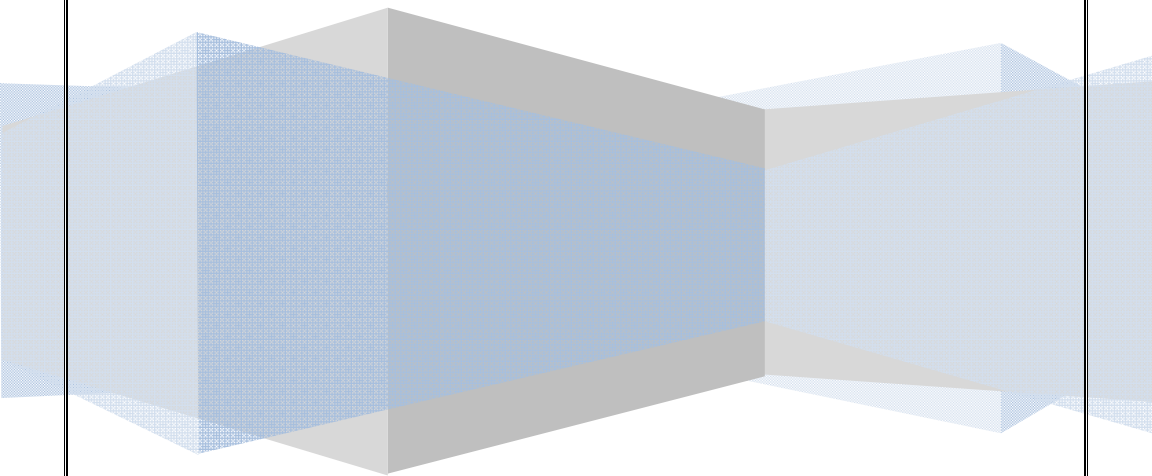


**Work Happy
the
Google Way**



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How Does Google Create a Great Atmosphere?

Google has taken great pains to create an atmosphere that promotes fun, creativity and accomplishing audacious goals. They do this because they understand people's needs. People need to work in a place that cares about them.

Google shows they care in many ways. Their perks include:

- 11 free gourmet cafeterias
- Employee lounges
- Massage services
- Free laundry and dry cleaning
- Oil change service
- Personal concierge to place dinner reservations
- Weekly TGIF Parties
- Top quality speakers visiting on a regular basis

The list goes on and on. I think these are great perks, but the best part of working at Google is the ability to accomplish great things with great people. After every Google employee's career comes to a close I guarantee they'll remember two things:

- The people they worked with
- The things they accomplished.

I doubt that they will remember a particular meal or oil change five years later. I can't remember my oil changes three years ago. Heck, I can't remember what I had for dinner last Tuesday. I can remember most of my bosses and co-workers from every job I've had. That's why you have to create an environment that encourages people to get to know each other and share their ideas.

Google has built a family that supports each other in every thing they do. They all believe in the vision and work their butts off to make it a reality.

You can build this same camaraderie at your company by showing your employees that you care. It's about asking them about their family and actually listening. You might be surprised how much an employee wants to talk about their personal life. I guarantee you'll get a better understanding of how to lead them.

Help Employees Connect to a Larger Vision

People want to be a part of a bigger picture, connected to the purpose. If all you do to improve employee moral is pay your employees more to stay, you are fighting a losing battle.

“I like working at Google because everyone has a common goal to add value to our end users lives and to make our product better for them. That makes my work exciting.”

- Rose (Google Employee) Associate Product Manager (1)

Studies have proved that earning extra money when you are in poverty means a great deal to a person, but earning more money when you are already earning a decent wage doesn't mean as much. It's common sense. Pavlov's Hierarchy of needs kicks in. They have shelter, food, and gadgets and then they want more, but it's just not as important to buy that second home compared to that first home purchase.

There is a reason that non-profit organizations don't have to pay as high of salaries. People want to do work that they have a personal interest in. Most people want dogs or cats to live better lives. We've all met a dog or cat that's just magical and could put a smile on anyone's face. Shelters don't have to pay top dollar to keep people helping out. People want to help these wonderful creatures because it makes them feel good.

Your company doesn't have this same luxury. Just like Google you must find reasons that help your employees connect with your goals.

