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There is a business case for organizations to prioritize and invest in employee well-being. Utilizing the scientific study of positive psychology, this literature review highlights the employee and employer benefits of increasing employee well-being and describes a handful of different practices organizations can implement in their workplaces to do so: increasing access to nature in the workplace by incorporating natural light or encouraging walks outside; increasing employee autonomy by allowing more flexible work schedules; prioritizing positive work relationships by implementing specific interventions; and providing opportunities for employees to experience flow at work through activities such as meditation. These interventions may lead to happier and healthier employees as well increased organizational productivity and profitability.

Keywords

organizational well-being, employee well-being, subjective well-being, nature, autonomy, relationships, flow

Disciplines

Business | Industrial and Organizational Psychology | Psychology

Improving Employee Well-Being Through Workplace Contexts and Behaviors

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MAPP 800: Capstone Project

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July 20, 2021

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There is a business case for organizations to prioritize and invest in employee well-being. Utilizing the scientific study of positive psychology, this literature review highlights the employee and employer benefits of increasing employee well-being and describes a handful of different practices organizations can implement in their workplaces to do so: increasing access to nature in the workplace by incorporating natural light or encouraging walks outside; increasing employee autonomy by allowing more flexible work schedules; prioritizing positive work relationships by implementing specific interventions; and providing opportunities for employees to experience flow at work through activities such as meditation. These interventions may lead to happier and healthier employees as well increased organizational productivity and profitability.

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Improving Employee Well-Being Through Workplace Contexts and Behaviors

Preface

I have been around long enough to know that most people want to be happy, yet many people do not know how to become happier. Ever since working for a small consulting firm that works with organizations of all shapes and sizes, I realized I have the opportunity to make a difference in the workforce through the work I do every day. Since so many individuals spend the majority of their waking time at work, it is the perfect place to integrate positive psychology and help people become happier. With this degree, and using this literature review as a starting point, I hope to gain the credibility and the confidence to help organizations make informed decisions about how they can increase employee well-being. I recognize that many organizations have other priorities like making a profit, satisfying shareholders, or having productive employees, but the good news is this: When your employees are happier, your business is likely to do better, too. The late US Senator Paul Wellstone said it best during a speech to the Sheet Metal Workers Union: “We all do better when we all do better” (P. Wellstone, personal communication, 1999). Although there are many ways beyond what is suggested in this paper to increase employee well-being, I will give you a starting point on how you can positively impact your employee happiness. Enjoy!

Introduction: Why Employee Well-Being Matters

There are several components in individuals’ lives that may contribute to their overall well-being. According to Clifton and Harter (2021), Gallup’s CEO and Chief Workplace Scientist, these domains are career, social, financial, physical, and community. They suggest that for many, career well-being is the most essential and fundamental component of well-being because many people want a good job, and many people spend the majority of their waking time

at work. There is data to suggest that by incorporating well-being into the workplace, organizations will benefit from better performance from the employee and the organization at large.

Employees want to be happy. According to Deloitte's Insights Team and *Global Human Capital Trends* survey, in 2020, 80% of individuals identified well-being as an important or very important factor for organizational success. However, only 12% of organizations said they were ready to address this issue. Prioritizing well-being is a trend among organizations. In the United States, large organizations spent an average of \$3.6 million on well-being programs in 2019, equating to about \$762 per employee. In the United States, this trend is likely to continue to grow to \$90.7 billion by 2026 (Volini et al., 2020). As the focus on well-being continues to increase across the country, organizations need to prioritize employee well-being to stay relevant and desirable to their employees.

Clifton and Harter (2021) believe that a positive workplace, which may involve a good job that leads to employee engagement, is the foundation of a life of flourishing. While there are important scientific differences between these terms and many researchers and practitioners may define them differently, for the purposes of this paper, flourishing, well-being, subjective well-being, happiness, wellness, and thriving are used interchangeably unless defined explicitly. Further, there are several ways to define employee engagement. Harvard Business Review author and clinical psychologist Peart (2019) defines employee engagement as an employee's mental and emotional connection toward their place of work. Researchers at Gallup (2020) define employee engagement as "involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace," (p. 1) and includes having basic needs met, having an opportunity to contribute, a sense of belonging, and opportunities to grow and develop. Similarly, Seligman (2011) describes

engagement as being fully immersed in an activity. Engaged employees may experience reduced stress and more positive affective states (Harter & Stone, 2012). When employees are engaged, they report more hope, happiness, energy, interest, and respect (Clifton & Harter, 2021).

Ultimately, engagement can lead to flourishing. According to Gallup analytics and their *Best Possible Life Scale* and a survey from over a million respondents across 160 countries, only 78% of the global population is engaged at work, and an even smaller 64% in the United States is, engaged at work (Clifton & Harter, 2021), there is a real opportunity to increase employee engagement and career well-being in the workplace.

The majority of the workforce is not actively engaged at work, which may result in consequences. Using the aforementioned Gallup's *Best Possible Life Scale* to measure well-being in survey respondents, compared to their engaged and thriving counterparts, individuals who are not thriving are 61% more likely to experience burnout, 48% more likely to experience daily stress, 66% more likely to experience daily worry, and experience 50% more daily sadness and anger (Clifton & Harter, 2021). Although this was a correlational study, Gallup was able to predict future happiness and health, as well as negative outcomes such as stress, depression, or burnout, based on respondents' current assessment of their lives. The Industrial Accident Prevention Association suggests that work-related stress can lead to more turnover and litigation, less employee satisfaction and employee commitment, and an increase in absenteeism, health insurance claims, presenteeism, short- and long-term disability, depression, and workplace accidents (Burton, 2008). Further, "unwellness" makes up 10-15% of the global economic output, equating to trillions of dollars annually when factoring in medical costs, productivity losses, work-related stress, injury and illness, and disengagement (Yeung & Johnston, 2018). Unhealthy workplaces are associated with health risks such as substance abuse, heart problems,

and poor mental health. Together, these negative consequences are a direct risk to individual productivity (Burton, 2008) and to organizations' bottom lines (Diener et al., 2017).

Organizations should place strategic bets on increasing engagement and well-being in the workplace.

Using and evaluating the scientific research of positive psychology, this literature review will address how to increase employee well-being in the workplace by 1) changing workplace contexts and policies and 2) implementing workplace practices to incorporate more opportunities for flourishing through various positive interventions.

Well-Being is Important for the Individual

Most people want to be and feel happy. Not only does happiness feel good, research also shows that there are many tangible benefits to experiencing wellness. A literature review of De Neve et al. (2013) summarizes various correlational, longitudinal, and experimental studies that show the objective benefits of happiness, some of which are highlighted in the following paragraphs. The authors conclude that health and longevity, income, productivity, organizational behavior, and individual and social behavior are positively impacted when an individual is happy.

