

WORKPLACE HAPPINESS

*Tools, Methods, & Frameworks
for building Happiness at Work!*



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Understanding Happiness

WORKPLACE HAPPINESS

Understanding Happiness

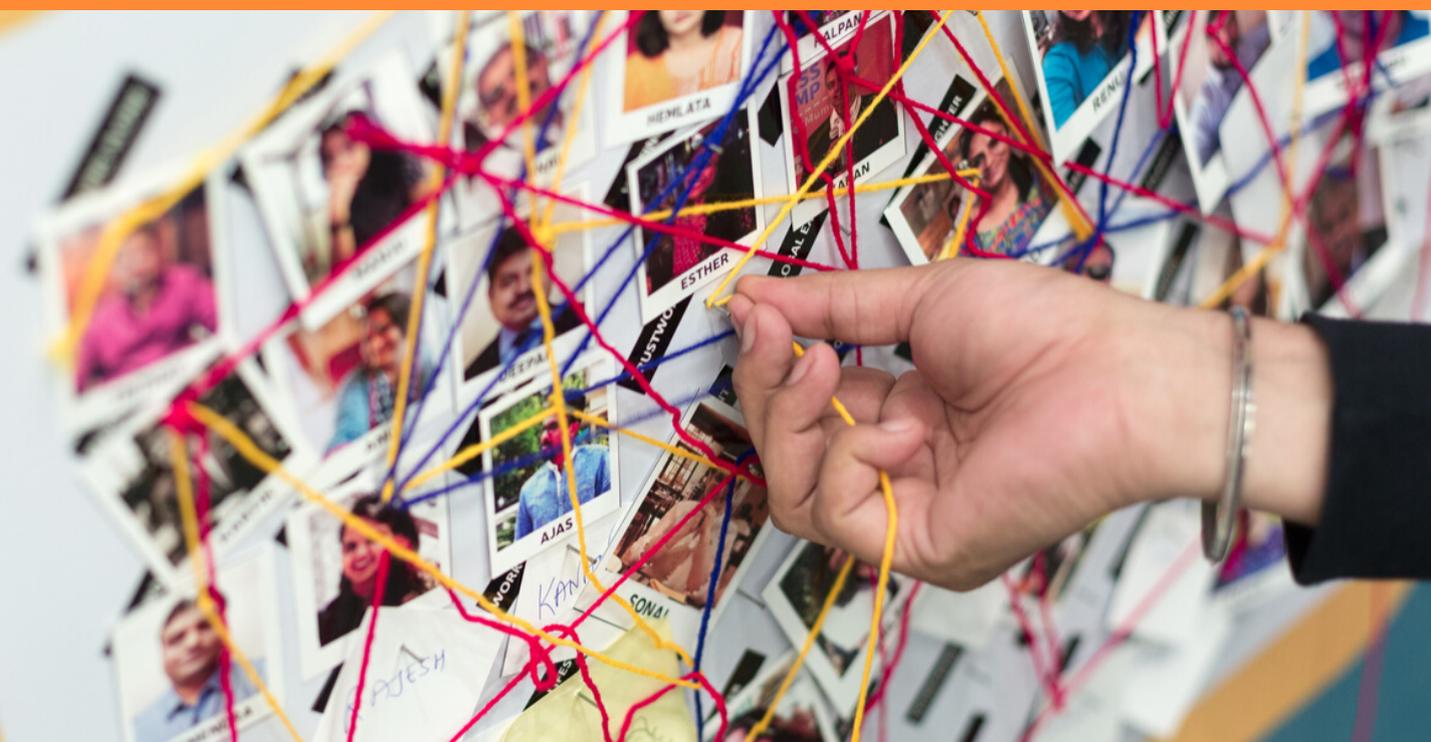
How do we define Happiness?

This is the first question that we need to answer before we can start understanding methods, frameworks, and finally, build the road map for enhancing happiness at the workplace.

When we ask people to define what happiness means to them, most people explain it as the feeling of peace, calmness, laughter, contentment, and so on. But- if only positive feelings evoke happiness, then why do we feel happy after otherwise physically challenging activities, like lending a hand to a friend when they are moving houses?

- Why do people work hard to land a great paying job, only to want to leave that same job for not being happy?
- Why do people want to get married to the person they love the most, only to want to get divorced for not being understood?
- Why do people venture into their dream business, only to want to quit when it's not scaling up?

What could be the reason for all these things?



Two dimensions of a human being

Two Dimensions of a Human Being

If we look deeply within us, we realize that there are two dimensions of every person—one that always seeks to expand itself, is open to accepting new possibilities, takes risks and thrives, whereas the other side always wants to hold onto objects, sentiments, and feelings of comfort and familiarity.

So, how can we define happiness in this state of inner conflict?

Let's look at a quick exercise to explore Happiness further. We ask people to rate their happiness using the scale given below:

1). In general, how happy do you think you are in your life?

I am Very Happy I am Happy I am Good I am Looking Forward...

2). On a day to day basis, which of the following negative emotions do you face quite often?