Top 10 Reasons to Work at Google (2)

1. **Lend a helping hand.** With millions of visitors every month, Google has become an essential part of everyday life - like a good friend - connecting people with the information they need to live great lives.
2. **Life is beautiful.** Being a part of something that matters and working on products in which you can believe is remarkably fulfilling.
3. **Appreciation is the best motivation,** so we've created a fun and inspiring workspace you'll be glad to be a part of, including on-site doctor and dentist; massage and yoga; professional development opportunities; on-site day care; shoreline running trails; and plenty of snacks to get you through the day.
4. **Work and play are not mutually exclusive.** It is possible to code and pass the puck at the same time.
5. **We love our employees, and we want them to know it.** Google offers a variety of benefits, including a choice of medical programs, company-matched 401(k), stock options, maternity and paternity leave, and much more.
6. **Innovation is our bloodline.** Even the best technology can be improved. We see endless opportunity to create even more relevant, more useful, and faster products for our users. Google

is the technology leader in organizing the world's information.

7. **Good company everywhere you look.** Googlers range from former neurosurgeons, CEOs, and U.S. puzzle champions to alligator wrestlers and former-Marines. No matter what their backgrounds Googlers make for interesting cube mates.
8. **Uniting the world, one user at a time.** People in every country and every language use our products. As such we think, act, and work globally - just our little contribution to making the world a better place.
9. **Boldly go where no one has gone before.** There are hundreds of challenges yet to solve. Your creative ideas matter here and are worth exploring. You'll have the opportunity to develop innovative new products that millions of people will find useful.
10. **There is such a thing as a free lunch after all.** In fact we have them every day: healthy, yummy, and made with love.

This chart is on their website and has probably been viewed by over a million people. They want everyone, potential employees and Google users, to understand why they do what they do. They connect their work to a larger vision that gets people excited about their company.

1 Source: Google website <http://www.google.com/support/jobs/> (They've updated this information and the quote can no longer be accessed).

2 Source: Google website <http://www.google.co.uk/jobs/reasons.html>

Open and Honest Communication

Google has a weekly gathering of employees. Whether it be a meeting online or face-to-face, they gather as many employees together as possible to discuss topics and happenings that occurred during the week. The best part is that employees can ask any question that they want. Senior members and other employees must answer the questions to the best of their ability. Google believes in being as honest and open as possible. It's the only way that employees give their trust to the company. The company has to earn it.

Your company can do this by opening the channels of communication.

You may not need to meet every week if your company doesn't have the ability to do so, but you can meet once a month. By gathering your employees to discuss topics out in the open, everyone is held accountable for their actions. This can be tough because it has the potential to put people in an awkward position, but this isn't such a bad thing. When people are held accountable for their actions on a regular basis, they base their future decisions with regard to their employees. This levels the playing field, giving the employees who care about the company and want to see it succeed, a chance to voice their opinion and bring up discussions that can improve the company.

Does Your Mission Inspire?

Google's motto is "Do no Evil." They probably decided on this because of all the back stabbing and money grabbing in today's corporate environment. They wanted to send a statement out to the public that they are there to help them connect with the information they need, but they aren't going to do it if it causes people harm.

They believe in using as few natural resources as possible to provide their servers with energy and their employees with great work. They have one of the best recycling programs and solar panel infrastructures at their facilities. People want to work for a company that considers the future health of the earth, especially forward thinking employees that work at Google.

What can you do to connect with your employees' concerns?

Ask your employees what they care about. It's as simple as that.

If they are worried about environmental issues then plan for the company to take an afternoon off and help plant trees at a local park. When you do things like this don't be afraid to get some PR out of it. You want the community to know that you care about the earth too.

If they are worried about their healthcare then create a small team with the HR manager as the lead. Have them research other healthcare plans and see how much money they might save if the

company would switch to another carrier. Once they reach that allotted time they must present their information to management.

Your employees are unique and have many ideas that they would love to share if you only ask.

If you want to get a few more ideas that might help your company succeed check out – [Creating a Goal Post Business](#).⁽¹⁾

1. Source: Work Happy Now - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/05/create-a-goal-post-business/>

Extend Your Recruitment Message to Social Outlets

In doing my research on Google I stumbled across a [Google produced video on YouTube](#) (1) that interviewed employees and showed the viewer various locations at the Google offices.