Subjective well-being is one indicator of happiness. Someone with high subjective well-being feels many pleasant emotions and few unpleasant emotions and is satisfied with their life (Diener, 2000). Individuals who have high subjective well-being have better health and longevity. Studies have found that experiencing positive emotions is associated with improved health (Cohen et al., 2003) and better immune and endocrine systems and can also help the cardiovascular system return to baseline after negative arousal (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998). Positive affect is also associated with healthier habits such as eating well, exercising, and not

smoking (De Neve et al., 2013). On the other hand, one study found that adversity and stress, which may elicit negative emotions, in childhood are associated with increased inflammation later in life (Appleton et al., 2011). Finally, studies such as the infamous Nun Study have found that happier people tend to live longer (Danner et al., 2011). In this study, researchers evaluated 180 Catholic nuns' personal journals and discovered that those who wrote more about positive events were strongly associated with longevity six decades later. Positive well-being is associated with positive health-related benefits.

Happiness and well-being can be associated with positive outcomes at work for the individual. For example, one experimental study found that individuals who were induced with a positive mood via a 10-minute comedy clip were more productive (Oswald et al., 2015). Research has found that happy employees are associated with increased curiosity, creativity, and motivation (De Neve et al., 2013) and are more likely to be rated highly by supervisors (Peterson et al., 2011). One study found that happier individuals tend to have higher incomes and better relationships with colleagues (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005a). Happiness has positive benefits for the individual in the workplace.

Individuals who are happier and have positive subjective well-being may have more positive social behaviors. For example, happier people tend to spend less and save more money, which may be good for their well-being (Güven, 2009). High life satisfaction is also associated with healthier decisions such as wearing a seatbelt (Goudie et al., 2014). Happier people are also more willing to sacrifice short-term gains to pursue long-term benefits or goals (Ifcher & Zarghamee, 2011). Finally, a well-known longitudinal study by Fowler and Christakis (2009) found that happiness is contagious and can spread up to three degrees of separation – meaning, happy employees may impact other individuals in their lives. Happiness is not only good for the

individual, it can be good for collective society.

Well-Being is Important for the Organization

It is worthwhile for organizations to prioritize employee well-being and job satisfaction. A meta-analysis found a moderately strong relationship between job satisfaction and job performance (Diener et al., 2017). Further, the authors found that if individuals like their job, they are more likely to be good at it, but being good at their job does not necessarily mean they will enjoy it. High employee subjective well-being can predict greater customer satisfaction, more productivity, greater profitability, and may influence stock prices (Diener et al., 2017). Research has shown that organizations with actively engaged employees experience higher productivity and less turnover among employees, and ultimately, more profitability (Harter, 2018).

Organizations with high subjective well-being among employees report better customer satisfaction and loyalty as well as higher monetary returns compared to organizations with lower employee subjective well-being (Harter et al., 2002). A study found that employees who were more satisfied with life were more cooperative, more helpful, and more punctual at work and had a longer tenure with the organization (Spector, 1997). Positive affect is associated with higher performance ratings from supervisors (Wright & Bonett, 1997). Individuals with higher subjective well-being are associated with having better relationships with supervisors and colleagues and are better organizational citizens, meaning that prosocial and ethical behavior is intrinsic and not based on an external rewards system (George & Brief, 1992). High employee satisfaction can also predict organizational productivity and performance, such as revenue, sales, and profits (Harter et al., 2010). Not only does employee engagement and subjective well-being feel good and produce good results for the individual employee, but the organizations will also

benefit.

When asking people what they want from life, it could be assumed that most individuals would place happiness at the top of their priority list. Further, many people also likely want a good, engaging job. The workplace is where many working adults spend most of their life, with most spending one-third of their waking time at their jobs. If an individual is thriving at work, they are twice as likely to thrive in other capacities of their lives, too (Clifton & Harter, 2021). With so much time spent at work, there is a unique opportunity for employers to create well-being-focused policies or environments as well as targeted programs or interventions to boost employee happiness. A culture that values well-being will benefit both the organization itself and the individuals within it.

Introduction to Positive Psychology

A Brief History of Positive Psychology

According to two of the founding members of the field, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), the science of positive psychology aims to research and study what makes life worth living and how best to achieve the "good life." Positive psychology encompasses subjective experiences in the past, present, and future such as well-being, contentment, and satisfaction; positive individual traits such as the capacity to love, interpersonal skills, and wisdom; and positive institutions that move individuals toward better and pro-social citizenship.

Flourishing can be defined as finding fulfillment in life, accomplishing meaningful work, and connecting deeply with others (Seligman, 2011). Flourishing is an essential aspect of human life because it can lead to better citizenship (Diener & Seligman, 2018), stronger relationships, better mental and physical health, higher work performance, increased happiness, and even a longer life (Peterson, 2006).

Positive psychology has been a continuously evolving field of psychology over the last several decades. However, much of its foundation could be seen in the works of Aristotle when he asked about the ultimate purpose of human existence and declared it was happiness. Researchers such as William James, Abraham Maslow, and Ed Diener (to name just a few) built from these key insights in ways that informed the whole field of psychology. Positive psychology became even more mainstream and well-known in 1998 when Martin Seligman became president of the American Psychological Association and declared the field should focus more on what makes life worth living (Peterson, 2006). Whereas mainstream psychology has become known for focusing and fixing what is wrong, negative, or harmful, positive psychology studies the positive aspects of human experience. Specifically, positive psychology focuses on strengths over weaknesses, optimizes the best parts of life instead of focusing on its challenges, and promotes more of what is good instead of fixing what is bad. This is not to suggest that the most humanizing parts of life such as grief, anger, or sadness should be ignored or disvalued; the field instead narrows its focus on the pleasant and meaningful aspects of life and what makes it most worth living.

For some, happiness is a pipe dream and can seem far out of reach. However, a frequently cited study from Lyubomirsky et al. (2005b) suggests happiness can be attainable for many through intentional activities. These intentional activities may take time and sustained effort in order to reap lasting benefits (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky 2019). Intentional activities can be what one chooses to do in their everyday life and can also include positive interventions. Positive psychology incorporates scientifically and empirically researched positive interventions which are intentional actions intended to increase well-being in a positive direction away from zero (Pawelski, 2016). These activities may bring an individual from a negative or neutral state

closer to a neutral or positive state, respectively. Positive interventions can lead to many pathways of happiness as will be described below.

