



**Have a good**

**WORK DAY**



**the  
happy  
manager**

*...a better way to manage*

# *The Happy Manager* **WORKLIVES** *Model*

**W**

- *Work to your strengths*

**O**

- *Offer your help*

**R**

- *Relationships are the key*

**K**

- *Keep it real*

**L**

- *Look after yourself*

**I**

- *Inquisitiveness is worth it*

**V**

- *Value what you do*

**E**

- *Enjoy what you do*

**S**

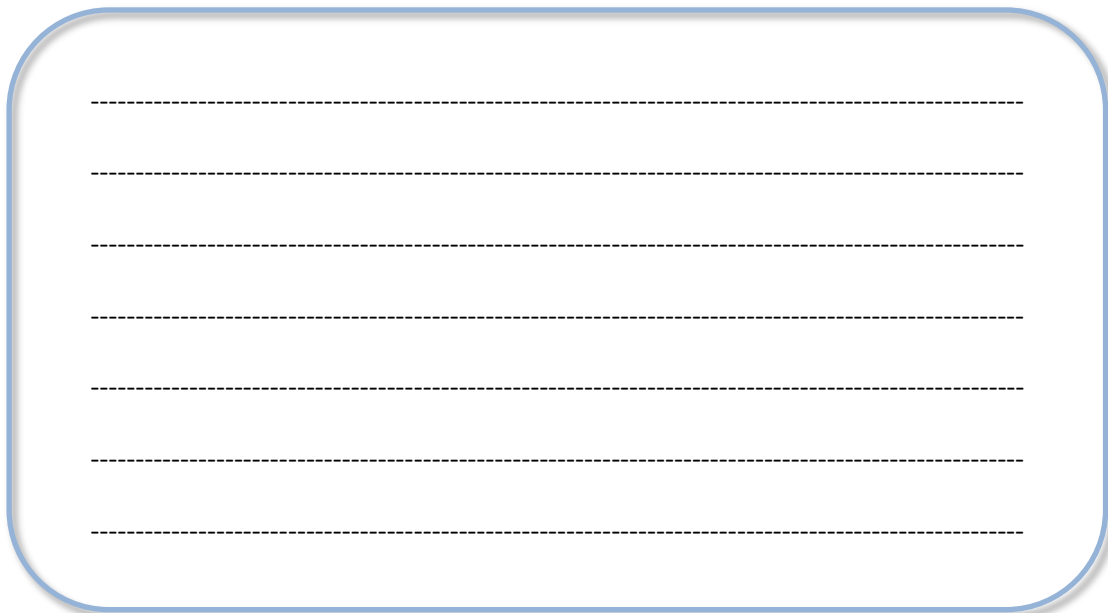
- *Smile - it's infectious*

## Have a Good (Work) Day

When people exchange pleasantries or say goodbye, often you hear them say: “have a good day”. Nobody says: “have a mediocre day” or worse! We all start off intending or hoping to have a good day at work, but we can easily be knocked off course.

Have a Good (Work) Day applies happiness principles to help you to do just what the title says. It contains our tips on how to have a good day at the office. It uses “WORKLIVES” our simple tool to help you remember our easy-to-use tips, *each working day*.

So, where do you start? First try this simple exercise. Think back to when you had a great day at work. A time when you felt really energised, excited and motivated in your job. What was it that motivated you? Write down some of the things that made that work day a **good** day.



A large rounded rectangular box with a blue border and a drop shadow, containing seven horizontal dashed lines for writing.

It's more than likely that you were doing something that really interested you, or that seemed especially worthwhile. It might be that you had a lot of freedom to get on with things, in a way you saw fit. You may have been energised by the people you worked with, or the way in which you were led or managed. It may have been the satisfaction of knowing you did something really well, or someone recognising your efforts and praising you for them. Or was it that you felt good about helping someone out, or doing something to make someone else's day a happy one.

What helps to make a good day at work can often be the small everyday things. The tips in this guide may be easy-to-use but that doesn't necessarily mean they are easy to do! They will take some thought, focus, and practice. We think the results will be well worth the effort though!

## Recognising happiness

Happiness and well-being are about feeling good and functioning well - flourishing. There are numerous factors that impact on our happiness, but there are two that have been shown to be particularly important:

- **the way we think**
- **the things we do**

When we're feeling happy, we are experiencing feelings of enjoyment, curiosity and a sense of engagement. When we are functioning well, we usually have positive relationships, control and choice over what we are doing and a sense of purpose in what we do.

When you get to work, don't expect others to make your day - and don't let others spoil it. Make a conscious effort to have a good day, each day.