Everything looked so inviting from the sleek cafeteria to the game room and the beautiful outside patios. If I wasn't so invested in this whole "Work Happy Now" thing I would send my resume in right now. Maybe someone at Google will read this ebook and pass it on to Larry or Sergey and they'll give me a call and bring me in to talk to their employees. We all need awesome goals to keep us reaching beyond even what we think is possible.

Google created this video to extend their marketing message. *We are a great place to work. Just look at this video, our employees love working here and I know you would love it here too.*

You can extend your marketing message by creating a blog, putting out a podcast (free audio download), or creating a video like Google. The quality prospects that you bring in to interview will research you on the internet. If all they see is a boring website, (or worse yet, nothing at all) they won't be thinking this is an interesting place to work. If you only recruit for "average employees," then you're going to end up being an average company. You must recruit superstars to take your company to the next level.

Google has so many blogs out there that I can't keep up with all of them. I think they have one for every service they offer. They help you understand new features as well as how to maximize old ones.

They do this to create a relationship with the people that love their services and products.

I know that your company probably doesn't have the resources to do this, but you can start small by creating a basic blog that talks about your industry or gives tips to your customers. By reinforcing the relationships you already have, you are telling people in your community that you are willing to fight for their business.

Employees don't want to work for the perfect business because every business messes up, but they want to work for a business that cares about what they do. If you can send the message out that you care about what you do people will join in the cause.

1. Source: Google Video - <http://www.youtube.com/lifeatgoogle>

Celebrate

Every company should celebrate its successes. Google does this in various ways.

Small Scale - Google built lounges for people to gather and talk.

You don't need to physically throw a party to create a celebration type atmosphere. People want to gather and share. Your company can do this too by creating an area that's dedicated to letting off steam and building a community.

Medium Scale - TGIF Parties

I'm all for throwing parties and Google does this every Friday. It gets other Googlers together. They usually have a band, but all you need is a little iPod dock and some cool music. Your employees can hang out and make new friends and your company can do this with a modest budget. I wrote an article called [Create 12 Parties a Year Instead of 1 Boring Holiday Party](#) (1). The idea is simple - throw a party each month so everyone gets to hang out and learn about each other.

The more friends people have at work the more they enjoy working at their company.

Large Scale - A party to remember.

In 2005 Google created “Jetaway on a Google Holiday.” They threw a big bash on the San Francisco piers, but it wasn’t your typical party. They brought the various cuisines, decorations and music from all over the world. I know that you probably can’t afford to rent out the SF piers and bring in all this cool stuff, but you have employees with various backgrounds. Why not create a party where everyone shares in their heritage. Maybe all they have is an old photo album from the 1940’s. Whatever it is, it should be unique and help create an exciting atmosphere.

1. Source: Work Happy Now - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/04/create-12-parties-a-year-instead-of-a-boring-holiday-party/>

Design Friendly Atmosphere

A place that feels friendly is friendly. As long as people feel comfortable they will work in a more relaxed and creative fashion. Google makes sure that their people can express themselves in ways that range from a pimped out Simpsons cubicle to an office that looks like it's out of the Ikea catalogue.

Google Slide

This slide ([Google Slide](#))(1) is from their office in Zurich. It's a great example of how to make the office feel fun. Even if no one rides it, the employees are still walking by it every day. This signals to them that they are in a special place.

You have an infinite amount of tools at your disposal that you can use to create an environment that is fun and extends the company's personality. You can create a team of people with a budget of \$100 whose job it is to go out and find cool things to put in the office. You can stipulate that nothing should cost over \$20. The employees can vote on where each object goes with the president having final say.

I know that I would want to be on this team. If I was an accountant and I had the opportunity to go to various second hand stores and discount stores for an afternoon I would jump at the chance.

1. Source: Work Happy Now - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/06/10/the-google-slide/>

Pajama Day

In engineering building 40 they have a “pajama day.” This consists of other Googlers wearing pajamas at work. How cool would it be to have a day when everyone is dressed up in pajamas? Awesome, right?

Even if you are a bank, you can take a certain angle to these events that might get your customers talking about you. “Don’t sleep on your interest rate, get a XYZ CD.” I don’t know if that would work, but it sure would be fun for the staff and the customers that walked into the branch.

