengage from the project at hand such as work on a crossword puzzle, listen to music, take a walk around the block, or browse through a nearby bookstore.

6) Find the humor in negative situations – Lead the way in joking about difficult situations in the company. When people can laugh in the midst of a impending deadline, make fun of themselves after making a mistake, or share the story of a horrendous (but humorous) customer experience, then can defuse a lot of tension and stress. They also clear

the way for themselves and other to work on those issue with greater enthusiasm and clarity.

7) Create a fun squad – Ask for employees' ideas for ways to add fun to the work place. Consider creating a “fun squad” whose job is to dream up ways to bring lighthearted fun into the office. Let people use their creativity to raise the level of laughter, and there will be creativity left over for more concrete business objectives.

8) Acknowledge anniversaries. Celebrate the day each employee joined you team. Let them know much you appreciate their contributions with a small gift, Cake, or token of gratitude for the role they play in the company.

9) Build a “wall of frame”. Designate an area where you can post pictures of team members, thank – you notes from clients and customers, and clippings about the organization's success. Celebrate your people whenever and wherever you can.

10) Step out occasionally. Plan occasional group excursions to get everyone out of the office in a while. Have a group in a nice restaurant, hold an off – site meeting at a museum or botanical gardens, or the every one on an impromptus trip to the movies.

11) Designate a humor corner. Transform one corner of your break room or other area into a humor corner. There you can post cartoons, funny quotes and pictures, and other illustrations designed to relieve stress.

Humor Incorporated (2006: website) beliefs when humor is incorporated the goals are much easier to achieve and appropriate humor can bridge the gap between co – workers and develop a happier workplace. Improved morale is followed very closely by dramatic sales increase. Other such as Penttila, C.,(2004: website) gives his opinion that if you want happy, harmonious employees. Cv Tips (2006: website) gives advice when an employee isn't happy with his workplace values, his home life is often affected so it's important that a values check is made on a regular basis to ensure that the current position is still the right one. Els, M. (2006: website) agrees with Canadian IT Professionals that employees say they feel most driven to go to work each day by a happy workplace with a corporate community atmosphere, feeling they are valued by their employers and a strong sense of self – esteem. Sebastian Bailey, director at management development consultancy Mind Gym, suggested that companies need to do more to keep employees happy and motivated. More than two – thirds of those surveyed for the study into workplace potential cited regular feedback from the boss as the single most important factor in making them feel motivated. Seven out of tenths added that being able to work flexibly would make them more productive (Mortenman, J. 2006: website).

D. A happy workplace and occupational health and safety (OH & S)

OH & S management system is a framework that controls and co-ordinates your workplace safety and injury management requirements. Taking a strong approach to the issue will have positive benefits for your organization. An active OH & S management system provides cost benefits in improved morale, improved productivity, lower insurance premiums, increased marketability and better industrial relations. An accident can result in lost production, damaged equipment, higher insurance costs, fines and lawsuits. One accident will cost an organization more than the entire cost of design and implementation of an OH & S management system. A good OH & S management system provides a system that is user friendly without being overly intrusive. It will encourage staff to be involved in managing their own safety and that of their fellow worker. A safe workplace is an efficient workplace (Safety Service, 2006: website). It is estimated that over 40 million workers in the United States had to receive emergency medical treatment for workplace – related injuries in the year 2003. There is a staggering number when one considers the offers most companies have put into maintaining a safe workplace. In modern times, a number of companies have been found liable for injuries sustained in their workplaces. There is a relationship that exists between workplace safety and profitability.(Staller,J.2006: website)

Every company, especially those involved in industrial manufacturing, is constantly looking at ways to continuously improve their products and processes. They realize that their profits are directly

related to the ways and means by which they produce their products. Unfortunately, many companies get caught up in drive for higher profits and tend to allow workplace safety to become an afterthought.

The costs associated with operating a large manufacturing facility in America are astounding. Workplace injuries place a massive burden of expense and weakened productivity on a company. Most workplace injuries are preventable. There are a number of factors to consider, but maintaining a safe and tidy work area is one of the best ways to prevent injury. Workers too have a responsibility in keeping themselves safe from harm. They should always think safe and work safe.

Workplace injuries place a significant burden on health care providers and insurance companies. As companies continue to pay higher premiums for employee health care, one of the only means available for cost recovery is to increase the prices of the goods they produce. This places the burden of expense on the consumer, and allows companies to ignore the root cause of their workplace injuries. The focus here seems to be on maintaining a healthy relationship with shareholders, and not necessarily on maintaining a healthy workplace.