Anger Fear Anxiety Boredom None of the Above

When we ask these questions, most people tend to rate themselves with the, “**I am Happy**” option, which is fine, but the whole confusion begins with the next question.

In the second question, people select **Anger, Fear, or Anxiety** as the most preferred choice. If these are the dominant emotions one faces on a day-to-day basis, then “I am Happy” does not look like the most appropriate answer to the first question.

Pleasure, Positive Emotions, & Happiness

Can you differentiate between these three?

Let us give this a try:

Please, write a short definition to each of these terms:

Pleasure:

Positive Emotions:

Happiness:

Now let us see if we can tell the difference from what we know as concepts and what we go experience on a daily basis.

It might seem like a difficult task, however, let's try it out first-

Write an example of the following from your day-to-day life:

Pleasure:

Positive Emotions:

Happiness:

Look at the answers above and determine what seems to be true for you.
Does it imply-

- I know what is Happiness
- I don't know what is Happiness

If you relate to the first point then you can stop reading this because it wouldn't mean anything to you. However, if you relate to the second point, please continue reading.

Let us learn more about this in **Paradox of Happiness :-)**

The Paradox of Happiness

The Paradox of Happiness

The most frequent question people ask us and we too find ourselves questioning is- What does happiness exactly mean?

Ah well! Honestly speaking, we have tried many times to condense it into a definitive term. But, no piece of literature, research, or poetry has been able to fit the perfect satisfactory definition for us to this date. So, in a way, we don't know any better than the next seeker who is in search of exploring this subject.

Maybe this is the reason why, even after more than 5 years of work in the field of happiness, we are still curious and passionate about the work we do. So, now is the time to find out the truth about happiness as not something that we already know but as something that we don't.

Because “I don't know” is the beginning of any enquiry. When we realize that we don't know something, we become curious and start searching for answers.

We can start this journey from something that we know from our own experience and not because it was mentioned by some authority, scripture, or book. One of the things that we all know with our own experience is that we live in a world, which is weaved in threads of duality- there is day and night, good and bad, right and wrong, and so on..

Time and modern civilization have managed to have the following effects on our minds:

- We acknowledge fear more than love.
- We talk more of hunger than abundance.
- We talk more about systems and structures than the real idea of freedom.

Given a chance, you can ask any 12 year old child to write an essay on the topic of “**Pollution**”, which is very easy for them. But they will have a tough time writing about “**Clean Air**” because they might have never had a chance to breathe in clean air.

Even then, whatever they will manage to write will come from their conceptual understanding of “**Clean Air**” rather than their personal experience.

That is why, on a similar note, today we all can describe “**Unhappiness**” very easily than to try to get ourselves to define “**What is Happiness?**” So why not take this approach to understand what happiness is...

WHAT IS UNHAPPINESS?

IS IT

ANGER

Let us enquire it further.

For example, you are walking on a lonely street during the night and someone comes and points at something behind you, then tells you to keep walking. How would you feel?

Scared, obviously. This event ends suddenly when you see a group of policemen approaching from the other side. Before you can turn back, the person disappears.

IS IT

STRESS

Is this unhappiness?

We asked this question to many of our participants and the answer was unanimous, stating “it is not unhappiness”.

IS IT

FEAR

Then what is it?

It is the emotion of fear.

Fear is a negative emotion. So, if fear is not unhappiness, then we can also say that negative emotions are not the cause of unhappiness.



The Paradox of Happiness..

Therefore, if the above is true, then with the same level of surety, can we also say that all positive emotions are not the cause of Happiness?

So, does this mean that laughing and smiling cannot be considered as happiness?

To answer this, we have to ask you one more question.
(Oh No!..one more question??)

The answer to this question does not require any experience or prior knowledge, but only a little sensibility that we are sure you already have, and that's why you have read it so far.

What seems to be more true to you?

All the positive emotions like laughing, smiling, & contentment are (a) the expressions of happiness, or (b) happiness in itself?

What seems more sensible to you? We asked this question to most of our participants and we got a unanimous answer. Positive emotions seem to be the expression of happiness rather than actual happiness itself. It is also true for negative emotions being an expression of our unhappiness.

But our expression of happiness seems to vary by some degree.

Sometimes, it's high, and sometimes, it's low. Sometimes, it comes for a very brief period of time, and sometimes, it stays a little longer. And perhaps there is something that is sustained forever, no matter what goes on in the world.

It sounds too good to be true, but let us not reject this idea- nor accept it either. Rather, let's keep our search open.

