

Promoting a Positive Work Environment

A work culture that fosters collaboration, supports inclusion, and encourages camaraderie can lead to happier, healthier, and more motivated employees. To create a more enjoyable work experience for your team, start with the information and tips below, then reach out to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for more recommendations.

Qualities of a positive work environment

What makes for an ideal work atmosphere is different for everyone, but the aspects that tend to be at the center for most employees are:

- Cooperative, friendly relationships with coworkers
- A relaxed setting that encourages fun and laughter
- Feeling inspired
- Supportive, empowering leadership
- Meaningful work
- Flexibility and work/life balance
- Transparency and open, honest communication
- A trusting culture that forgives and doesn't assign blame
- Recognition and praise
- Understanding, compassionate, and respectful colleagues and leadership

Benefits of workplace positivity

For employees

- Increased productivity and efficiency
- Greater desire to develop skills
- Elevated sense of trust, independence, and commitment
- A more upbeat attitude and brighter disposition
- Better quality mental health and overall well-being
- Enhanced creativity and innovation
- Collaborative, cohesive teamwork

For the agency

The benefits are all of the above (and then some)! Satisfied employees are more likely to look forward to work each day and to want to do a good job when they get there. When people feel good about the work they produce or that what they do matters, they feel more engaged, connected to the mission, and have a greater sense of fulfillment. All of this leads to higher degrees of loyalty, less turnover, and fewer issues with presenteeism and equates to success for the agency. Plus, happiness and positivity are contagious and can have far-reaching effects across the entire organization.

Ways to cultivate a culture of positivity

Invite and encourage employees to talk to you: Open dialogue with your employees fosters trust, builds rapport, and shows you care about them as individuals. Get to know them with a balanced mix of personal and work-related interactions. Ask about their family, weekend plans, and life goals. More importantly, let them know that they can come to you with anything — even their problems. Being approachable in this way strengthens employees' psychological safety and allows you to offer them even more support during challenges.

Provide employees with autonomy and opportunities: Giving your employees the freedom to work without interference demonstrates your confidence in their abilities and the work they produce. As a result, they tend to feel less stressed and more self-assured, empowered, and free to be creative and come up with solutions on their own. In addition, show employees that you're interested in their long-term abilities and success by offering up opportunities for them to use their talents, grow their leadership skills, or do something they're passionate about.

Support social interactivity: The stronger the bonds your employees form with one another, the more successful they'll be at collaborating, working as a team, and offering support to one another. Just as your relationships with employees benefit from getting to know them as more than someone who works for you, so too is the case when employees get to know each other as more than people they work with. Allow them some leeway to chat, suggest they team up on projects, and generally model behavior that lets them know it's okay to connect on a social level.

These are just a few examples of how to foster and advocate for a more positive work environment for your employees. To find out what else you can do, contact the EAP. Our experts can provide more information and guidance specifically geared to your needs as a manager, as well as for your specific goals and challenges.

The EAP is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to eligible federal employees at no cost.

24 HOURS A DAY

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