Pathways to a Meaningful Life

There are several pathways to enjoy a full and meaningful life. According to Seligman (2011), there are five elements to live a meaningful and fulfilling life: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (PERMA). Experiencing positive emotions such as hope, joy, amusement, or gratitude can improve well-being; experiencing "flow," or complete engagement, is when an individual is completely absorbed in an activity in the present moment and entirely focused on the task at hand; since human beings are innately social creatures, having positive relationships in life is critically important to a life of flourishing; finding a sense of meaning or purpose in life or work can improve well-being; and experiencing a sense of accomplishment or achieving goals can be motivating and impact well-being. These pathways could be considered in the workplace when attempting to increase employee well-being.

Domains in Which Well-Being Can Be Influenced

Researchers suggest there are different domains in which well-being can be influenced. Isaac Prilleltensky (2016) suggests that well-being can be developed in several key areas of life: Interpersonal, community, occupational, physical, psychological, and economic (ICOPPE). Further, the more well-being an individual experiences in a domain, the more satisfaction with their life they will have. Similarly, researchers at Gallup suggest that the five elements of well-being are in the realm of career, social, financial, physical and community, noting that career well-being is the most important and the foundation for the other four elements (Clifton & Harter, 2021). It is valuable to note that well-being can be modified in different aspects of life.

Just because an individual is flourishing or languishing in one domain does not mean they are flourishing across all domains. Organizations can take appropriate steps to maximize employee well-being at work to influence their occupational domain and career well-being.

Measuring Well-Being

Although the field of positive psychology is young, many of the topics and subjects it studies, like subjective well-being, have been researched for decades. The late researcher Ed Diener is one of the world's most profound researchers on subjective well-being and coined the construct itself. Subjective well-being is defined as an individual evaluation of cognition and affect including life satisfaction, satisfaction with different domains in life, positive affect, and low negative affect (Diener, 2000). Subjective well-being can be achieved when basic human needs are met, which gives individuals the capacity to become more concerned with self-fulfillment or flourishing. Subjective well-being is one way of describing happiness.

Measuring subjective well-being is an indicator that it is valuable and worthy of study and pursuit. When businesses or people measure something, it shows that it is of value. For instance, businesses tend to track key performance indicators and return on investment to determine if they are progressing towards goals and whether the goal was worth achieving. Similarly, individuals set goals for themselves when trying to attain something for themselves and can track their progress. Monitoring progress towards a goal can increase the likelihood of attaining the goal (Harkin et al., 2016). Measuring subjective well-being would reveal which domains of life are more important and how and where interventions could be used to increase life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Diener, 2000). Subjective well-being can be measured using self-report scales such as the *Satisfaction With Life Scale* (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985) which is a five-item scale intended to measure global life satisfaction and well-being, and with

the *Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale* (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988) which measures the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect. Subjective well-being is an indicator of overall happiness and can be applied across multiple populations. As more nations and organizations measure subjective well-being, they will better understand which factors may lead to a better, happier life, thus changing systems, policies, or practices to accomplish the goals and outcomes people desire.

Research about subjective well-being. There are many factors that predict, influence, and correlate with subjective well-being. A correlational study conducted by Diener et al. (1995) assessed over four billion individuals across 55 nations and found that high income, individualism, human rights, and social equality were strongly correlated with subjective well-being and with each other. This study concluded that at the self-report level, these factors that correlate with high subjective well-being are consistent across nations, even when controlling for general economic development. These four correlates may be related to subjective well-being because they all are associated with the ability to achieve goals and to have individual needs met, which positively impact subjective well-being (Diener et al., 1995). This is valuable information as organizations determine how to increase subjective well-being in their employees.

Life satisfaction of workers is both influenced by and influences work experience. Thus, it is worthwhile to improve life satisfaction of employees. According to Diener et al. (2017) occupational stress can cause anxiety, which can lead to negativity and mistreatment in the workplace. This can cause a downward spiral of negative attitudes and poor work environments. Life satisfaction and job performance can be increased by providing more freedom, autonomy, and flexibility in the workplace. Further, crafting work to fit employees, skills, interests, and needs to the job increases job satisfaction (Diener et al., 2017). Since income, individualism,

human rights, and social equality are key factors related to high subjective well-being, and businesses have some control over several of these areas, organizations might consider different policies and practices to implement in the workplace that are related to these different domains to improve the lives of their employees.

Increasing Employee Well-Being in the Workplace

Two Pathways to Increase Employee Well-Being

Many organizations are paying attention to the mental health and well-being of their employees because of the widespread belief that it can impact company performance (Volini et al., 2020). Organizations have the ability to influence subjective well-being in the employees. According to the Thompson and Marks (2008) dynamic model of well-being, individuals can flourish and experience subjective well-being via personal resources (i.e., optimism, self-esteem, resilience), enabling external conditions (i.e., the various domains in one's life such as work or home), and with good psychosocial functioning when needs are met and they are engaged (i.e., feeling connected to others, safety and security, being autonomous). Organizations have the ability to increase well-being in these domains through their policies or workplace environment and through the implementation of different positive interventions in the workplace. Although many other factors contribute to subjective well-being as noted throughout, this paper will focus on improving employee well-being through changing contexts and behaviors in the workplace.

Change the Context to Influence Employee Well-Being

Organizations can help to make long-term, lasting changes in their employees' well-being by modifying the workplace environment. Making physical changes to the office space, such as incorporating more natural elements into the environment or providing employees with more access to nature may increase well-being. Additionally, changing work-related policies to allow

for more flexibility and autonomy may increase employees' well-being by allowing them to create and control their work-life balance and schedule. These are just two possibilities to change the context in the workplace to increase employee well-being potentially.

Change the context via nature. The physical office space is a place that can be optimized to increase employee well-being. Although the physical workplace changed dramatically since the Covid-19 pandemic and more people are working outside of their main office, there is still an opportunity for employees to design or modify an environment that is optimized for wellness. One way to increase well-being in the office space is by incorporating nature into the workday or natural elements into the workspace. There is a growing body of evidence that accessibility to the natural environment has many positive effects on well-being. One theory of why nature is beneficial to humans is the psycho-evolutionary theory. Ulrich (1983) posits that nature may promote psychophysiological stress recovery by exposure to open spaces, the presence of patterns, and water features that trigger positive emotional reactions related to safety and survival. Another commonly cited reason for nature's benefits is the attention restoration theory, which suggests that people can concentrate better after spending time in nature because nature allows people to have involuntary attention on the surroundings and can restore the mind after experiencing mental fatigue (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989). Nature can be restorative and help individuals feel good.