**Decide then do - choose to have a good day, and then do something about it.**

## Why does happiness matter?

Why does happiness matter? Besides the obvious, that by definition you feel better, happiness matters because it's been proven to make such a big difference to our lives. Happy people tend to live longer, are healthier and more successful in their personal and professional lives. There is also increasing research evidence that happy people make a more significant contribution in the workplace. For example happy people are more likely to:

- Secure job interviews
- Show superior performance and productivity
- Be evaluated positively by their supervisors
- Handle managerial jobs better

Besides this, given the choice, where would you rather spend your work day? A place where people grind out a living, where pressure and stress dominate, where many are over-worked, others are bored, and people are generally unhappy and disgruntled? Or would you rather work in an enjoyable atmosphere, where people feel enriched by their work, and know their contributions are recognised, and valued?

## Happiness at work

We spend a considerable amount of our time at work, so it's well worth making the effort to be happy when we are there. But you may wonder if there's any point. Especially if you think your efforts are insignificant compared to what's happening around you.

There may be some big issues for organisations to address if they want to become serious about happiness at work. Some of these issues may be within the organisation's control, such as attitude, systems, policy and culture. Others may be more difficult for them to control, especially during difficult or uncertain economic times.

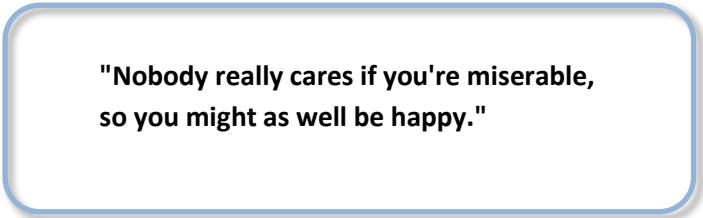
Regardless of these factors, the important thing is that **you** work at having a good day at work. True, it may be hard to feel happy if you think you're being treated unfairly or in an uncaring manner. However, there's still much you can do for your own benefit, regardless of what else is happening around you.

It is not the intent of this guide to address an organisation's approach to happiness at work (that's for another guide). But we do want to make the point that it's managers who are best placed to build the conditions for a happy productive workplace. Managers often have a far bigger impact on us than the organisation. Survey after survey has shown that people are more likely to leave their jobs because of their line manager, than because of dissatisfaction with the organisation.

The ideas in this guide are based on current thinking and research into what will help us to be happier. We recommend you use it in two ways:

- ✓ **Take these simple steps to help ensure you have a good day at work.**
- ✓ **Discuss it with your colleagues and your manager - spread the word that happiness at work matters, and it's up to all of you to foster it together.**

Why? Because as Cynthia Nelms said:



**"Nobody really cares if you're miserable,  
so you might as well be happy."**

The aim of this guide is to help you find ways to have a good day at work. Or better still, to have a good day *every* day! You can do this by remembering your WORKLIVES...

## *W*ork to your strengths

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You will be much happier at work if you focus on your strengths. A strength is something you're good at and that you do consistently well. There must be clear evidence to indicate that this is the case, either from results or from feedback. Try to build your work, or as much of it as you can, around your strengths. As Peter Drucker said: "It takes far less energy to move from first-rate performance to excellence than it does to move from incompetence to mediocrity."

## *O*ffer your help

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The old adage: "it's better to give than to receive" applies in the workplace as much as elsewhere. There is growing evidence to show that helping others helps makes them happy, which in turn makes us feel better. So make time for others at work wherever you can. Offering your help, support, positive words, or signs of appreciation will make both you and your colleagues feel better.

## *R*elationships matter

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Is there on thing that is most likely to help people find happiness? The answer is surprisingly clear – feeling connected with other people. The bonds we form with others can make a crucial difference to our happiness. Working hard in the workplace isn't just about the pursuit of targets. Make sure you work at developing strong, rewarding relationships with colleagues and customers. Try to ensure you routinely do things at work with other people, especially those you work well with. One great way to build relationships is to become an active team member.

## *K*eep it real

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Sometimes a healthy dose of pragmatism is needed in the workplace. Some things can't easily be changed and, whilst they may cause you angst or frustration, often don't seem to go away. In such situations use a sense of pragmatism to help you keep things in perspective. Remember, at the end of the day, a job is just that – a job. Do your best at work but if you can't change things, change the way you feel about them. Adopt a healthy indifference as a way to cope with anything you can't easily change. Remember Oliver Hart's famous quote:

"Give us the fortitude to endure the things which cannot be changed, and the courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to know one from the other"

## *L*ook after yourself

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Keeping yourself in good physical shape is one of the keys to happiness. There is a clear link between physical and mental health. Build exercise in to your work routine. Apart from keeping you in shape, exercise will release endorphins which will make you feel better. A healthy, balanced diet will provide you with the energy and incentive to be more active - maybe use part of your lunch break to exercise!

## *I*nquisitiveness

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Just as a healthy body will help us to be happier, so will a healthy mind. One way to do this is to think of yourself as a life-long learner. Maintain an inquisitive mind about your job, the people you work with, your customers, your employer and their situation. Make an effort to continue learning at work, not just by attending courses but as part of your working routine. Knowledge can also be gained from shared experience. Don't overlook the resources which surround us each day. Learn and draw inspiration from the pool of experience that surrounds you at work.

