



*the power of*  
**POSITIVITY**  
*at work*

# OPTIMISM IS THE ONE QUALITY MORE ASSOCIATED WITH SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS THAN ANY OTHER.

Imagine a workplace where you and your team are able to be your best selves each and every day. It's possible, and it doesn't require a massive human resources initiative or expensive company retreat to achieve. In fact, you can create this culture of optimism yourself, simply by refining your day-to-day thoughts, beliefs and actions to celebrate the bright side of your work, your peers, and your life.

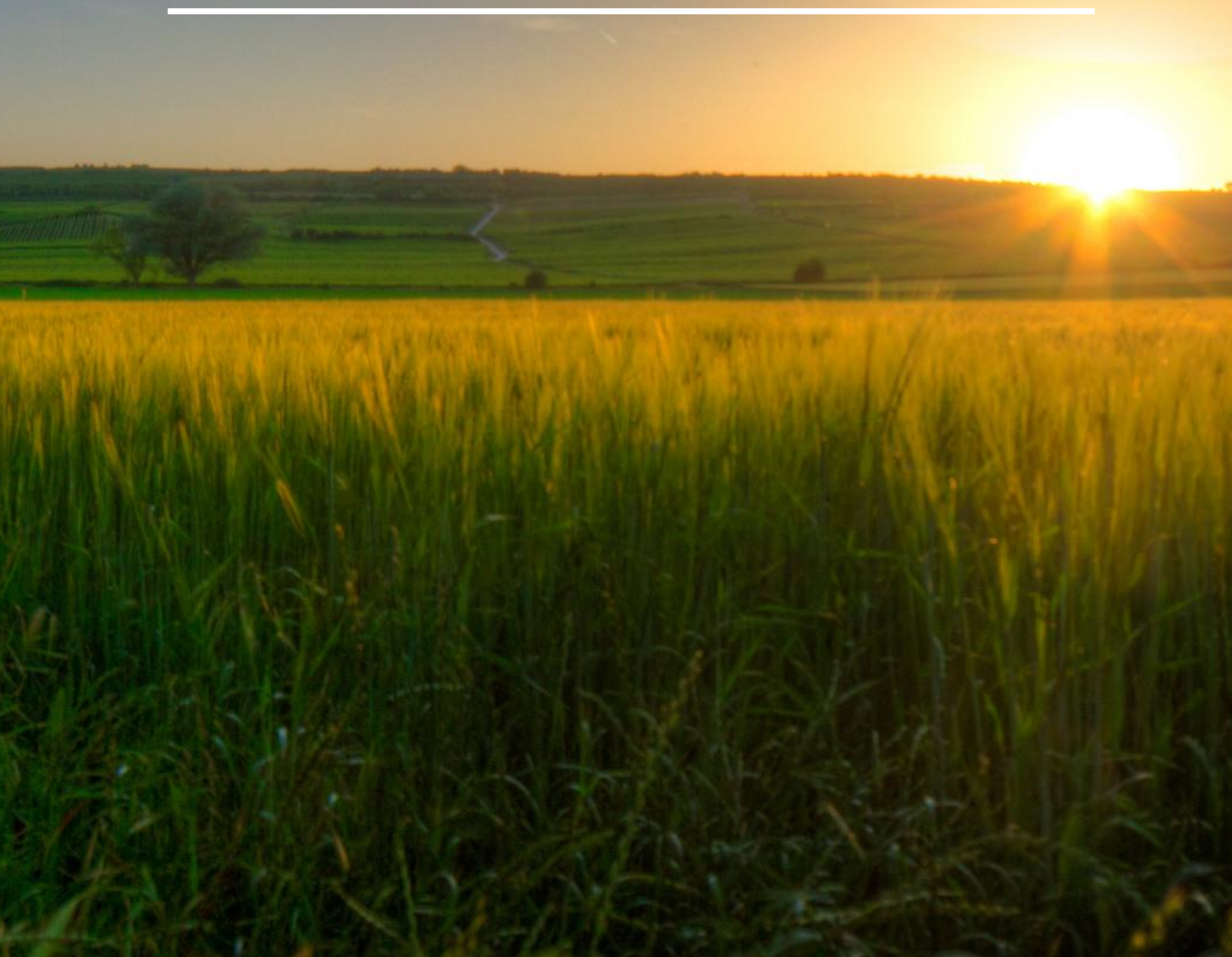
Positivity is good both for the bottom line of your business and your employees. It is beneficial for organizations because it leads to higher levels of engagement, productivity and performance. Positive employees are better problem-solvers, are more creative and have enhanced interpersonal skills. Optimism is also good for employees because it enhances their overall health and wellness and can even impact their career growth, leading to better job satisfaction and more loyalty and commitment to their employer.