It is interesting to note that there are a number of jobs in the industrial sector, being sent overseas. There are a number of reasons to account for this. One of the most significant reasons is that American companies are able to shave their operating costs down to a fraction of their domestic costs, by capitalizing on cheaper labor in foreign markets. Foreign governments, eager for investment, are all too willing to

accommodate the interests of big western business. Far too often, this comes at the expense of workplace safety. To be profitable in the long term, companies need to reexamine their approach to workplace safety and the health of their workers. Many companies are sending jobs overseas, in order to take advantage of cheap labor and relaxed labor laws. American companies can be both profitable and safety conscious. Through directed education campaigns and preemptive planning, workplace injuries can be reduced in a significant way. Remember: a safe work is a happy worker, and a happy worker is a productive worker. (Staller,J. 2006: website).

E. Happy workplace in practice

Happy workplace programs are implemented in various businesses such as hospitals, universities, and It workplace.

E.1) Happy workplace programs in hospitals

“The safety of patients and staff is paramount” Lord Hunt, UK Minister for health and safety said. “The costs of getting it wrong are unacceptable, both morally and economically”. Lord Hunt, also pointed out: “Injuries from incidents such as falls account for around a third of patient injuries. For health services staff, 54 percent of major reported injuries are due to slips, trips and falls, compared with 34 percent across all employment sectors. Given that the vast majority of such injuries result in broken bones, the costs to the health services in staff absent

are phenomenal, while those injured endure a great deal of pain and suffering ” (HSE – Health and Safety Executive,2006: website).

“The slip and trip example illustrates the synergy between patient safety and health and safety”, Lord Hunt continued. “Whether the risks are to patient safety or staff, our two organizations are promulgating the same messages – the effective management of risk. Good health and safety, must be integral to good business management”.

Lord Hunt continued “The NSPA – the National Patient Safety Agency is still relatively young. HSE – Health and Safety Executive has a longer history, and can demonstrate that its approaches work. The last 30 years have seen significant reductions in the rate of fetal injuries to workers. A recent report stated that half of the successes of health and safety will give you faith that inroads into patient incident rates can be similarly reduced”.

One in ten admitted patients experienced some forms of harm, costing the National Health and Safety 2 billion, while 40 million working days are lost to UK businesses as a result of occupational ill health and injuries, costing 12 billion a year. (HSE – Health and Safety Executive, 2006: website)

To improve these statistics, Lord Hunt outlined his vision about this issue that:

- the health and well – being of people of working age is given the attention it deserves;

- health care services meet the needs of people of working age so they can remain in, or ease their return to work;
- work offers opportunities to promote individual health and well – being, and access to and retention of work promotes and improves the overall health of the population.

Lord Hunt concluded his presentation: “Both HSE and NPSA are keys to engaging those who can really make the difference in health and safety and patient safety, and will continue together to ensure that the lessons are learnt to reduce the toll of incidents. A safe workplace, is a happy workplace for staff, better able to care for patients, and so a safer environment for them too. The two organizations have a great deal to offer to ensure that this is achieved”.

Happy Heart at work of the Irish Heart Foundation was established. (Irish Heart Foundation, 2006: website) This program is designed to assist any individual or working group with responsibility for health or welfare, to plan implement and maintain a healthy lifestyle behaviors associated with maintaining heart and consists of two modules;

- Healthy Eating
- Physical Activity in the Workplace

The Happy Heart at Work Review reveals that success of health promotion initiatives in the workplace depend on full management support. The appointment of a coordinate within the company to implement Happy Heart at Work and the establishment of a steering committer, which is representative of the company's workforce and

management is fundamental to sustainability of the program. Despite a substantial decrease in the rate of premature death from coronary heart in the 1980's, Ireland still has the highest rate in Europe of premature death from cardiovascular disease – twice the EU average. In 2000, 26 percent of all deaths in those under 65 were due to heart attack, stroke and other diseases of the circulation.

To improving the health of employees, there is now clear evidence that comprehensive approaches to health promotion in the workplace, including activities that focus on the individual or those addressing the work environment which are supported by management and employee consultation can improve productivity and therefore have a positive economic impact for the company. Happy Heart at Work can play a key role in implementing effective workplace health promotion. This program will assist any individual with responsibility for health or welfare program to plan, implement and maintain a healthy lifestyle program in their workplace.

E.2) Happy workplace program in Universities

Happy Student Program was established in University of Alberta by University Student Service. (University of Alberta. 2006: website). A key part of Residence Service' mission is directed towards helping students succeed and develop both academically and personally. People of Residence Service' mission are enjoy working with students and want to make them happy. They use organizational theories to

practice including their experience that foster happy workplaces and, consequently, happy students.

