

## 5 Basics of Employee Happiness

These elements can foster engagement and enthusiasm among your workforce.

I recently wrote about 4 Ways to a Happier and More Engaged Workforce, and then Fast Company came out with an article on just that, Secrets of America's Happiest Companies.

Looking at organizations including Pfizer, NASA, Philips, and Adecco and further drawing on research from the Stanford Graduate School of Business and Globoforce, the article boils down these "5 rules of happy employees":

1. **"Happy employees don't stay in one role for too long.** Movement and the perception of improvement create satisfaction. Maintaining the status quo, on the other hand, creates burnout.
2. **"There is a strong correlation between happiness and meaning.** Having a meaningful impact on the world around you is actually a better predictor of happiness than many other things you think will make you happy.
3. **"A workplace is far likelier to be a happy place when policies are in place** to ensure that people regularly get acknowledgement and praise for a job well done.
4. **"Recognize that employees are people first, workers second,** and create policies that focus on their well-being as individuals.
5. **"Emphasize work/life integration,** not necessarily 'balance.'"

Need that in even simpler terms? If you want to create a company culture and workplace in which employees want to engage because they're happier for doing so:

1. **Offer challenges;**
2. **Spotlight the deeper meaning** in the work;
3. **Recognize people;**
4. **Remember employees are human,** not robots;
5. **Make space** for employees' lives.

These individual steps are fairly simple. It may even be easy to implement them with specific managers or in specific groups. But changing the culture of an organization such that all employees, at every level, are on board—well, that's a bit of different challenge.

You certainly won't solve that challenge with yet another local initiative or program owned by HR. You must create a culture that is owned by every employee. The most solid culture to build that can feed all of these elements is a true culture of recognition.

What would you add to the list of rules for keeping your employees happy?

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