If you're ready to positively impact your company culture and create an environment for employees to thrive, read on for the ways optimism can impact the health, productivity, stress management, engagement and career growth of your employees.

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*Your mind is a powerful thing. When you fill it with positive thoughts, your life will start to change.*

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# ● HEALTH

Besides catching the flu at work, it's also possible to catch someone's bad mood and negative attitude. Creating a positive company culture can actually help your employees to be mentally, emotionally, socially and physically healthier.

## **Extensive studies have been done on the effect of optimism on your health.**

A couple of our favorites:

A 2006 study explored the link between emotions and viral infections of the respiratory tract. Scientists evaluated the personality style of 193 healthy volunteers, then gave each a common respiratory virus. Subjects who displayed a positive personality style were less likely to develop viral symptoms than their less positive peers.

A U.S. study looked at 6,959 students who took a comprehensive personality test when they entered the University of North Carolina in the mid-1960s. During the next 40 years, 476 of the people died from a variety of causes, with cancer being the most common. All in all, pessimism took a substantial toll; the most pessimistic individuals had a 42% higher rate of death than the most optimistic.

## **Researchers continue to investigate the effects of positive thinking and optimism on health.**

The benefits of positive thinking may include:

- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease

*Every positive thought propels  
you in the right direction.*

# ● PRODUCTIVITY

Positive people are able to get more work done. Not only are they able to better power through their own tasks, but being outwardly optimistic contributes to the building of strong teams and productive working relationships.

## **A complaining coworker is beyond annoying -- it's bad for your brain and expensive for the businesses.**

A 2011 study by Thomas Straube at the University of Muenster and another by Go Okada of Hiroshima University determined that exposure to negative words damages the formation of memory associations that are crucial for productive work.

Another research study conducted by Stanford University's Robert Sapolsky shows how stress from negative influences can shrink the hippocampus, the exact part of the brain that is needed to solve problems and drive initiatives. This means a Negative Nancy isn't only unproductive, it's actually counter-productive, weakening cognitive function and diminishing can-do attitudes.

## **Your perspective and attitude play huge roles in determining your ability to get work done.**

Here are a few of the ways a positive attitude can make you more productive:

- Coworkers will be more willing to help you (because it's more pleasant to interact with an optimist!)
- Avoids wasted time spent complaining and promotes positive action
- Keeps your energy level high
- Builds teamwork and brings people together
- Determines your confidence and success
- Solves problems instead of creating them

***Work your hardest, think your smartest, dream your biggest.***

# ● STRESS MANAGEMENT

One theory for why optimists live longer, healthier lives is that having a positive mindset enables you to better cope with and recover from stressful situations, which reduces the harmful health effects of stress on your body.

## **Optimists are better able to handle stress.**

A 2008 study of 2,873 healthy men and women found that a positive outlook on life was linked to lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol, even after taking age, employment, income, ethnicity, obesity, smoking, and depression into account. In women, but not men, a sunny disposition was also associated with lower levels of two markers of inflammation (C-reactive protein and interleukin-6), which predict the risk of heart attack and stroke. Other possible benefits include reduced levels of adrenaline, improved immune function, and less active clotting systems.

Another research study released on July 23, 2013 confirmed this theory, demonstrating that optimists have a better biological response to stress than pessimists. Researchers at Concordia University's Department of Psychology found that the stress hormone cortisol tends to be more stable in people with a positive outlook.

## **Stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behavior.**

Stress that's left unchecked can lead to a wide range of negative physical and emotional symptoms. Focus on positive thinking as a proactive way to avoid these negative effects:

- On your body: Headache, muscle tension, muscle pain, upset stomach, insomnia, chest pain, fatigue
- On your mood: Anxiety, irritability, lack of motivation/focus, anger, sadness or depression, restlessness
- On your behavior: Overeating or undereating, drug or alcohol abuse, social withdrawal, angry outbursts

*Our greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.*

# ● ENGAGEMENT

If you're optimistic about your work, you will be a better employee and experience more happiness and health overall. Engaged employees are committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to the company's success, and are able at the same time to enhance their personal sense of well-being.