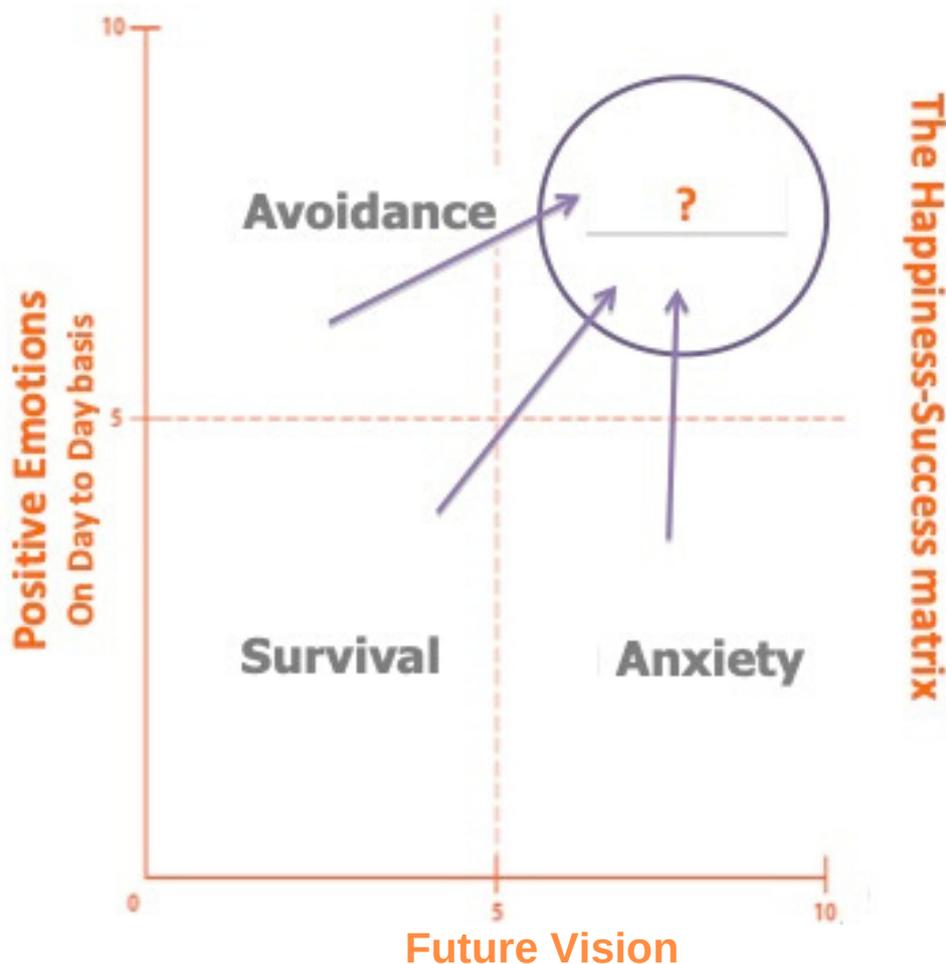
Meanwhile, let us introduce to you a powerful model which can always be kept handy, like a yardstick for exercising happiness at work.

The Four Zones of Happiness

THE FOUR ZONES OF HAPPINESS

Have you ever met someone who has not experienced happiness in his or her life? No matter how small or big it is, people have their own ways to experience happiness. Even someone who is clinically depressed must have experienced some moment of happiness in his life. So, do we really need to teach people that how to be happy?

Teaching people to be happy will be like teaching a thirsty person how to drink water. People already know how to be happy, however, most of them don't know how to sustain it.



The X-axis of the above image shows Positive Emotions on day to day basis, while the Y-axis represents Future Vision.

Survival: If a person is neither experiencing positive emotions on a day-to-day basis nor having any future vision, they are in the Survival Zone. We have mastery over the art of survival. The reptile brain is at function, which only knows how to survive. We become defensive and not open to change. There is hardly any opportunity for us to innovate, grow, or move out of our comfort zones.

Avoidance: For some people, it becomes easier to close their eyes to the future and start getting involved in pleasurable activities to experience more positive emotions. If most of your dose of positive emotions are coming from external triggers like alcohol, food, shopping, etc., and you are not having or committing to a future vision, then there are high chances that you are operating mostly in the Avoidance Zone. This is also called as Escapist Zone. People in this zone seem to be very happy and pleasant, but deep inside, they are always struggling. Hence, it is a very tricky zone.

"People tend to feel suffocated in the survival & anxiety zone- and activities like drinking, shopping, etc. take them to the avoidance zone for a short while."

Anxiety: When the future becomes too overwhelming and your current life becomes a means to reach the future, people become anxious. This is a zone from where many performers are operating today, which is giving them physical and mental expansion- but a lack of emotional expansion gives them a sense of unfulfilled life. This zone implies living in denial of today for the sake of tomorrow. This is one of the reasons that many performers look out to be anxious, stressed, and worried.

Growth: All those who have ever played any kind of sport must have experienced this: time in the game when you are so involved that you stop worrying about the results. Now, that does not make you score a goal on the wrong side. You still know why you are playing, but it has become a little less relevant for a while. This is the Growth Zone. You are at your best. Not just physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. Under stress and anxiety, you can still give your physical best, but your mental and emotional best come only with the ease of mind. Maybe this is why everyone is looking towards yoga, meditation, and ancient practices to achieve this.

Which Zone is the best?

Before determining the best zone, it is very important to know which is the zone from where you operate most of the time. Look at the graph and ask yourself.

The best zone will depend on what you want to do in life.