I know that if my company did that I would tell my friends about the cool event. They might tell their friends and boom! You have a little word of mouth campaign going through your community.

People Who Play together Stay Together

Google encourages quarterly offsite gatherings with employees. They get to meet other people that they might not normally talk to in a given day or week.

You can have various department supervisors gather their staff at a local Starbucks or for Happy Hour at a local restaurant. This bonds people together. A group of employees that are close will communicate more freely and be more willing to help each other back at the office.

Hire Well Rounded People

Google hires people from every age, creed, and religion. They do this to create a diverse atmosphere.

“We believe that in addition to hiring the best talent, the diversity of perspectives, ideas, and cultures leads to the creation of better products and services.” ⁽¹⁾

If everyone has a similar background in your organization then you are going to have a limited view on what the customer needs. By expanding your employee base to cover a wide range of different people you are bringing perspectives that will help you stay creative.

¹ Source: Google Website - <http://www.google.com/support/jobs/bin/static.py?page=diversity.html>

Give Employees The Freedom They Need to Succeed

Google gives its engineers 20% of their time to work on personal projects that have resulted in Google news, Gmail, and Google Finance. Google didn't do this out of the goodness of their heart. They know they have very creative people who want to work on a wide range of concepts. So Google lets them come up with their own ideas and run with them. Their employees consistently reward them with fresh new concepts that have helped Google grow their market share.

You can give your employees the freedom to work on their personal projects too. If they can figure out a project that will help the company, then give them 10% of their time to work on it. If they can't then they receive one hour each week to work on a personal project of their choice. It could be knitting or writing a book. Every company I've ever worked for had employees who wasted time chatting to each other, surfing the internet or taking a nap in the back room, so why not designate a time for it? If they are going to do it, you may as well make it seem like a perk.

A company should work with employees to make them feel good, not micromanage them until they get sick and tired of old eagle eye watching their every move. Creating freedom at work is about letting employees optimize their production. Only they know how to get the most out of themselves. It's the company's job to give them the resources to make it happen.

Empower the Employees to Improve the Company

Google has an internal website called “Google Ideas.” Google employees submit their suggestions on how to improve a product or how to make things better at Google. Their co-workers can read this site and give their feedback by rating the suggestion and leaving comments. Management monitors this website very closely so they can stay abreast of their employees’ feelings.

Your company can create an expressive outlet for your employees. This will empower them to make suggestions that will probably help the company function better, creating engagement and loyalty.

You need to show your employees that their opinion matters.

Every Employee is an Entrepreneur

Google tries to create an entrepreneur-like mentality within its company. It rewards employees for going above and beyond, but also acknowledges below average performance and creates a plan to help the employee overcome his deficiencies.

The more responsibility a person is given, the higher the levels of rewards. Google wouldn't be this far ahead of their competitors if they didn't trust their employees.

They can trust their employees to succeed because they make their job details clear. Employees also know when they can stray from a task to help another group because they are trusted to get back to what they were doing before they helped the other team. They have this flexibility because Google emphasizes team work.

Employees have a lot of resilience and creativity when trusted. You need to hire the right people and trust that they will do a good job. Then reward them when they do well and let them know when they mess up.

The employee must feel like they have power within the company. If they feel weak they will perform below expectations. Your company must create a reward system that promotes risk. It's this encouraged risk taking that will let great work flourish.

Professional Growth

Google has an educational reimbursement plan. They will pay up to \$8,000 for an employee to take work related courses at an outside institution. They also offer the employee a maximum of 5 years off and up to \$150,000 if an employee wants to pursue an further education full-time.

Your company may not be able to give such generous benefits, but you can provide a library of resources that your staff can listen, read, and watch at work or at home. You will be surprised how many employees want to learn more about their field of work if they have easy access to it.

You can also create an incentive for your employees to read one book, watch a video or listen to an audio book that helps them do their job better. The incentive could be simple like letting the employee go home an hour early if they hand in a short report. All they need to do is provide a half page synopsis along with a suggestion on how the company can improve based on an idea from the book.

Create A Members Only Club

Google has a name for all their employees – Googlers (1). When I first heard this I thought it was cheesy, but the more I thought about it the more it made sense. They are a club of elite people who are trying to change the world. That’s the message that people want to send when they create a club. They feel special to be at a place where others want to be. They are proud to call themselves Googlers.