## *V*alue what you do

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Happiness is not just about pleasure, it's about meaning and significance. One way to add to your happiness is to think about the value of what you do. There will be obvious value in terms of what your job does for you – money, support for your family and life, friendships, self-esteem, etc. There is also value in terms of how your work has significance to others. Even the most routine job will be providing value for colleagues or customers. We're happier when we value what we do, often because we can see that something meaningful is being achieved.

## *E*njoy what you do

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One interpretation of happiness is a combination of pleasure, meaning and significance. So next time you go to work: **enjoy, engage and excel**. Try to **enjoy** your work. Amidst all the things you **have to do**, make sure you find time for things you **want to do**. **Engage** with your work by being productive, not just busy. **Excel** – make a significant impact at work by doing something really well. Even better, make it something that's important to your role and the team's goals.

## *S*mile – it's infectious

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The simplest action you can take to be happier at work is to smile more often. The very act of smiling makes us look and feel better. It can make the people you're with feel better too. Make a conscious decision to smile more often. Look for things to help you and your colleagues smile, as often as possible.

## **W**ork to your strengths

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ Make a list of your proven strengths, both professional and personal.
- ✓ Think about how you can make more use of them at work and use at least one strength today.

## **O**ffer your help

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ List 5 specific ways you can offer your help to others at work. Do them today.
- ✓ Reflect on how you've done, and how it made you feel while doing it.

## **R**elationships matter

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ List the people you relate to each working day. Do you have a good balance of social interaction and professional contact? Make a point of doing something supportive today.
- ✓ Make the effort to talk to someone from beyond your normal working or social circle. Think about volunteering for a team or other group at work.

## **K**eept it real

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ List the 3 main things at work that are causing you stress or anxiety.
- ✓ Can you change them? If so, how, and is it worth the effort?
- ✓ If you answer "no" to any of the last points, think about how *you* need to change. The way you think about the things on the list, or the way you act in response to them.

## *Look after yourself*

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ If you don't exercise regularly, try building some extra effort into your work routine. For example, use the stairs rather than the lift.
- ✓ Make the effort to analyse what you eat. Resolve to eat responsibly for one full week then reflect on how you feel.

## *Inquisitiveness is worth it*

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ Investigate opportunities to develop yourself, both professionally and personally.
- ✓ Practice asking questions at work and engaging in conversation with colleagues, with a view to learning.

## *Value what you do*

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ Think about and appreciate what your job allows you to do with your life.
- ✓ List the things that your organisation does for its customers and community
- ✓ Reflect on how your particular job contributes to this.

## *Enjoy what you do*

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ Think about what you enjoy at work and how you can add it to your routine as often as possible.
- ✓ Reflect on the last time you did something really well. How did it make you feel? Do it again.
- ✓ Think about team goals and how your strengths and interests can best be applied to them.
- ✓ Even if you're having a bad day, make sure you do at least one thing you enjoy.

## *Smile – it's infectious*

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### **Tasks:**

- ✓ Try smiling and reflect on how it uplifts your mood.
- ✓ Make a conscious effort to be positive with your colleagues – try to make smiling habitual.

**The Happy Manager – WORKLIVES Model**

<b>W -</b>	<b>Work to your strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make a list of your proven strengths, both professional and personal.</li> <li>✓ Think about how you can make more use of them at work and use at least one strength today.</li> </ul>
<b>O -</b>	<b>Offer your help</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>List 5 specific ways you can offer your help to others at work. Do them today.</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Reflect on how you've done, and how it made you feel while doing it.</b></li> </ul>
<b>R -</b>	<b>Relationships are the key</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ List the people you relate to each working day. Do you have a good balance of social interaction and professional contact? Make a point of doing something supportive today.</li> <li>✓ Make the effort to talk to someone from beyond your normal working or social circle. Think about volunteering for a team or other group at work.</li> </ul>
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<b>L -</b>	<b>Look after yourself</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If you don't exercise regularly, try building some extra effort into your work routine. For example, use the stairs rather than the lift.</li> <li>✓ Make the effort to analyse what you eat. Resolve to eat responsibly for one full week then reflect on how you feel.</li> </ul>
<b>I -</b>	<b>Inquisitiveness is worth it</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Investigate opportunities to develop yourself, both professionally and personally.</li> <li>✓ Practice asking questions at work and engaging in conversation with colleagues, with a view to learning.</li> </ul>
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<b>E -</b>	<b>Enjoy what you do</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Think about what you enjoy at work and how you can add it to your routine as often as possible.</li> <li>✓ Reflect on the last time you did something really well. How did it make you feel? Do it again.</li> <li>✓ Think about team goals and how your strengths and interests can best be applied to them.</li> <li>✓ Even if you're having a bad day, make sure you do at least one thing you enjoy.</li> </ul>
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## HAVE A GOOD (WORK) DAY!

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**Notes**