If you want to survive in safety and security, then survival zone is the best. Roses that blossom in the wild have more thorns because thorns are needed for survival. So in order to survive, you might develop thorns of irritation, anger, and worry, which will pinch you and others around you.

If you just want to experience pleasure, then avoidance is best. As they say, ignorance is bliss. Jumping from the 30th floor is also bliss- until you hit the ground. If you enjoy the free fall without worrying that you are going to hit the ground, it is always fun.

If you want to run away from the present, then anxiety is the best zone. When we say that the future will be good, we are also saying that the present is not good. Our destination will be great- or not. We can never be sure of that, but making our journey beautiful is always a choice for us!

The main intention of this Happiness at Work initiative is to move people from the Survival, Avoidance, & Anxiety Zones into the Growth Zone.



**Same boat, different engagement.
Some drive it, some jump off it.**

The Why of Happiness

WHY HAPPINESS?

When people go to their workplace, they might feel like they are looking for good pay, career, job role, and so on, but when you ask them “why” three times, it comes down to happiness.

WHAT IS YOUR GOAL IN LIFE?



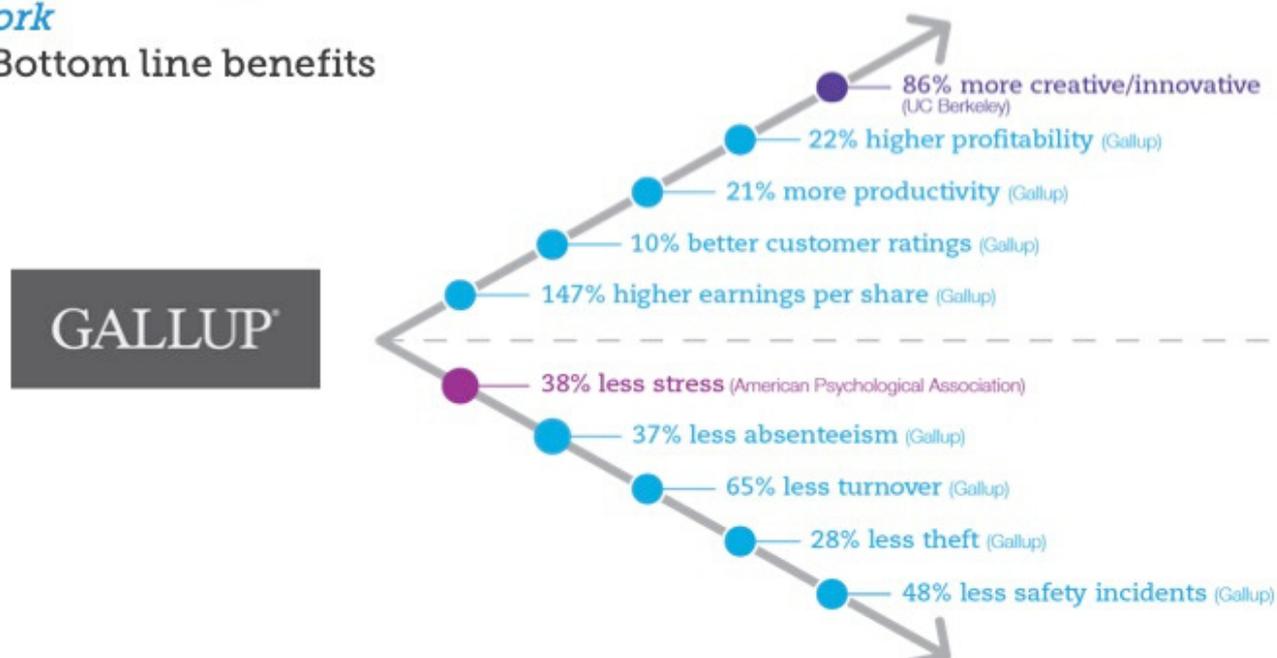
Let us see: when do people feel happy at work? People feel happy when they are earning a high salary that enables them to afford physical possessions like a home, a car, nice clothes, and so on. On a mental level, it can mean learning a skill, getting more exposure, or facing a challenge, all of which give a sense of expansion to people.

On an emotional level, it can mean a sense of belonging, organizational pride, authentic relationships at work, a sense of meaning and purpose, and so on, which can give people a sense of growth & expansion. But, when we look at the following numbers, we get an idea that most organizations are failing to provide these three levels of happiness to people at work!

WHY HAPPINESS AT WORK?

+ Effects of happiness at work

= Bottom line benefits



The above data shows how happiness at work can help an organization perform at an optimum level. If this is the case, then why don't organizations take initiatives and help their employees be happier? It is because most organizations are still operating through conventional methods. These conventional methods are typically only focused on helping people feel a sense of happiness at the physical level.

There is a bit of good news: in the last two decades, many organizations have been trying to focus on a mental level of happiness. We have been hearing words like organizational pride, exposures, training, and challenging work. However, people's needs are changing fast and most people are now focusing on the emotional level of happiness.

In India, we get to experience this shift everywhere around us. The industries of advertisement, cinema, and television are becoming more realistic and are connecting with people on an emotional level. It is high time that organizations also start accepting the fact that if people are not involved in an emotional level, they will always find it difficult to give their best.