## **Happy, engaged employees have more company loyalty.**

A 2004 Towers Perrin European Talent Survey revealed that 66% of highly engaged employees reported that they had no plans to leave their company, while only 3% of them were actively looking, compared to 12% and 31%, respectively, for disengaged employees.

The Companies on *Fortune's* list of 100 Best Companies to Work For tend to have less employee turnover than average. In information technology, an industry notorious for job-hopping, voluntary turnover is 5.9% at the companies on the list, vs. 14.4% industrywide. In professional services, turnover in the best places to work is 11.3%, vs. 24.7% industrywide.

## **Stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behavior.**

Happy, highly engaged employees result in better:

- Worker health
- Job satisfaction
- Customer satisfaction
- Productivity
- Quality
- Profitability
- Safety

*The only way to do great work is to love  
what you do.*

*- Steve Jobs*

# ● CAREER GROWTH

You can call it a self-fulfilling prophecy, but it is generally accepted (and scientifically supported) that optimists are more successful at work. Not only is this better for your bottom line, but it's better for the employees themselves.

## **Optimists are more likely to find jobs, get promoted and make more money than their pessimist counterparts.**

A 2010 National Bureau of Economic Research working paper concluded that optimistically inclined MBA students found comparable jobs to their peers—but found them more easily, with less-intensive job searches.

In a study with life insurance agents, Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman found that the most optimistic salespeople sold 88 percent more than the most pessimistic ones. The study also indicated that agents in the least optimistic quarter were three times likelier to quit than agents in the most optimistic quarter. Other studies have shown that this data is consistent with findings in other business categories.

## **Many of the most successful entrepreneurs in history are famous for their unflinching optimism.**

Here are a few of our heroes:

- Steve Jobs
- Oprah Winfrey
- Warren Buffett
- Shawn Achor, CEO of Good Think Inc.
- Alan Mullaly, former CEO of Ford
- Tony Hsieh, Zappos.com
- Winston Churchill
- Colin Powell

*Optimists see opportunity in every  
difficulty.*

*- Winston Churchill*



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*A positive thinker sees the  
invisible, feels the intangible  
and achieves the impossible.*

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# THINKING POSITIVELY REQUIRES NO MONEY, LITTLE TIME AND GIVES YOU A HUGE RETURN ON INVESTMENT.

You can learn how to think positively – the process is simple and can easily be achieved with a little time and practice. Here are some ways to think and behave in a more positive and optimistic way:

- **Identify areas to change.** Take a look at areas of your life that you typically think negatively about, whether its work, your daily drive to the office or a relationship. Start small by focusing on one area to approach in a more optimistic way.
- **Follow a healthy lifestyle.** Exercise at least three times a week to positively boost your mood and decrease stress. Follow a healthy diet to fuel your mind and body. Learn techniques to manage stress in and outside of work.
- **Check yourself.** Occasionally during the day, stop and assess what you're thinking. If you find that your thoughts are primarily negative, seek out a way to put an optimistic spin on them.
- **Surround yourself with positive people.** Make sure the individuals in your life are supportive people you can depend on to give helpful advice and feedback. Negative people may increase your stress level and make you doubt your own ability to manage difficult situations in healthy ways.
- **Practice positive self-talk.** Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't want to say to anyone else. Be kind, optimistic and encouraging. If a negative thought crosses your mind, evaluate it rationally and respond with positive affirmations.
- **Be open to humor.** Give yourself permission to smile or laugh, particularly during hard times. Seek the humor in everyday life. When you can laugh at most situations, you will feel less stressed.

# *We do wellness differently.*

According to Healthiest Employers, 63% of employers say employee engagement is their most common corporate wellness challenge. By holding screenings with a smile and providing a safe, optimistic place for participants to talk openly about their health, we can host unique experiences that employees will actually want to attend.

The ultimate goal of a health screening is to give employees a baseline to help motivate them toward healthier behaviors.

**We believe that a positive outlook on health changes the conversation—that's why we always start our screenings by examining what an employee is doing "right" in their life.**

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*Click here for a free price quote and discover what a positive screening experience can mean for your business.*

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