

No prizes for guessing the highs of a **happy workplace**. Employees, of course, enjoy their time at work and look forward to coming to office. But that's not all. For business leaders, it's good news too. A happy workplace makes for happy employees, who, studies suggest, are **20%** more productive than their counterparts.

A **happy workplace** also breeds softer **human values** like **energy**, friendship, **generosity**, and **trust** that create **positivity**. And the best part of it all: You see your employees smiling and content. Now who wouldn't want that?



1 Be Creative

Boxy cubicles, dimly-lit interiors, boring wall colours, and that dusty old fax machine in the corner are all prehistoric stuff. If your work environs are creative and done up differently (you can also let your employees design their workspace themselves), it lends **energy** and a **positive air** to work. In fact, businesses that invest in creativity have **76%** happier employees. So colourful interiors with lots of **natural light** streaming in, **wall graffiti**s, a **music hub**, a "quiet zone", and even a **mini library** thrown in for good measure - all add up to a happy workplace.

2 Communicate instantly

Ditch the desktops and ban the bulletin board. And please, no long emails. Almost all employees today, especially the millennials and Gen Z, are a **texting** bunch. They have an **app** for everything - so why not for internal communication? Your employees are the happiest when they are **looped in** properly. They won't settle for anything less than getting regular company updates, and they want their voices to be heard as well - and they want it **fast and cool**. **Instant messaging** also helps you build a solid bridge of communication between your desk-based and non-desk workforce.

3 Let them have fun

No one likes a long-drawn day with all work and no play. Bring back the long-lost lunch and **coffee breaks**, if you wish to keep your workforce happy and engaged. Studies show taking breaks increases productivity and focus in employees. A quick **gym workout** between meetings, **fun games** or a **nap** when work is lean, free food at the **canteen**, and even a game of badminton post-work keep your employees happy and motivated.

4 Say thank you

When it comes to **happiness**, it is not always the moolah that matters. According to a report, the most important driver of great work in an organization is personal **recognition** that's timely, regular, and relevant - be it an appreciative shout out or a thank you message in front of **peers** or a career-building training session.

5 Encourage remote work

In a world where the lines between **work** and **life** are becoming increasingly blurry, compulsory workplace attendance is a thing of the past - as long as employees stay productive and don't take it for granted. Remember, **remote workers** aren't a different breed: they feel **valued**, have a **great relationship** with co-workers, and are one of the **happiest at work**.

6 Bring in positivity

Happiness researcher and bestselling author Shawn Achor says, "Your brain at **positive** performs significantly better than at negative, neutral, or stressed. Your **intelligence** rises, your **creativity** rises, your energy levels rise". **Positivity** in the workplace can come from any quarter - from one-on-one interaction with top management, **healthy competition** with peers, and working in a team to personalized goal-setting, close work friendships, fun team meets, and empowering employees. HR initiatives like positiveness camps, **health check-ups**, team outings, and **family days** also breed a positive atmosphere at work.

7 Rules? Bend them

Still fixated on 9-to-5 office hours, intranet communication, dress code, and compulsory attendances? The world has moved on since you last looked around. You can't keep your workforce happy anymore if you set strict rules. **Flexibility** at work is basic now. Think **work from home** and **vacation** options, **emoji** communication, and even **bringing pets to work**. If your employees are happy with these and more, and there's no dip in productivity, it pays to bend the rules.

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