So let us learn more about the frameworks of Workplace Happiness in order to build sustainable happiness initiatives.

The Framework of Happiness at work

THE FRAMEWORK OF HAPPINESS AT WORK

There are 5 elements in this framework, each carrying an equal level of impact on the success of any workplace culture-related initiative.

01

SELF-EXPRESSION

02

CONNECTEDNESS

03

SENSE OF GROWTH

04

SENSE OF CONTROL

05

BEING A PART OF THE STORY





1. SELF-EXPRESSION

Expressing oneself is one of the most innate desires of every person, but unfortunately, not everyone is lucky to get a companion in another person, or from the environment where one can express oneself fully. In a world that accepts conformity more than truth, people often feel handicapped in terms of expressing their true notions, emotions, and feelings. This need is more suppressed for someone who worries a lot about what other people would think, aka public judgment.

From the clothes we wear to the car we own, from the food we eat to the books we read, every body uses these arbitrary, shallow, and material criteria as tools to express themselves. One important area which every employer must consider is whether they provide an environment in which people can be open about their thoughts and opinions. And if they don't, this expression happens more internally in people's minds, which becomes a reason for self-doubt, unfulfillment, holding grudges, and participating in negative gossips at work.

2. CONNECTEDNESS

As humans, we are emotional first and logical later, so we always look for opportunities where we feel connected and accepted as a part of something. We consciously choose people and institutions where we can exercise trust, belonging, and where we can help each other win. Some find these in church, some with their friends, some with their family, and some on Twitter or other social media. Some see themselves as connected with only one or two other people. Others experience a connection to all people in the world, to humanity.

Whereas, some struggle to find a sense of belonging, and their loneliness becomes painful for them. To accept others and their views which are not aligned with yours may require you to open your mind to the idea that there is value in everyone's thinking.

You can find truth in even the most difficult-to-understand situations even while disagreeing with them. In the case of a workplace, full-time employees spend the majority of their day at the office. This is why work relationships are important to employee well-being. These relationships can either positively or negatively affect an employee's stress levels, productivity and general feelings of happiness.

We must know that we can be free enough, sometimes, to share the things that scare us without fear of recriminations. We must be able to talk about what is messy or sad, to have hard conversations with colleagues who are driving us crazy.

- Charles Duhigg

3. SENSE OF CONTROL

From an evolutionary standpoint, if we are in control of our environment, then we have a far better chance of survival. Our subconscious mind thus gives us strong biochemical pushes when we face some kind of danger (such as the fight-or-flight reaction).

Look around and observe what people do. A significant portion of our everyday activity is related to achieving our much-needed sense of control. At the workplace, it is interesting that the manager is looking for a sense of control and so are the subordinates. The question arises- "how can we ensure it for both?" because control means ownership and accountability.

Rituals, for example, are everywhere. Why do we follow them? They exist to reassure people that everything stays as it was, and to provide a familiar environment for our daily lives.

Social norms and values tell us what to do, what is right and wrong, what is good and bad. When everyone in the group follows the same rules, we feel a sense of control. Interestingly, more control also leads to lack of interdependence that directly impacts the connectedness at work. So, it is very important to balance both factors at work.

4. SENSE OF PROGRESS

The power of progress is fundamental to human nature, but few managers understand it, or know how to use the influence of progress to boost motivation.

In fact, work motivation has been the subject of a long-standing debate. When we think about progress, we often imagine how good it feels to achieve a long-term goal or experience a major breakthrough.

These big wins are great—but they are relatively rare. The good news is that even small wins can boost the entire work life tremendously. And, these small wins must be cherished and recognized, which would further boost the system, as well as people's motivation to boost their morale on a regular basis.

5. BEING A PART OF THE STORY

Going back to our understanding of Happiness which is that every human being is looking for ways to expand oneself: The individual expansion is always limited, and so is one's own story. Everyone looks for ways to be a part of a bigger story and find meaning in whatever they are doing as a part of that bigger story.

For example, a person coding on the computer will find it more inspiring if he or she knows that how this coding is going to impact people's lives in the real world. If a sales person selling a bag of cement knows that he is not just selling cement but building homes, that will be bigger motivator.

What are the core principals your company lives by? How can you make these more present in your people's everyday actions?

Identifying these purposes requires some deep thought and maybe even some impact-searching. The power that real purpose brings to any effort makes it all worthwhile. So, take the time to identify how you connect with something greater than yourself, and prepare for the power you will wield when you tap into that intention.

