

Why taking time to play with your employees is important

It shouldn't come as a shock that your employees are, in fact, human beings. Therefore, you know it's rarely wise to treat them as machines whose only function is productivity. Yet, it can be challenging to establish which are the most impactful ways to ensure your company operations are geared toward supporting workers.

One of the often under-explored methods is arranging for fun experiences on company time. It's understandable that recreation might come lower on the list of priorities than recognition programs and career progression. Nevertheless, it can still be an invaluable part of a wider positive company culture.

We're going to take a moment to explore why taking time to play with your employees is important.

It improves employee wellness

Employee wellness should be a priority for all businesses. After all, it can improve productivity and reduce absenteeism. Not to mention that it serves the ethical duty you have to provide a safe and healthy environment. Taking

the time to play with your workers can help here.

Firstly, playtime can contribute to lowering the stress levels at work, which positively impacts employee mental and physical wellness. Scheduling group relaxation time at work, such as watching a movie or listening to music, can reduce stress and facilitate team bonding. It's also important to also create a comfortable space for stress-busting to take place. So, ensure the furniture and office colour choices are geared toward maintaining positive experiences.

Taking time to play can also boost your workers' fitness levels. Particularly if you're operating an office environment in which employees are largely sedentary, arrange activities that get your workers up and moving. This could be occasional sports outside, dance-based video games, or even small group walking discussions where workers can move around while casually chatting.

It's important to remember, though, to plan activities with equal accessibility for all team members in mind. Wherever possible, reach out in advance to your workers for suggestions, accessibility needs, and concerns.

It develops strong bonds

Providing team bonding opportunities is important to the success of your company. It can help employees improve their communication skills with one another, particularly if they're interacting in a relaxed setting. Stronger bonds can also foster effective collaborations. Not to mention that more than 80% of both employers and employees agree that building a sense of community at work is important.

This can include encouraging employees to collaborate on fun projects. Consider creative activities or challenges, such as arranging a time for workers to make short films or build crafts with found recycled materials. This helps team members to learn more about one another's personal and working styles in a fun context and use their diverse skill sets toward a shared goal.

It's important to take the time to host team-building activities outside of the workplace that everyone can benefit from, too. This enables employees to form friendships away from the office environment and gain the health benefits of being in nature. Arrange for workers to head to local outdoor festivals together or hold a field day at a nearby park with a range of fun sports. If you run a remote or hybrid office, ensure that the location is easy for all members to get to, or arrange transport.

It builds trust in the company

It's no secret that there's a worker shortage in the U.K. at the moment, with significant vacancies available in most sectors. This means that some companies are struggling to retain talented employees who may have their pick of alternative businesses to head to. One of the key contributors to employee retention is trust. If employees feel they are able to trust their leaders they may be less likely to turn over.

This trust needs to be present throughout the company culture. However, taking the time to play with your employees can certainly strengthen your efforts. After all, committing to ensuring workers have regular paid time for rest, recreation, and bonding shows you genuinely care about their well-being. Investing in workers' fun is also a solid form of appreciation.

You can bolster this by ensuring that all leaders in your company open themselves up during fun activities. Don't be afraid to make a fool of yourself or be vulnerable. Show your geeky side in creative projects and make mistakes in sports you have no skill in. You may find your workers respond to your authenticity and relate to your humanity in meaningful ways.

Conclusion

Taking the time to play with your employees can help make your company a stronger and more supportive space. With an organised approach and the right activities, you can boost worker wellness and collaboration. An open and authentic attitude from leaders during these sessions can also bolster trust.

Don't neglect, though, ongoing opportunities to utilise fun to help meet specific company goals. Management and human resources should be vigilant about areas of dropped employee productivity or satisfaction. You can then arrange relevant activities to address issues, propel your success, and simply make your business a pleasant space to be for everyone involved.