Google will never be the perfect work environment for every type of person. A lot of people don’t like the competition and the stress, but others do and it works for them. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again. No place is perfect, but Google does a great job of creating an atmosphere that feels special.

I don’t think that you should come up with a cheesy name like Googler. It probably won’t work. The reason it won’t work is because it needs to happen naturally. I tried to find where the name Googler came from, but couldn’t. I was surprised to find that [wikipedia](#) (1) considered anyone that felt like they were an expert in Google called themselves Googlers. This name is spreading to the users as well. That’s magical branding that rarely happens.

You can create that same feeling on a smaller scale. Your community of employees and customers talk about you too. Do you help influence the message or do you just let it happen? You have to be proactive like Google. Allow people to understand what your company is all about and how you should be perceived.

Your company needs to feel special to its employees otherwise it's just another job where they put in the time, but not the effort. You have to figure out why it's so special to work in your organization.

The best way to do that is to find out why people choose to work for you or buy from you. Do you provide that extra attention to detail that your competition doesn't? Do you give your customers a call after they've had your product for two months just to chat and check in? Let's say you are a massage therapist and you asked all your first time clients what famous dead person they would love to have a conversation with. The next time they come back, you might Google their favorite person and get them to talk about their lives. Whatever you do to show your customers and employees that you care will help you forge relationships that will last years, and in turn they will probably refer you to other friends and family.

You can get people in your community talking about you like they talk about Google by staying true to your personality and core strengths. It will take some creative brainstorming every few months, but it will be worth your time to create a club like atmosphere that makes people feel special.

1. Source: Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Googler>

It's All About the Customers

Larry Page rejected an advertising idea that would have brought in millions of dollars in revenue because it wouldn't enhance the user's experience. Google wants to give the customer the best experience possible. If they feel turned off in any way they will jump to another search engine. There are plenty out there that are almost as good as Google.

You are not the only company that does what you do, and if you are then the gravy train probably won't last long. You'll have competition eating into your bottom line in no time.

Your company needs to always put the customer first, even if it means making a tough decision that might hurt you in the short term. My father is an electrician who has run his own business for over forty years. He has repeat business because he does great work. He won't install cheap switches from a certain company because they break too easily. He could make more of a margin off each switch, but it isn't worth upsetting the customer over a few dollars.

Do not be afraid to make tough decisions that will help you and your customer out in the long run. You'll thank yourself for paying a little more now to reap the rewards further down the line.

Personality

Google measures their employees by what they like to call “Googlyness.” They have certain criteria for the type of people that will fit in with the company. They must be able to innovate and want to make the world a better place to live. They make sure that they find these traits in a person by asking some crazy questions in the interview. (1)

1. How many golf balls can fit in a school bus?
2. Imagine you have a closet full of shirts. It’s very hard to find a shirt. So what can you do to organize your shirts for easy retrieval?
3. If you look at a clock and the time is 3:15, what is the angle between the hour and the minute hands?
4. How many piano tuners are there in the entire world?
5. How much should you charge to wash all the windows in Seattle?

I won’t attempt to answer these questions, but you can easily see how Google can learn about a potential employee by making them think beyond their comfort zone.

You can learn about your potential employees’ ability to fit in with your company’s culture by asking them unique questions to see how they think things through. Any potential employee can go online and find questions that an employer might ask. They can just memorize their answers and deliver the perfect response. It’s hard to discern

the lame interviewees from the superstars if you don't shake things up and challenge your them. You need to figure out what type of employees you want and create some unique questions. It will take time to find the right questions that will help you, but once you understand what works and what doesn't you can really find the employees that will work well within your organization.

1. Source: I found a few of these questions on a blog. You can go to [Tom's article](http://tihomir.org/crazy-questions-at-google-job-interview/) - <http://tihomir.org/crazy-questions-at-google-job-interview/> to read all 17 of them. He also tries to answer them in his comment section.

Take Away Any Obstacles

Google understands that an employee who can focus on their work will do a better job.

"The goal is to strip away everything that gets in our employees way. We provide a standard package of fringe benefits, but on top of that are first-class dining facilities, gyms, laundry rooms, massage rooms, haircuts, carwashes, dry cleaning, commuting buses - just about anything a hardworking employee engineer might want. Let's face it: programmers want to program, they don't want to do their laundry. So we make it easy for them to do both."

