

Human Happiness Index

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Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being defined by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. Happy mental states may also reflect judgements by a person about their overall wellbeing.

The World Happiness Report is a measure of happiness published by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. In July 2011, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution inviting member countries to measure the happiness of their people and to use this to help guide their public policies. The United Nations declared 20th March as the International Day of Happiness to recognize the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals.

‘Happiness’ has been making headlines over the past few months, though India didn’t have much to cheer about, as it figured among 10 countries that saw the largest declines in happiness levels between 2005–07 and 2013–15. According to the World Happiness Report which ranked 156 countries, India was at the 118th spot-one below last year’s ranking. But this must have hurt the powers that even Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Pakistan were rated happiest than India. Every year, the World Happiness Index surveys numerous people from various countries around the world in search of, as the name implies, which country has the happiest population. This year’s winner is Denmark, followed closely by Switzerland, Iceland, and Norway. The US ranked 13th.

What is the ‘Gross National Happiness–GNH?’

The Gross National Happiness (GNH) is an aggregate measure of a country’s national production, in the vein of the gross national product or gross domestic product. Gross National Happiness (GNH) attempts to measure the sum total not only of economic output, but also of net environmental impacts, the spiritual and cultural growth of citizens, mental and physical health and the strength of the corporate and political systems.

In July 2011, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution inviting its member countries to measure the happiness of their people and to use this to help guide their public policies. On April 2, 2012, this was followed by the first UN High Level Meeting on ‘Happiness and Well-Being: Defining a New Economic Paradigm’ which was chaired by Prime Minister Jigme Thinley of Bhutan, the first and so far only country to have officially adopted GNH (Gross National Happiness) instead of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as their main development indicator. The first World Happiness Report was released on April 1, 2012.

An index to measure happiness at your workplace may seem like too corny an idea, but the experience of some of the world's most attractive employers shows that companies can no longer ignore the happiness quotient in their organizations.

Employee Happiness

Most of the organizations have realized the importance of employees' happiness. Most speakers in seminars explain that happiness could make you healthier, kinder, more productive, and even more likely to get promoted. Organizations spend money on happiness coaches, team-building exercises, game-plays, consultants, and Chief Happiness Officers.

When you look closely at the research, there is evidence to suggest that happy employees are less likely to leave, more likely to satisfy customers, are safer, and more likely to engage in citizenship behaviour. However, we also discovered alternate findings, which indicate that some of the taken-for-granted wisdoms about what happiness can achieve in the workplace are mere myths.

Real Statements on Happiness (Review of Literature)

- It won't necessarily get you through the work day.
- Happiness could damage your relationship with your boss, family, friends
- Happiness could make you selfish.

So why, contrary to all of this evidence, do we continue to hold on to the belief that happiness can improve a workplace?

When we assume that happy workers are better workers, we can sweep more uncomfortable questions under the carpet, especially since happiness is often seen as a choice. It becomes a convenient way of dealing with negative attitudes, party poopers, and other unwanted characters in corporate life. Let's state some inexpensive ways to keep employees happy.

Inexpensive ways to keep Employees happy

- Trust people—give them freedom within guidelines
- Help people see why what they do matters
- Give regular encouragement, praise, perks and thanks
- Help people find and play to their strengths
- Encourage a healthy balance between work and life
- Treat your employees with respect: Give respect and take respect, treat them well.

- Money Matters: Provide adequate vitamin M to all employees as per their performance.
- Build ownership among your employees: Let employees feel that they own the place, not just work there.
- Positive work environment has long-lasting effects on employee engagement, overall productivity and profit and ultimately happiness.

In reality, work—like all other aspects of life—is likely to make us feel a wide range of emotions. If your job feels depressing and meaningless, it might be because it is depressing and meaningless. Pretending otherwise can just make it worse. Happiness, of course, is a great thing to experience, but nothing that can be willed into existence. And maybe the less we seek to actively pursue happiness through our jobs: the more likely we will be to actually experience a sense of joy in them a joy which is spontaneous and pleasurable, and not constructed and oppressive. But most importantly, we will be better equipped to cope with work in a sober manner. To see it for what it is. And not as we—whether executives, employees, or dancing motivational seminar leaders—pretend that it is.

So stay happy stay healthy...