Research about nature in the workplace. There is a growing body of supportive evidence suggesting that exposure to nature can be good for individuals in various settings such as hospital patients, prisoners, students, and employees. Kaplan (1993) cites anecdotal evidence of employees stating that windows in the workplace impacts their work and attitudes towards work such that the presence of a window can correlate with job satisfaction. White et al. (2013)

found via a longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of over 10,000 adults across 5,000 households in the UK from 1991-2008 that individuals have significantly higher well-being and life satisfaction when living in urban areas with greater amounts of greenspace.

Incorporating more green space can help improve mental health.

The physical environment can have an impact on well-being. Previous research has found that interacting with or spending time in nature can reduce stress (Largo-Wight et al., 2011). One cross-sectional, web-based survey design measured the impact of contact with nature on 503 employees' stress and related health outcomes. Individuals were asked to have various direct and indirect connections with nature both indoors and outdoors. Some forms of nature contact included outdoor work breaks, a view from a window, live plants in the office, photographs of nature, or recorded nature sounds. This study found that employees who had more contact with nature reported significantly less stress and had fewer general health complaints ($r=-.14$, $p<0.01$). Although the effect size was small, the significant results of this correlational study are important because workplaces may consider incorporating different elements of the natural world into their workplaces – whether it is by encouraging employees to spend time outside during the workday or investing in indoor plants in the office place. Spending time in, with, or near nature can increase employee well-being and decrease stress or general health complaints.

Different types of natural elements can impact well-being. A study in two densely populated cities in New Zealand and Australia evaluated via self-report general well-being, personal well-being, and psychological well-being when viewing nature from their immediate environment at work and home (Taylor et al., 2018). In this three-question survey, participants were asked how much nature they see from their windows at home and from another location that they spend much of their time (i.e., work), and an open-ended question to share any other

comments. These survey questions were analyzed alongside self-reported measures of well-being. Exposure to nature was also evaluated by assessing the zip code participants lived to determine how much vegetation and different bird species existed in their region. This correlational study found a significant relationship between viewing nature in their immediate environment and their well-being across several domains. Specifically, individuals in Melbourne and Sydney who had more proximity to vegetation in their zip code had significantly higher general well-being, personal well-being, and psychological well-being. These data show that exposure to nature can be positively correlated with different domains of well-being.

Understanding the role of greenspace on employee mental health and well-being is worthy of research to help design workplace environments. Gilchrist et al. (2015) assessed the relationship between greenspace on science parks, which are essentially campus-style business sites that aim to support innovation and technology in an incubator-type environment. This study had three main objectives: To determine if there was a relationship between employee well-being and use of greenspace or window views of nature, if different window views had varying impacts on well-being, and if satisfaction of the view from the window mediated the objective views of the window and employee well-being. Employees from 82 organizations across five study sites responded to online questionnaires that assessed their well-being, their use, views, and subjective satisfaction of greenspace available. The results of this study were total time spent per week in workplace greenspace predicted well-being, there was no association between frequency of greenspace use and well-being, views of plants such as bushes and trees was associated with well-being, and the satisfaction of the view did not mediate the relationship between greenspace and well-being (Gilchrist et al., 2015). These findings are aligned with other studies that have found that access to and use of greenspace at work may promote employee well-being.

Stress at work can impact well-being and performance and is a problem for workers around the world. A large body of research has found positive relationships between access to nature and decrease in stress. A study in Sweden randomly selected over 400 individuals to assess their level of stress, workplace attitude or pleasantness about the workplace, the characteristics of the workplace environment and their accessibility to outdoor nature. This correlational study found that male and female individuals had a significant relationship between access to nature at work and workplace attitude (Lottrup et al., 2013). Statistically, individuals who had physical access to workplace greenery reported more pleasant experiences at work than those who had no visual or physical access to greenery ($F=8.81, p<0.0001$). Additionally, it found that male respondents had a positive relationship between access to nature at work and decreased stress levels. Females, on the other hand, did not have a significant relationship between access to nature and decreased levels of stress, but they did have a significant relationship between workplace attitude and levels of stress. These findings suggest that the workplace's physical environment can influence stress and positive attitudes about the workplace (Lottrup et al., 2013). This study may also suggest that there are gender differences on the impact of natural elements in the workplace and well-being at work.

Incorporating nature in the workplace. To conclude, exposure to nature has many beneficial effects on well-being. Given that many business people spend most of their time at their desks inside, it can be challenging to incorporate the natural world into their workdays. However, organizations can incorporate nature into the workplace. Some ideas to consider implementing are: Give every new employee a plant as part of the onboarding process, provide state park passes to employees, encourage employees to take nature breaks and spend several minutes outside throughout the workday, host meetings outside instead of the board room,

provide offices with plenty of natural light, encourage employees to decorate their office space with photographs, or have natural sounds or music such as rainfall playing throughout the office. Given the research on natural elements in the workplace and its relationship to employee well-being, different ideas are worth implementing to increase access to nature at work.

Change the context via autonomy. The workplace can create an environment that allows for optimal well-being and functioning. Creating an environment of self-determination, and ultimately autonomy, is a critical enabler of well-being. Deci and Ryan (1985) posited that individuals can become self-determined when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. Autonomy is the desire to feel ownership over one's own behavior; competence is the desire to produce certain outcomes; and relatedness is the desire to connect with others. The surrounding environment can impact the ability to be autonomous or self-determined.

Autonomy can also impact motivation. According to Brown and Ryan (2015), self-determination theory suggests that extrinsic and intrinsic motivations can influence behaviors and choices and ultimately impact well-being. Extrinsic motivation is when a person does something as a means to an end – typically as a reward. Extrinsic rewards weaken intrinsic motivation because they cause individuals to correlate behaviors to rewards rather than themselves. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is when a person is naturally inclined to do something for interest, enjoyment, or pleasure. Intrinsic motivation involves adopting a value or regulation (internalization) and incorporating that regulation (integration) into the self. When a behavior is integrated and internalized, it becomes self-sustaining and volitional. Intrinsic motivation is associated with better persistence, performance, and positive affect. Further, when employees are engaged, they may be more intrinsically motivated to do work that is rewarding,

meaningful, or interesting (Gallup, 2020).

Previous studies have found that workplaces with more autonomy facilitate increased well-being at work and more intrinsic job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The ability to have autonomy and make personal choices can impact well-being and could be facilitated in the workplace. When employees have autonomy, they are more effective and have stronger subjective well-being (Russell, 2008). Providing employees with autonomy to decide when, how, and what tasks they will do, may reduce their chances of experiencing burnout (Peart, 2019).

