

Laughter and Fun are the Best Medicine for Companies

The immune system is the body's defence mechanism to handle viruses. Laughter and fun have been held for a long time to be the best medicine. Science has now found that every cell in the body has a receptor for the substances produced when we are laughing and having fun. Thus our first line of defence against viruses is laughter and fun. The correct use of laughter and fun in the workplace facilitates learning, and changes people's behaviour as it helps them feel less threatened by the prospect of change. Laughter and fun have been found to be the best tools for giving the corporate identity a human face. Laughter and fun have been recognised for centuries to be the best medicine. When people are having fun and laughter, work is no longer a chore or something to get over quickly. They will gladly take on extra work as it gives them joy. People like doing business with people who are fun. Look at Disney World, the fun place for kids and many adults who want to be kids. It attracted millions of visitors. Many of them have patronised the place several times. Another example is MacDonald's. Its philosophy is that going to MacDonald's is fun. The MacDonald's clown is the comic icon representing fun and laughter, the kind of place where you go to enjoy yourself. Also a fun working environment is more productive than a routine one. People who enjoy their work will come up with more and better ideas. Fun is contagious. In excellent companies, employees seem to enjoy themselves. If fun is the meta-value in an organization, the distinction between work and play disappears. Excellent companies acutely aware of the link between fun and creativity encourage the playful potential of their people. The leaders recognize that if people have fun, they not only work harder, but have more creativity, which is the ingredient for global competitiveness. In bad times, when the company can afford little, the key is how to take out the frills and yet keep the thrills. Corporate turnaround experts know how to use humour and laughter to facilitate change management. In organizations that fail to recognize fun as a value, work is merely a chore. The staff behave just mechanically, going to work everyday listlessly, whiling away the time and waiting to be released at the end of the day so that they can have fun outside organization. Richard Branson is a prime example of turning work into an exciting adventure. Branson said of Virgin, "We have done things differently, and that has made life more fun and enjoyable than if we have taken a slightly more conservative approach. I have been determined to have a good time." Therefore, to have a really happy workforce, you got to do more than pass out bonuses and angpows. You need to make work fun. Science opens to us the book of nature, while laughter and fun open the doors to human creativity.

About the Author

Welcome to the School of Medicine at the University of New Mexico Health.

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