Three types of Happiness Initiatives

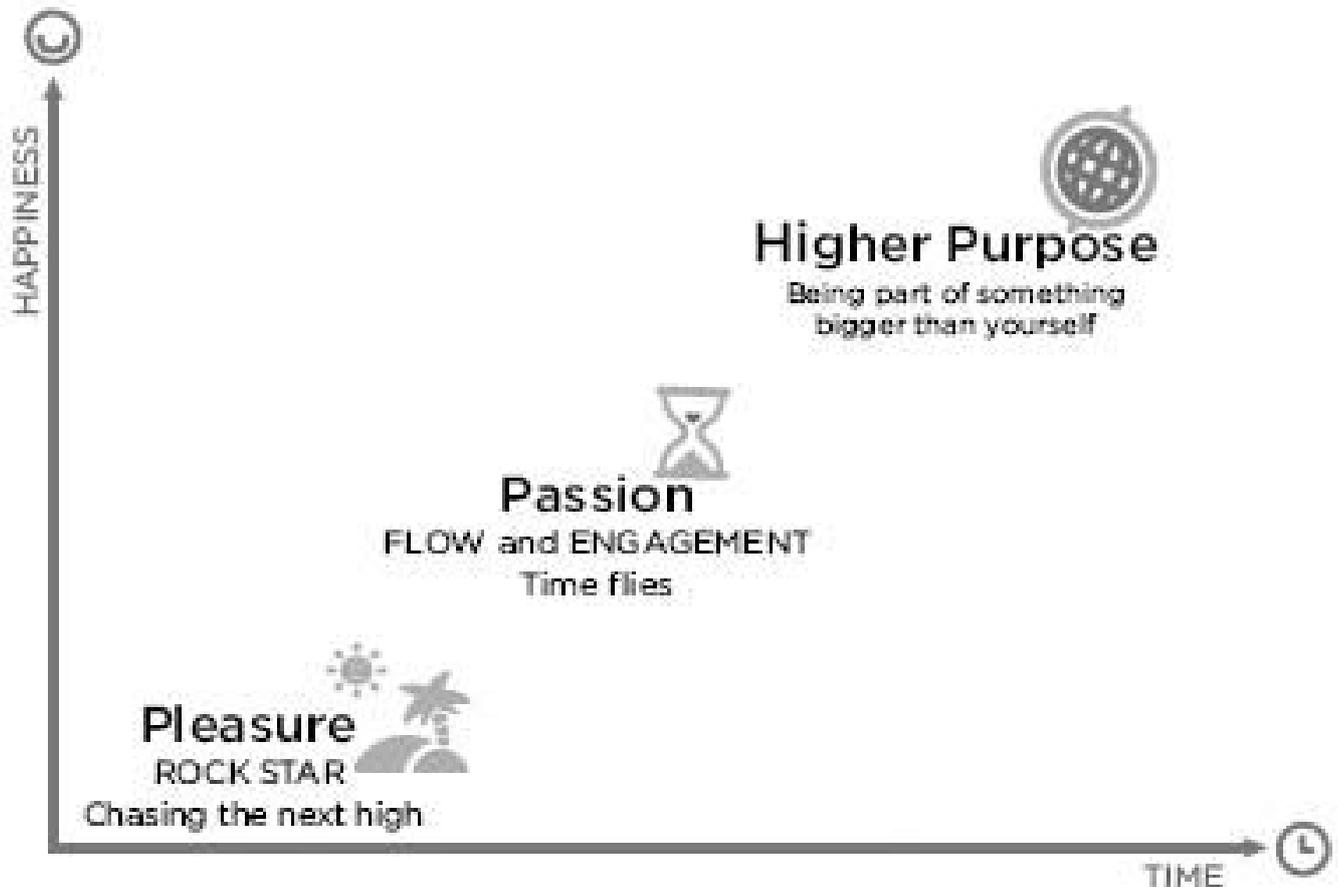
Is the Happiness Initiative the same as Employee Engagement Initiatives?

Before we answer this, it is very important to understand what we mean by an initiative?

If we talk about activities, annual theme parties, birthday celebrations, and other such initiatives, then, yes, these are a part of the happiness initiative. Let us understand the three types of happiness initiatives:

3 TYPES OF HAPPINESS INITIATIVES

Given below are the three types of initiatives aimed at enhancing happiness at work, but the duration and sustainability differ for each of the following:



01

PLEASURE

All the small things like birthday celebrations, having "smilies" in the offices, and annual meet-ups come under this category where the impact is immediate but lasts for only a short duration.

02

PASSION

When we help people with finding passion in their work, building relationships and authentic connections among the team, the happiness impact is higher but it takes a while to build.

03

PURPOSE

When people start to see the meaning in their work, how they are positively impacting lives around them, their happiness is more sustainable. To build purpose at work does not mean that we don't build upon the first two types of initiatives.