A happy workplace of people working together can always build on basic skills. Dr. Vera Pickering of the University of Sydney Sciences & Technology expressed his opinion on qualities of a vet graduate. He described the type of vet graduate he look to recruit for his organization: bubbly personality, passionate about vet science, wanting to learn new techniques and willing to extend themselves, adaptable and gets well with people. He gave advice to undergraduate veterinary science students who would look to become more employable by the time they graduate that they should be broadminded and willing to listen or try unfamiliar ideas and not necessarily assume that the a taught way is the only way, including be willing to go to different places to build on skills. (Life Long Earning Organization. 2006:Website).

E.3) Happy IT workplace

IT and telecoms workers have claimed that better recognition combined with the ability to work flexibly will make them more productive, according to research by the Department of Trade and Industry, U.K. (Mortleman, J.2006:website) more than two-thirds of those surveyed for the study into workplace potential cited regular feedback from the boss as the single most important factor in making them feel motivated. Seven out of ten added that being able to work flexibly would make them more productive. It also found that 81 percent of workers in

the IT sector would be more committed if their employer helped them to realize their full potential in the workplace. Some 86 percent cited training and development as very important motivating factors. The study also noted that significant staff potential is currently being wasted. Three out of five respondents admitted that, on an average working day, they are not as productive as they could be.

Sebastain Baley, director at management development consultancy MindGym, suggested that the results showed that companies need to do more to keep employees happy and motivated. (Mortelman, J.2006: website). He also said that the command & control approach to managing business was reducing, but it was by no means a thing of the past. We needed a change of approach. Even inexpensive measures could make a big difference in most organizations. By improving staff recognition and feedback, managers can help people feel motivated, energized and valued within the business. As well as offering flexible working options, a more collaborative working style could also be beneficial, particularly in IT where staff often work in isolation. Companies that adopt a more collaborative approach seem to show increased productivity and a marked shift in the bottom line. Business leaders need to think more actively about how they can incorporate such a culture of collaboration and recognition.

An IT World Canada survey of salaries, skills and satisfaction has revealed that job environment, value and empowerment score highest across the board for more than 2,500 IT workers. (IT World Canada Company. 2006: website)

Employee say they feel most driven to go to work each day by a happy workplace with a corporate community atmosphere, feeling they are valued by their employers and a strong sense of self-esteem.

IT shopkeepers say the overall tone at the office and recognition for work well done are among the key drivers for what makes them happy in their current jobs.

At the end of the day, the typical IT professional goes home in a good mood when he feels his knowledge and opinions are valued, that he is contributing to corporate goals and that commitment is being reciprocated by his employer. Pay is okay, but more than anything, workers want to feel a part of something.

IT executives and senior managers are not too concerned with their compensation packages, but annual raises, bonuses and incentives become more of an issue as base pay slides down the employee scale.

Overall, middle managers are more conscious of job security, technical IT staffers are more money driven and the executive echelon is focused on corporate culture, recognition and working with competent peers.

Almost three in five IT employees in Canada say they are satisfied with their current jobs. According to the survey, 58 percent wear smiles to work , 16 percent scowl at their computer monitors and 26 percent are expressionless. (Els , M. 2006 : website)

Techsol (Technical solutions Inc.) founded in 1996 in Canada , grew from the realization that despite dramatic hardware and software advancements over the years, embedded technology had remained essentially unchanged. In response, Techsol offers a proprietary technology that translates into vast performance improvements in hundreds of current and potential applications in which low power and small physical size is vital

Techsol is not only an environmental friendly company, it also cares of their workers happiness. One of it's mission statement shows the commitment to provide a caring, respectful and happy workplace to company's associates. Moreover, company will place talented people in the right jobs, allow everyone to fulfill their potential and reward performance. To company itself, mission statement shows the commitment to put integrity first, work with enthusiasm, pride and passion, and believe that success comes through fostering everyone's best efforts. (Techsol. 2006 : website)

F. The U.S. new national awards for happy workplace

American Psychological Association (APA) honors companies in a new national awards program designed to highlight psychologically healthy workplaces. (Hallaway, J.D.2006: website) There are 15 companies recognized in 2006 by APA's as the Best Practice Honors. These companies and their best practices serve as a model for corporate America, which is beginning to understand that employee are their best asset.

The honored companies are diverse in their missions and in their best practices, but all are committed to happy workplaces. They are:

1. Arkansas Educational Television Network.

This company's executive director instituted an innovative approach to hiring teams that include the position supervisor, another member of the department and someone from an outside department are responsible for all aspects of hiring new employees.

2. Rogers; Joseph, O'Donnell and Quinn Lawyers.

This California law firm blurs the lines of corporate hierarchy. Non-attorney staffers design their own performance reviews and can evaluate the attorneys too.

