

Opinion: Develop your ‘mental fitness’ in work to find a sense of well-being

All employees need to develop skills to manage some of the emotional barriers that prevent them from thriving at the workplace.



HOW WE FEEL in work can impact directly on our productivity and job satisfaction, and influences our general wellbeing. A recent [report](#) published by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work showed that stress is one of the highest reported work-related health issues, and that 50–60% of all lost working days can be attributed to work-related stress.

With that in mind, it is clear to me that there is a real need for people to develop their ‘mental fitness’ in order to deal with the daily pressures facing them daily in work. Employees need to develop skills to manage some of the emotional barriers that prevent them from thriving at the workplace. Likewise, by investing in the mental well-being of their employees, businesses can also benefit, by increasing productivity through better stress management, and enhancing employee performance.

Mindfulness is one of the key focuses of my work, and I have found that by developing some easy habits that only take a few minutes out of your day, you can greatly increase your happiness levels. The following simple tips can help to improve emotional wellbeing:

1. Gratitude: write down three new things that make you happy every day. Keep this on a piece of paper, or use your notes app on your phone.
2. Keep a journal: write about a positive experience you have had recently for two minutes every day. This is a strategy to help transform you from a task-based thinker to a meaning-based thinker, who scans the world for meaning instead of endless tasks and to do lists.

3. Exercise: engage in 15 minutes of cardio activity daily.
4. Meditate: concentrate on your breathing for two minutes a day. This will help to reverse the negative effects of multitasking, and battle the cultural ADHD our society has developed.
5. Engage in random, conscious, acts of kindness: for example, write a positive email thanking a friend or colleague, or compliment someone you admire on social media. This will help to reinforce your feelings of social support.

Following these steps regularly can help to build a resilience to the stress caused by work and everyday living, and will help improve your focus, productivity and overall wellbeing.

Some other topics I cover in my work include dealing with interpersonal communication; increasing staff morale; major lifestyle changes, and making the workplace a more positive and beneficial environment for both employers and employees.

Work-related stress can't always be avoided, but by equipping employees with the tools they need to better manage stress, and to promote resilience and wellbeing, they can become more productive inside and outside of work.

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