- Eric Schmidt, CEO Google

You can remove obstacles from your employees' paths too. Maybe they are fed up with having to ask for permission. Give them the freedom to purchase something they need as long as it's under \$50 and they hand in a receipt and the reason that they needed it. If you can eliminate some of the red tape that frustrates them you'll be removing pain and creating a happier employee.

The easier you make it for your employees to be productive, the more that they will get done.

How to Improve Your Work Happiness the Google Way?

Google makes their work environment as employee friendly as they can while still meeting stockholder demands. This is a hard balance, but one Google seems to have a good grasp of at the moment.

In the second half of this book, I'll cover various techniques that Google uses to create an employee friendly atmosphere and how you can apply them to your working life. We'll cover:

- Tips on improving Your work environment
- Stress relief
- Ideas for Constant Growth
- Guidelines to Eating Healthy
- Creating Friendships with Your Co-workers

You'll have to run with these ideas and make them your own. I know that your company may not have as much freedom as Google allows, but you just need to be creative and find ways to relax, stay productive, and eat healthy.

Your Work Space

Google allows their employees to show their personality in their work spaces. In doing my research for this ebook, I saw photos of people with Simpsons gear, pirate flair, and Star Wars paraphernalia all over their desk. It was disturbing and cool at the same time.

Your work space has a huge effect on the way you handle situations. If it's messy, you may feel more creative. If it's clean, you may feel more productive. You must push the decorating boundaries of what makes you happy.

Take Leisure Breaks

Working at Google is stressful. They want everyone to push for better user experience and innovative ideas. Google supplies its employees with break rooms that have games so they can relax and unwind.

Your company expects you to perform at a high level on most days, and you must occasionally find time to just unwind that mind and enjoy a fun conversation or a walk around the block. (1)

My favorite leisure breaks:

- A short walk
- Chat with a co-worker
- Cup of green tea
- A call to a friend or family member on a break
- A nap in my car
- Bathroom break

There are many ways to take a break at work. Every company's culture is different, so watch what others are doing and modify it so you can find some time to relax that mind and body if you are getting overworked.

(1) If you want a few more good ideas on how to take a relaxation break to reduce your stress check out my article [How to Relieve Your Stress With a Three Step Plan](http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/03/how-to-relieve-your-stress-with-a-three-step-plan/) - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/03/how-to-relieve-your-stress-with-a-three-step-plan/>

Take A One Minute Relaxation

Google brings in many speakers, but the ones that are the most popular are the ones that can help the employees enjoy their life more. I don't know how many employees meditate at Google, but I'll bet the ratio of employees that meditate is much higher than other companies. Googlers are willing to try anything to tap into their creativity. They've learned that a calm mind is the most creative, so many of them meditate when it's needed.

If you are worrying about finishing a report or the outcome of certain sales figures, you are taking time away from the task at hand. Taking time to relax allows a worker to put these thoughts out of his/her mind and enjoy work.

The next time you are stuck on a problem take one minute to do a short relaxation. You'll clear out those overwhelming thoughts and bring yourself back to the joy in the work.

* Check out my article [Active Relaxation](http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/03/how-to-relieve-your-stress-with-a-three-step-plan/) - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/03/how-to-relieve-your-stress-with-a-three-step-plan/> to learn more about reducing your stress and improving your productivity in one minute.

Fresh Ideas

Rather than just bringing in technology experts who can teach about code and search algorithms. They invite people who inspire and teach like Mikhail Gorbachev, Timothy Ferriss (author of the 4 Hour Work Week), and Margaret Thatcher.

There are probably plenty of people at your work or nearby who would be willing to sit down and have a conversation with you. People love to be flattered, so ask the local store owner if they wouldn't mind meeting with you for an hour. They can teach you about the ins and outs of running their business. It may help you get a better grasp of the management and ownership's mindset for the company that you work for. When you can understand where they are coming from, you will become more capable of improving your work and moving up.

“My goal is to deliver compelling new products that make a real difference to real people in the real world. I feel that Google is a place where I can achieve this. When I hear people saying things like "I don't know how I managed before I had this" about products that I have helped build, I get a buzz.”