3. Reflexite Americas

This Connecticut company values communication so much that the criteria was purposely placed between the administrative offices and the factory so all levels of employees would convene in one place. Reflexite also offers English as a second language courses to employees.

4. Nordic Construction

The company, located in Hawaii, allows injured employees time to recuperate and helps them ease back into work by doing light-work at community nonprofit organizations – all while receiving their normal compensation.

5. DSM Desotech

This Illinois firm had to downsize its work force. But with 120 days notice and help with job placement, employees who were laid off said the process was handled humanely.

6. Bell South

The Kentucky company has established an Employee Satisfaction Team that has created an Employee Appreciation Day, formed an employee diversity group, changed company policies on employee discounts and refocused employee communications.

7. Hunter Douglas Inc.

This New Jersey company's employee turnover rate is far below national averages, thanks to a new mentor program that helps employees adapt to the workplace.

8. Computer Associates

On site Montessori child-care centers, staffed by master's – level teachers and consulting psychologists, keep employees who are parents satisfied and productive at this New York company.

9. Melrose Diner Inc.

Teamwork is the motto at this Pennsylvania company, Teams consist of management and staff and are responsible for different aspects of operating the diner, such as customer service , employee recognition and menu development.

10. Southeastern Freight Lines.

This South Carolina company conducts an annual anonymous employee opinion survey and involves employees in problem – solving on employee concerns after the survey results are scored by an outside consultant.

11. Southwest Airlines

The Texas airline is ranked by Fortune magazine as one of the “ 100 Best Companies to Work For ” , in part because of its “ University for people “that provides its 35,000 employees with leadership and professional development opportunities.

12. ARUP Laboratories

This Utah company offers employees a free, on-site health clinic which has kept employees and their morale healthy.

13. Small Dog Electronics Inc.

The Vermont firm allows employees to choose the music played in the office, and work areas are painted in vibrant colors. Breaks are encouraged, and the company even lets employees bring pets to work and offers pet insurance.

14. SRA International Inc.

Employees at this Virginia company can contribute to and draw from a sick-day bank. The pool is used to cover employees who have major medical illnesses or are in need of crisis benefits.

15. Washington State University Vancouver

The University fosters a sense of community on its large, 340 acre campus with an employee recognition program.

G. Happy Workplace in Thailand

The Federation Thai Industries (FTI) realizes the importance of employee's quality of work life that is crucial and necessary to develop economic and social of the country. For this reason Quality of Life (QWL) project is established with supported fund from the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (THPF) in order to create and develop the sustainable quality of work life. (Federation of Thai Industries, 2006:17)

MS – QWL (Quality of Work Life Management System) was developed in 2004. This management standard emphasizes on the factors which affect the worker in physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects from the work and the work environment. The MS – QWL was developed by a committee of qualified and experienced persons including management system specialists, psychologists, officers in the workplace, doctors, safety and occupational health experts in the workplace.

MS – QWL – 2004 was in a trial period in 20 pioneered factories located in all regions of the country. There were only 13 certified pioneered factories at the end of first trial. The Logo of MS – QWL is shown in Figure I.

After the first trial, MS – QWL – 2004 was applied to 100 factories in expending phase in order to develop MS – QWL standard to be more complete and applicable in real practices.

Chonburi province is the first one to foster happy workplace in provincial area with the motto “Happy work life, happy workplace and community cohesion “. The project is supported by The Thai Health Promotion Foundation and implemented in 2006. Eight requirements are set as certified criteria.(manager online , 2006 : website) They are :

1. physical and psychological health
2. spiritual relationship
3. good social health
4. recreation and relaxation
5. continual self development
6. morality conducts
7. no debts
8. happy family

H. Conclusion and Recommendation

H.1) Conclusion

Happy workplace concept is a modern concept in business administration. It has been applied worldwide including in Thailand. Happiness is a significant issue in life. A happy workplace is a happy worker, and a happy worker is a safe and productive asset. Every religion has taught people to do moral conducts in order to get a happiness. In Buddhism, there is no happiness at all. The truth is that there are only three main conditions in all individual life: They are anitjung, tucka and anatta. However, most of Buddhists in Thailand are still practicing for happiness of life. They believe that happiness is the opposite facet of tucka. Reducing tucka means increasing happiness.

H.2) Recommendation

Human capacity building for high technology should be emphasized. Human resources in Thailand are mostly lacking of some special skills for high-tech – industries. Research and development for human capacity building in such areas should be supported as well as happy workplace program. Moreover, social accountability of all companies should be fostered. All Thai companies should pay attention to ISO 26000 –corporate social responsibility, which may be a new international management system guideline standards in the year 2008.

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