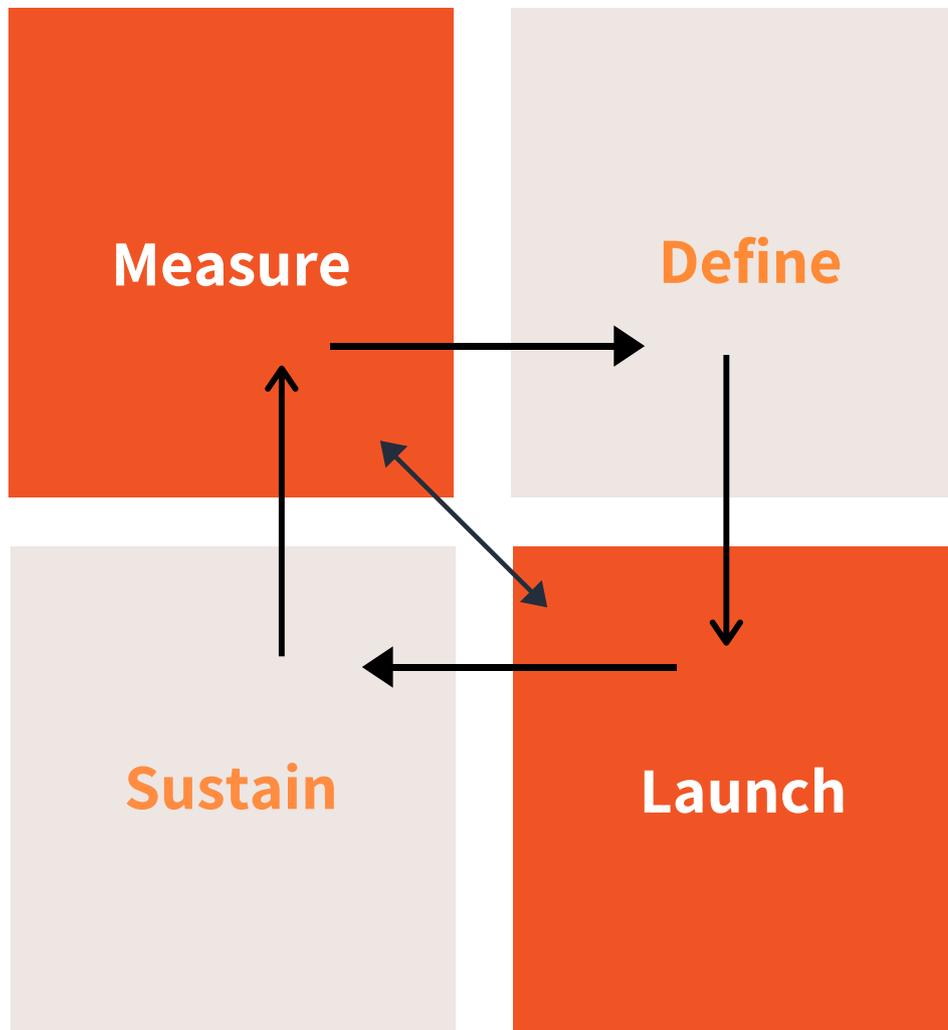
A disengaged leader can expect their teams to be engaged but an unhappy leader cannot expect their team to be happy. This is simply going to fail.

As people in an organization come to know that there is going to be a happiness initiative at work, they start expecting. In such cases, pleasure initiatives, that have an immediate impact, are very useful.

Also, these immediate impact initiatives keep on building the momentum, but their ultimate aim is to build profit, passion & purpose at work.

Workplace Happiness Roadmap

WORKPLACE HAPPINESS ROADMAP



MEASURE

We always say that there are ideal ways to go ahead in a business and that there are workable solutions. The ideal way to implement a happiness initiative at work is to measure the current level of happiness and understand the impact of the business. We at Happiitude have designed Happiness at work surveys in collaboration with our global partners. You can either take a brief dipstick or a full-fledged happiness survey to start your happiness initiatives. Before we plan to take the first step, it is very important to decide on what we are going to do after the survey results are out. Many organizations take the survey but do not take concrete actions based on the results, and employees who genuinely participate in the surveys feel betrayed. They lose their interest in future surveys and sometimes develop a negative mindset for the company as well.

If you have already done such a blunder in past, then you need to find unconventional ways to get proper feedback from your employees.

For example, a small company, with less than 1000 employees, can select a few questions and print them over a small card (a little bigger than visiting card). You can ask people during their breaks to fill up answers and collect responses.

You can also have a happiness box on each floor of your office and dedicate a time when employees can fill up small survey cards and put them in the box. Balloons on the floor with survey question cards are also a great idea to manually collect feedback. If you don't want to take another survey then the workable way is to use your current survey results, focus group discussions, and identify challenges or areas that you want to strengthen at work.

A great initiative without a strong measurement and communication strategy is just a feel-good exercise

DEFINE

Once you have the survey results, you can make some assumptions based on the quantified data results. These assumptions can be validated through meetings, observations and discussions. The whole objective of the survey step is to help you clearly identify the “why” of happiness initiative.

Once you know the “why”, it is the time to move to the next step which is Define – the “what” & “how” of the happiness initiative. So, how are these things going to be defined? In this step, you are going to define everything including Happiness Objectives, Expected Behaviors, Metrics, Measurement tools, Happiness champions team and their training, Happiness initiatives (same or combined with your HR initiatives), communication strategies (one time and adoption), and so on.

Most teams focus more on the designing of initiatives than on the communication strategy. Each initiative needs to work upon the elements of the happiness framework. For example, flexible working hours increases Sense of Control, but at the same time, it may adversely affect people's relationships at work. So, making sure to understand that the impact of each initiative on the Happiness Framework element is very important.