Research about autonomy in the workplace. A meta-analysis facilitated by Yu et al. (2018) evaluated the relationship between autonomy and subjective well-being. Subjective well-being was evaluated by assessing positive affect, negative affect, and satisfaction with life. Autonomy was evaluating by assessing basic psychological needs. In this meta-analysis, the researchers analyzed 36 independent samples from the US and East Asia, totaling over 12,000 participants and found that autonomy was significantly correlated with subjective well-being. Autonomy was also moderately significantly correlated with positive affect ($r=.386$, $p<.001$) and negative affect ($r=-.376$, $p<.001$), but not as strong as the correlation between autonomy and subjective well-being ($r=.46$, $p<.001$) and autonomy and satisfaction with life ($p=.487$, $p<.001$). These statistics represent a moderately strong relationship between the two variables. Interestingly, these correlations did not differ between the US and East Asian populations. This meta-analysis showed that autonomy impacts subjective well-being, specifically satisfaction with life, positive affect, and negative affect.

The subjective environment and experience at work may impact employees' self-determination. Deci et al. (1989) researched the relationship between managers' support for self-determination (measured by the *Problems at Work* questionnaire) and subordinates' self-reported

levels of perceptions, affects, and satisfactions (measured by the *Work Climate Study*) at a large corporation. The participants were 1000 technicians and field managers from whom data was collected for a total of 18 months over the course of three years. The researchers found that companies with managers who provided autonomous support to their subordinates, meaning they supported their subordinates' self-determination, had more satisfaction with their jobs and the climate at work. Additionally, some managers went through an experimental intervention training program in which they received professional development and meetings devoted to changing the organizational climate to make it a more perceptively positive and satisfactory place to work. The managers involved in the intervention became more autonomy-supportive which led to employees feeling more satisfied with their job and trusting in the organization. Both the environment and managerial style can impact employees' satisfaction at work and ultimately impact perceptions of autonomy.

Flexible working conditions can impact employee well-being. An analysis conducted by Joyce et al. (2010) evaluated ten research studies which included randomized control trials, controlled before and after studies, and interrupted time series, all of which assessed flexible working interventions on employee health and well-being. The review of these studies found that flexible work interventions (such as self-scheduling or gradual/partial retirement) are correlated with positive health outcomes such as lower blood pressure, better sleep quality, and better mental health (Kandolin 1996; Smith et al., 1998; Viitasalo 2008). In contrast, organizations that implement policies such as fixed-term contract work or part-time employment were associated with negative health effects because unstable employment practices may be associated with fewer benefits, employment protection, and financial stability (Rodriguez, 2002). These associations are reminiscent of Diener et al. (1995)'s findings about the importance of high

income and human rights to subjective well-being. More intervention-based studies are needed to delineate the impact of flexible working conditions on health and well-being.

Although flexible working schedules, reduced work hours, or compressed work weeks allow employees to be autonomous, they may have unintended consequences. Kelliher and Anderson (2009) examined the relationship between employees and flexible or reduced working hours. This study found that, similar to other studies, flexible work hours was associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and fewer working hours was associated with lower levels of stress. However, the reduced working hours were also associated with work intensification such that workers tended to work more intensely in a shorter period of time. This study paradoxically found that flexibility can be a good thing but may make employees feel like they need to reciprocate this arrangement to their employers. To combat this potential issue, managers or supervisors could have straightforward conversations with subordinates to ensure expectations are clear and employees have permission they need to lean into flexible work schedules.

Incorporating autonomy in the workplace. Having autonomy and agency over one's own life and schedule is a critical factor to subjective well-being. One way organizations can increase subjective well-being in their employees is by allowing them to be flexible and autonomous with their work schedules (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). When employees have more flexibility over their schedules, they are less stressed (Shapiro et al., 2009) and experience better work-life balance (Abendroth & den Dulk, 2011). Many organizations had to become a flexible workplace because of the Covid-19 global pandemic and discovered that their employees were just as productive when working outside of the office. Further, there seems to be a greater emphasis from both the employer and the employee on flexible work and its impact on work,

career development, and well-being (Spurk & Straub, 2020). Since the pandemic, both employees and employers realize working from anywhere allows individuals to have better work-life balance and less time commuting to and from the office. Ultimately, implementing flexible work policies can lead to greater employee productivity and higher organizational profitability (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Other formats of flexibility include a variation of time and place, job sharing, career breaks, paternity/maternity leave, part-time working, flexible work hours, flexibility in the location of work, and flexibility in the daily schedule. When an employee can control their location of work and duration of working hours and schedule, they may experience higher levels of well-being (Casper & Harris, 2008). These enabling conditions can help foster employee well-being.

Having flexibility in the workplace is good for the employer and the employee. The employer may have a better chance at attracting, recruiting, and retaining high-quality employees (Croucher & Kelliher, 2005). It will also signal that they are an organization that is dedicated to employee health and well-being. This policy may also result in employee loyalty and commitment, higher job satisfaction, increased productivity, and reduced turnover and absenteeism (Anderson & Kelliher, 2009). To conclude, creating a workplace environment that helps employees feel autonomous and self-determined by allowing flexibility and control over their work may enhance employee well-being.

Change the context concluding thoughts. While there are many other ways beyond the physical office space, access to nature, and flexibility or autonomy in the workplace that may lead to more employee well-being, these interventions demonstrate that organizations can create the enabling conditions for happiness. Rather than expecting individuals to change their

behaviors and intentional actions to increase their personal well-being, organizations should instead consider how they can modify the environment around their employees to create opportunities to improve well-being.

Change Behaviors to Influence Employee Well-Being

In addition to changing the context and the workplace environment to increase employee happiness, organizations can incorporate new business practices, rhythms, and rituals to increase well-being. Using the science of positive psychology and its research of positive interventions, workplaces could create their own well-being interventions. Two such opportunities would include facilitating positive relationships and creating opportunities to find flow.

Change behaviors via positive relationships. According to the late Chris Peterson, one of the founding members of positive psychology, the field can be summed up in three words: "other people matter" (Peterson, 2006, p. 249). This is because human beings have an inherent capacity to love and be loved from infancy through aging adulthood. Having positive relationships is a crucial ingredient to a full and meaningful life and is one of the most significant contributors to well-being (Haidt et al., 2008). Positive relationships are associated with many benefits, including better physical health and higher satisfaction with life. For example, individuals who have supportive relationships experience less anxiety and depression during stressful times (Fleming et al., 1982). They have healthy cardiovascular reactions to stressful situations, recovery from surgery quicker, and even live longer (Haidt, 2006). Further, relationships can be beneficial because individuals who share their personal goals with others are more likely to achieve them (Feeney, 2004). Interestingly, the presence of a friend may help us perceive obstacles less challenging than if we were facing them alone (Schnall et al., 2008). Many of our happiest or most meaningful moments happen with, around, or because of other

people. Knowing some of these statistics, organizations may want to prioritize fostering positive relationships in the workplace.