LAUNCH

Once you have defined your objectives, initiatives, and communication strategies, it is time to launch them. You can launch this in a phase-wise manner so that you have complete control if something does not go according to plan.

It will become a people initiative only if we involve everyone in the organization. The most important thing is to make sure that the Leadership, HR, and Happiness Champions team see the positive impact on their own personal Happiness. So, the model Me – We & Community become important to understand.

A Happiness initiative should not be an HR initiative; it has to be a people initiative.

SUSTAIN

Now that your happiness initiative is launched, what next? Before we work to sustain it, we need to measure the impact- and if it is working fine, we can work towards sustaining the initiative. One of the most important factors to sustain in any initiative is its continuity. On the define and launch stages, there are some initiatives which are launched to build momentum, but some initiatives and adoption communication strategies are designed to sustain that momentum.

To sustain the happiness initiative, it should become an umbrella. Under this umbrella, all small things, events, and initiatives can be launched. Technology, Merchandise, Individual & team rituals are some of the most important elements to sustain these initiatives. You can explore the Happiness App by Happiitude to bring technology for sustaining and boosting happiness initiatives in the workplace!

Real Life Examples & Ideas

HOW A BILLION DOLLAR COMPANY STARTED HAPPINESS INITIATIVE AT WORK!



"There were Happiness Zones, Expression Boxes, Gratitude Walls, and many such amazing initiatives"

An Oil and Gas company approached Happiitude for starting the happiness initiative in their workplace. After a Workplace Happiness Survey report, a Happiness Champions team of 30 people was trained. These were the volunteers from each department who took the responsibility of transforming the organizational culture and make it a happier place to work.

HOW A FINANCIAL PRODUCT COMPANY WITH 7000 EMPLOYEES STARTED HAPPINESS INITIATIVE?



"There were more than 90% of the employees who participated in the survey"

A new leader in the organization wanted to shift from measuring employee engagement to employee happiness. They approached Happiitude to help them with building a Workplace Happiness Index for all their employees at hundreds of locations. The whole index gave them proper insights to start great initiatives and launched them through the happiness captains.

HOW HAPPINESS AT WORK HELPED AN IT COMPANY TO SCALE UP

A top-down view of a desk. On the left is a white keyboard with black keys. In the center is a small white pot containing a green and white striped succulent. To the right is a white notebook with a pattern of yellow pineapples and the word 'notebook' written in black cursive. A person's hand is visible at the bottom left.

Higher purpose was discovered, Happiness as a Value was defined with behaviors, and a happiness team was formed to drive back the company towards growth

A technology startup grew at a very fast pace for the first three years of their operations but then it stopped growing for next the 2 years. People were not engaged, attention was high, and new projects were not coming in. Management wanted to redefine values, have a higher purpose, and drive people with happiness.

Real Life Examples & Ideas

WORKPLACE HAPPINESS IDEAS

WALLS OF HAPPINESS

A wall can be designated anywhere in the office with pictures of each employee (or names) with an empty colourful envelope below each. Employees can write gratitude messages, anonymously or otherwise, and put them into these envelopes respectively. It is recommended that the employees state who the gratitude is from so they can start making friends and connections.



WORKPLACE HAPPINESS TOOLKITS

TOOLS TO BUILD HAPPINESS

We have designed Happiness Merchandise, DIY Toolkits, Expression Zones, and many such tools to help companies build happiness at work. These tools include small day to day usage- Wow! Card, Gratitude Card sets, Value card box, workplace happiness games, and so on. To know more, please feel free to get in touch with us at happiness@happiitude.com



Who are we?

WHO ARE WE?



"Imagine a workplace where people find meaning, connection, & growth. That's what we call a happy workplace!"

And this is what we are creating since 2013.

Happiitude is Asia's #1 company working in the space of Happiness & Well-Being. We help companies in measuring, boosting, & sustaining happiness at work through our effective solutions. Our advantage lies in integrating the eastern wisdom with the frameworks and methodologies of the west.

WHAT WE DO?

We help individuals and companies to boost their happiness through the following offerings:

01

WORKSHOPS

Experiential Happiness workshops for HR, Sales & Leadership Teams

02

COACH-SULTING

We co-create and enable organizations to build happiness at work

03

HAPPINESS SURVEYS

Individual Happiness Profiling & Workplace Happiness Index Surveys

04

CERTIFIED HAPPINESS COACH

Our coach course has been taken by thousands of people from 45+ countries

05

HAPPIITUDE APP

Our uniquely designed mobile app helps companies boost, measure, and sustain workplace happiness

06

DIY TOOLKITS

You can use our happiness merchandise and DIY Kits to build your own initiatives at the workplace

ENGAGE WITH US!

Whether you are looking for a keynote session, curate an event, deliver a workshop or culture intervention on happiness, Happiitude is your one-stop solution. You can engage with us to create a Wow! experience for your employees.

To know more and explore further, feel free to set up a call with us. You can also write to us at happiness@happiitude.com





WANT TO KNOW MORE?

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