Even as infants, humans desire other people. Harlow & Zimmermann (1958) discovered that baby monkeys preferred to spend time with a fake cloth mother more than a fake wire mother, even when the fake wire mother provided food. Although this experiment involved monkeys, the researchers concluded that infants are predisposed to need body contact, known as contact comfort, for survival. Other people make humans feel good, both mentally and physically. This may be why some individuals struggle to connect with colleagues via Zoom or other digital communication platforms.

Studies have revealed how relationships and social support are critical to survival and well-being. In the 1940s, A pediatrician named Harry Bawkin noticed that children in a particular hospital were dying at a higher than usual rate. Upon investigation, Bawkin realized these children were getting sick due to isolation. As soon as the hospital protocol included more human interaction, children's mortality rate fell from 30-35% to less than 10% (Van der Horst & Van der Veer, 2008). Further, in an experiment in which monkeys experienced total isolation for a year, they became fearful and withdrawn and were unable to interact normally with other monkeys (Harlow et al., 1965). This study suggests that extreme isolation and lack of socialization can have long-term negative consequences on infants' social-emotional development. Even through adulthood, a lack of social integration is bad for health. Isolation, lack of social support, or troubled relationships are common sources of depression, loneliness, and self-destructive behavior throughout the lifecycle (Reis & Gable, 2003). In fact, studies have revealed that isolation is a higher risk factor for mortality than smoking cigarettes (Reis & Gable, 2003). Further, a lack of involvement with other people in groups or activities is associated with

higher suicide rates (Smith, 2017). A lack of positive relationships has negative physical and psychological consequences. As the long-term effects of the pandemic are still unknown, organizations may want to consider these potential negative consequences from working from home instead of a shared, physical workspace.

Many individuals associate their workplace well-being with their relationships in the workplace. According to Dutton (2003), the quality of connections at work is one of the strongest predictors and influential variables associated with individual and organizational well-being. If employees have strong relationships with one another, both the individual and the organization will benefit. Everyday interactions among team members (being respectful, trusting one another, helping one another succeed) and the context of the organization (practices and processes, leadership structure and quality, the physical space, core values, etc.) have the power to facilitate, or diminish, relationships in the workplace (Dutton, 2003) and ultimately impact well-being. When the workplace has healthy relationships, the individual may experience better physical and psychological health and be more engaged at work, and the organization will benefit from better cooperation and coordination among employees and ultimately have more effectiveness as an organization (Dutton, 2003). Thus, it is valuable to both the employer and the employee to encourage behaviors and foster an environment that values positive relationships at work.

Research about positive relationships in the workplace. Friendships and positive relationships are associated with positive health and well-being. Previous studies have found that individuals who report having better interpersonal relationships in the workplace tend to have higher job satisfaction (Winstead et al., 1995). This study evaluated over 700 faculty and staff across two universities to measure the predictive relationship between having a best friend at

work and job satisfaction. Winstead et al. (1995) used two questionnaires to measure both the quality of relationship and job satisfaction. The results of this study found that the quality of friendship at work was related to job satisfaction. They also found that relationships that required more maintenance and upkeep were inversely associated with job satisfaction. Thus, friendships that are easily maintained and require mostly natural effort are associated with higher job satisfaction.

Further, researchers at Gallup have also found that having relationships at work can impact well-being. Clifton and Harter (2021) suggest having a friend at work makes a difference for the employee and the employer. Friendships at work increase speed, efficiency, collaboration, and productivity. The authors report that organizations with individuals who say they have a best friend at work experience fewer safety incidents, better customer ratings, and up to 10% higher profit margins. Having friends at work encourages motivation to come to work each day, improves performance to go above and beyond for teammates, and increases feelings of being cared about at work. Gallup facilitated a longitudinal study and found that thriving individuals are 20% more likely to have thriving team members. Building and maintaining relationships with co-workers is critical to job and life satisfaction (Helliwell et al., 2021).

Many individuals prefer to work alone or spend much of their time working on individualized projects. However, even introverted people, people who prefer alone time, or individuals who mostly work by themselves, still benefit from social contact and interacting with other individuals at work. Both giving and receiving support to and from others makes people feel good on the inside and more connected to the world around them (Haidt, 2006). Humans have evolved to need other people to feel understood, recognized, and affirmed. People enjoy affection and attention, and we all feel the need to belong (Smith, 2017). It is impossible to feel

these emotions while alone. Because most work within organizations is done in collaboration, the workplace is an ideal setting to help individuals foster and prioritize relationships.

Incorporating positive relationships in the workplace. The workplace is a great environment to foster positive relationships. Organizations should strive to create opportunities for collective effervescence, or the "hive switch," in which the group energy and levels of passion are so high, they are almost sacred (Haidt, 2012). When people experience the hive switch, they transcend self-interest and lose themselves in something greater than themselves. The hive switch can make groups more cohesive, better competitors and fosters love, trust, and equality. Because of its positive benefits, organizations may want to facilitate opportunities to create a hive mentality. Using research and insights from *The Hive Hypothesis* (Haidt, 2012), the following section provides a detailed four-part intervention on how to potentially boost positive relationships in the workplace by activating the hive switch.

Part 1: First, team members would spend some time getting to know each other on personal levels. The goal would be for team members to find more similarities, not differences, with one another. When people find shared goals, mutual interdependencies, common interests or experiences, they are more likely to experience the hive switch (Haidt, 2012). This would build the foundation for team members to trust one another. Most organizations would agree that building trust and the simplicity of getting to know one another is beneficial to the individuals and the organization.

Part 2: Next, the team would spend a couple of hours in nature at a local park with a journal. They may walk around and observe, journal, draw, or be mindfully present, attempting to cultivate the feeling of awe or wonder. Experiencing awe acts like a reset button and helps individuals feel more open-minded and connected to something bigger than themselves and is

one of the emotions most closely linked to the hive switch (Haidt, 2012). As mentioned in previous sections of this paper, nature provides many benefits to well-being. This opening activity is a great way to set the tone by creating a mindset of curiosity to prepare for the following sessions.

Part 3: The next session will gradually build on their first experience by creating a team challenge to create healthy competition among teams. According to Haidt (2012), inter-group competition can increase love for the in-group and positively affect social capital. Additionally, it is essential for team members to not compete for resources with one another, otherwise it may lead to mistrust and decreased morale. Therefore, a fun and meaningful team challenge could be an outdoor kickball game as it would be an opportunity for groups to compete in a healthy manner while creating team bonds. In addition to the positive benefits of being outside, physical exercise can strengthen the capacity for stress and can improve mood (Ratey, 2008), and is associated with decreased anxiety and depression (Carek et al., 2011). Before the game begins, team members would come up with a team name and a team song or dance to share before the game begins to create synchronicity (Haidt, 2012). By playing together competitively, team members might cultivate pride, loyalty, and enthusiasm and would create a bonding experience that they will remember when they return to their desks.

Part 4: When people experience challenges, they learn, grow, and adapt (Haidt, 2018). Further, a meta-analysis found that suffering may be more important than positive events to improve social relationships (Mangelsdorf et al., 2018). Therefore, the third and final session would be to experience a unique adventure designed to move the team members outside their comfort zones. These activities would require participants to participate in collaborative adventure challenges. Participants would be stretched mentally, physically, emotionally, and

spiritually through a series of events throughout the day. These might be mental challenges such as a small-scale construction project, a physical challenge such as rowing, an emotional challenge such as small group discussion sessions, and a spiritual challenge such as yoga. The more difficult the challenge, the more rewarding it may be (Norton et al., 2011). Further, some of these activities may require that the team works together, such that they cannot successfully complete it without coordination and cooperation. This would increase the likelihood of experiencing the hive switch. This culminating event would improve team members' relationships while promoting collective effervescence and would ultimately yield higher well-being.

Part of being human is the desire to connect and relate with others and being part of something larger than oneself (J. Haidt, personal communication, December 11, 2020). These experiences aim to activate the hive switch while also fostering a sense of collective goals, shared values, and common interests among team members (Haidt, 2012). If done well, participants will have healthier relationships and feel more connected as a larger team and organization. This is just one potential example on how to activate the hive switch at work to encourage team and relationship building. Important to note, the recommended intervention has not been empirically tested, it is designed based on previous and related research studies.

To conclude, positive, healthy relationships make people feel good mentally, emotionally, and physically. Relationships improve lives, provide a sense of meaning, and help people feel connected to the world around them. Humans have evolved as a species to need connection with others, starting at infancy and through adulthood. If people experience prolonged isolation, they can experience negative consequences. Although some alone time can be good for some people, people depend on others to flourish. Workplaces should prioritize

social relationships in order to create a sustainable workforce. Building and fostering positive relationships at work can help individuals increase their well-being.

Change behaviors via engagement. According to Seligman (2011), engagement is another pathway to flourishing. Seligman's definition of engagement is encapsulated by the experience of flow. Flow is when a person aligns thoughts and attention with personal goals and is in a state of optimal experience and is when the level of challenge is met appropriately with the level of skill required (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In the flow state, the person is fully present in the moment, experiences a loss of self-consciousness, and has a sense of control in the moment. Flow experiences may improve self-esteem, protect against negative outcomes, and can foster more growth, commitment, and achievement (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). These benefits are good for the individual and for the organization. Interestingly, autonomy and a sense of control are core elements of flow, and as previously mentioned in this paper, can also influence well-being at work. Ultimately, frequently experiencing this cognitive state leads to a higher quality of life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) and could increase employee well-being. Since disengagement in the workplace appears to be a pandemic in itself, organizations may want to increase employee engagement at work.

Research about engagement in the workplace. Although flow can often times be experienced during an individual's free or personal time, it can also occur in the workplace. Previous research studies have found associations between flow and positive mood, but little research has been conducted to determine if there is a causal relationship between the two variables. Fullager and Kelloway (2009) examined the relationship between flow, task characteristics, and hedonic well-being, which is feeling pleasurable, among 40 5th-year architectural students in the United States. Using an experience sampling methodology in which

the participants were assessed multiple times throughout the study, the researchers evaluated job characteristics across five dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job), positive and negative emotions, and flow using a nine-item survey. This study revealed three main findings: First, flow was found to be more of a situational state rather than a trait or disposition, meaning it is a dynamic process that could change across time and situations depending on personal situations or the environment. Second, certain job characteristics such as creativity, skill variety, and autonomy at work are associated with flow. Finally, there is a strong, significant, positive relationship between experiencing flow and positive mood states ($r=.73$, $p<.01$). The final finding is valuable as organizations may want to place a higher value on flow experiences in order to increase positive affect in their employees, thus leading to increased subjective well-being.

Flow at work may facilitate positive outcomes. Salanova et al. (2006) evaluated if work-related flow positively influenced personal and organizational resources. In this study, work-related flow may include work absorption, enjoyment for work, or intrinsic motivation at work. Over 250 secondary school teachers participated in a cross-lagged panel design study to determine if experiencing flow at work may result in increased personal resources. The results indicated that experiencing flow at work increased the likelihood of organizational and personal resources in the future. Specifically, some statistically correlated items with flow at work were self-efficacy, social support at work, innovation at work, goal-orientation at work, and rule-orientation at work. This study revealed that experiencing flow at work is positive and may influence other positive outcomes that may benefit both the individual and the organization.

Incorporating engagement in the workplace. There are many ways to increase opportunities for flow in the workplace. A study conducted by Nielsen and Cleal (2010) found

that planning, problem-solving, and evaluation were activities at work that significantly predicted flow. Planning includes the opportunity to use skills to take control of a work-related situation. Problem-solving allows employees to use skills to solve problems at work to create structure and clarity. Evaluation is when an employee can use cognitive skills to provide feedback to the tasks at hand. Finding opportunities for employees to engage in these three tasks may increase the likelihood of experiencing flow at work. Some ideas to incorporate more flow-inducing activities in the workplace may be to invite employees to plan and organize a celebration for the entire organization, ask team members to solve high-level problems that leaders are experiencing, or to ask for feedback and opinions on different processes or systems in the workplace.

Several researchers have suggested that characteristics of flow state are related to mindfulness (Reid, 2011). Thus, incorporating a mindfulness practice at work could be an opportunity to induce flow in the workplace. Mindfulness can be defined as "an awareness or attention to present experience" (Smalley & Winston, 2010, p. 3) and is a process of training the mind to hold stable focus to deepen awareness to the present moment (M. Baime, personal communication, November 20, 2020). A mindfulness practice can act as a buffer against several ailments and enhance well-being in several vital ways. Being mindful can strengthen the immune system, improve brain activity and brain structure, and decrease anxiety and depression (Smalley & Winston, 2010). Organizations benefit from mindful employees too. Mindfulness can increase attention and creative problem solving (Dahl et al., 2015), help manage impulses and intense pressures, and help make positive changes (Smalley & Winston, 2010). Mindfulness also impacts motivation, executive function, decision making, learning and memory, and empathy (Baime, 2019), all of which would positively impact businesses.

Meditation, a practice used to develop the skill of mindfulness, can be facilitated at work to increase the likelihood of experiencing flow. Meditation exercises can be short and simple and are vital to maintaining focus during an average day at work. Organizations could create a monthly meditation challenge in which employees strive to practice mindfulness for 15 minutes during each workday. These 15 minutes could be spent in one sitting or spread out across 3-5 different micro-sessions. Free guided meditations or breathing exercises, both easily found online, would be simple ways to begin the practice. By using these suggestions to create a monthly challenge, team members may be more compelled to participate and encourage each other to take part. These exercises are easy to implement, not time-consuming, and are available to anyone regardless of previous mindfulness or meditation experience. Meditation is similar to flow because the individual is fully present in the moment, has a goal of staying present, may experience a loss of self-consciousness, and has control over the moment. Incorporating opportunities for mindfulness and meditation at work, to induce the state of flow, benefits the individual and the organization.

To conclude, engagement in the workplace is valuable for the employee and the employer. Finding opportunities for flow in which the level of challenge is met with the appropriate level of skill can influence employee well-being. Individuals can find flow at work when they are engaging in an enjoyable activity, planning, problem solving, or even practicing mindfulness.

Change behaviors concluding thoughts. Workplaces can enable employee well-being by changing their practices or implementing different interventions that may boost employee happiness. Many people find well-being and fulfillment in their relationships. By focusing on positive relationships in the workplace, individuals may boost their own well-being and

experience greater happiness. Finding flow at work is another opportunity for organizations to increase employee well-being and potentially employee engagement. There are many ways to create and find flow at work and engaging in a meditation practice is one such way. These are only two of several areas, such as experiencing achievement, optimizing positive emotions, or finding meaning, in which individuals can find happiness at work. Organizations can implement other interventions that bolster employee well-being in any or all of these domains.

Limitations and Future Directions

The topic of employee well-being is massive. There are quite literally hundreds of well-researched studies and interventions that have been or could be used in the workplace to increase employee well-being. The scope of this paper is incredibly broad even within the narrow topics that were mentioned. Topics such as autonomy at work or relationships at work are so large, they can be difficult to summarize effectively and succinctly. Thus, this paper only highlights a few research studies within each section to highlight the different theories, research, practices, or interventions associated with each topic. Additionally, many of the studies highlighted are correlational, not experimental, which means the results cannot definitively determine causation. It can be difficult to delineate whether the outcomes of the various intervention were caused by the intervention itself, or just happenstance.

Another limitation is that much of the data highlighted in this paper were conducted before the Covid-19 global pandemic. Much of the workforce has changed and their policies and ways of working are constantly shifting due to changing needs and regulations. This may mean policies, office environments, and even interactions with colleagues are not the same as they were pre-pandemic. Finally, with such a broad topic, much of the paper and conclusions are painting with a broad brush. The workforce is incredibly diverse, made up of a collection of

individuals with different experiences and perspectives. Positive psychology interventions can be highly personalized and work best when the unique context of each individual is considered (Bao & Lyubomirsky, 2014). What works best for one individual may not work for another. Further, there is no consistency in the research studies that were mentioned in this paper – for example, some samples were from Australia, East Asia, Europe, or the United States; some samples were students instead of working adults; and some sample sizes were significantly larger than others. Therefore, conclusions throughout this paper should be taken with a grain of salt instead of the ultimate truth. Fortunately, most individuals around the world, whether they work in an office with thousands of colleagues or at home by themselves, want to be happy. This paper highlights several ways organizations can modify their workplace policies or implement interventions to increase employee well-being.

There are many ways to build upon the research, data, and ideas provided in this paper. First and foremost, more longitudinal and randomized controlled experimental trials should be conducted to determine causal relationships and long-term impact on the interventions mentioned throughout. Future studies would likely incorporate an element of more remote working due to the global pandemic and include more considerations for individualization as the workforce is becoming more and more diverse and individuals have varying needs and preferences. Future literature reviews could continue to evaluate how different factors of PERMA beyond positive relationships and engagement, may be influenced and developed in the workplace to increase employee well-being. Employee well-being matters and should continue to be an area of research and study.

Conclusion

Organizations should care about and prioritize employee well-being because everyone

wants to have a happy and fulfilling life. Since many working adults around the world spend the majority of their waking time at work, the workplace is a great place to foster subjective well-being. Subjective well-being is one way to measure happiness and it accounts for high positive affect, low negative affect, and overall satisfaction with life. There are many benefits to both the individual and to the organization when fostering and increasing subjective well-being. For example, individuals will be happier, they may have better health, and they may even live longer. Organizations with happy employees tend to have better outcomes like more profitability and less employee turnover. It is beneficial to both the employer and the employee to have a workplace that fosters well-being.

There are many ways to foster and develop subjective well-being in employees. For the purpose of this paper, two pathways that can improve well-being are 1) Enabling conditions or changing the context and 2) Increasing personal resources and good functioning by changing behaviors (Thompson & Marks, 2008). To change the context and create enabling conditions to increase well-being, organizations may consider incorporating more opportunities for employees to have access to nature or natural elements in the physical environment at work and create opportunities for flexible or autonomous work schedules. To change behaviors and increase personal resources and good functioning, organizations can help foster positive relationships at work or find opportunities for employees to experience flow in the workplace. These are just a couple of practical ways that organizations can use and implement using the scientific study and research of positive psychology.

If organizations are truly dedicated to investing in employee well-being, they should have measures in place to determine whether or not their interventions are working. One prominent measurement tool for organizations to use to measure subjective well-being is the *Satisfaction*

With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al., 1985) or the *Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale* (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988). Together, these tools would indicate how employee well-being has changed as a result of the proposed interventions. Organizations should measure SWLS and PANAS before, during, and ongoing after the implementation of the interventions.

A good life is enriched by conditions that support positive relationships, inclusive communities, good health, individual safety and security, rewarding employment, and healthy environments (Thompson & Marks, 2008). Taken together, these conditions can not only act as buffers against mental illness, they can also lead to a life of flourishing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Martin Seligman has a goal that "by the year 2051, 51% of the people of the world will be flourishing" (Seligman, 2011, p. 240). Organizations around the world have the opportunity to make significant strides towards this dream by increasing employee well-being in their respective workplaces.

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