- Charles (Google Employee) product Manager (1)

1. Source: Google website <http://www.google.com/support/jobs/> (They've updated this information and the quote can no longer be accessed.

Challenge Yourself

Google leaves a small one page document in the bathroom of their engineering building that is designed to spark curiosity. A person can't help but pick it up and see what's on it. Most of it is too complicated for the average person, but it works to spark an engineer's mind to work in a new direction. Planting a little seed can spur great ideas.

We need to challenge ourselves at our jobs. We get complacent and even irritated when we have to do something new. Instead of looking at it as an opportunity, we complain. We just need to be open to new problems because they create the most potential for professional growth.

One of the reasons why children are so loved is because they have the ability to challenge us and open our minds to new ways of looking at the world. We may get irritated and frustrated, but we keep on loving them because of the potential that they possess. If we can give a tiny portion of this mindset to our co-workers, we can extract joy from our jobs that we never thought possible.

Eat Healthy

Google provides its employees with excellent options for healthy meals. Their chefs cook with fresh, local, and mostly organic ingredients. This helps their employees maintain their high level of energy. Of course they have salty and sugary snacks; that will never go away. As long as they alternate between healthy and junk food, they will hopefully find that balance that makes the employees happy and still gives them sufficient energy.

You probably don't have the luxury of free healthy food options from various "top notch" cafeterias, but we do have the ability to make our own lunch. Try bringing your lunch to work and fill it with healthy options. You can still splurge on burgers or sugar cravings every now and again, but if you want to work happy for longer than a half hour, you need put ingredients into your body that will make you feel good.

Here's list of easy, cheap and healthy ingredients you can bring to work:

Good Fats (high in Omega-3):

- Peanut Butter
- Avocados
- Tuna
- Walnuts
- Cashews
- Low Fat Cheeses

High In Antioxidants

- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Oranges
- Red Grapes
- Cherries
- Blackberries

It's possible to bring good food to work that supports the brain and body. The list above is only a small fraction of good stuff that can keep energy high. You should experiment and try various foods to see what works best for you.

You may want to bring in lunch on M, W, and F and go out to lunch on T and TH. My suggestion is to stay consistent. The more you do something that is good for your body, the less likely it is that you'll go back to eating unhealthy.

Build Friendships

Google wants their employees to interact and share with each other. This helps improve communication and generate ideas. What this also does is build relationships. Google knows that if you have a lot of friends working in your department you will be less willing to leave.

Building friendships also helps with personal morale. We all need to have a confidant or a group of friends at work to whom we can unload our fears and worries. They may agree or not, but at least they listen. It makes us feel like we are cared for. The bigger a company gets, the smaller the people feel. Google does an excellent job of creating teams to work together. The teams support and challenge each other to do their best. The employees feel like they are a smaller company within a company.

The best way to build friendships is to stop looking out for yourself and give to others. This builds trust and appreciation. Even if others don't reciprocate right away, you'll eventually build a network of people who will support your wins and mistakes.

Besides helping others with their work you can also:

- Listen (That's it. Just listen to them and they will probably like you)
- Invite co-workers to lunch – your treat
- Share part of your life, so they share with you.

Show Appreciation

Google likes to show appreciation for their employees through celebration, rewards, and team building. It helps create an upbeat and friendly atmosphere. This spreads throughout the whole organization.

People love to be complimented when they deserve it. They usually know a phony compliment from a mile away, so give genuine compliments and people will enjoy working with you.

You'll build trust and they will be more willing to repay the favor.

Challenge Others

Google creates a competitive environment, which can be stressful, but also fun. They do this because people like to measure everything. That's why the sports industry is a trillion dollar business – statistics keep people comparing and expecting more.

When you challenge others to step up their game they will challenge you to do the same. Business is about results. In most organizations the more productive you are, the more you'll get noticed.

Creating a game out of work makes the work seem more exciting and fun. Create a little competition with your co-workers and watch the excitement level rise a couple notches.

Creativity is King

The only way Google can stay at the top of the search engine business is to be creative. They need to improve their algorithms, stand out in advertising, and innovate. They do this by stimulating their employees at every level.

Most companies are fine with their employees just coming to work, doing their job and going home. Google likes their employees to stick around and hang out. It's not uncommon to see a few co-workers sitting in a lounge at 3am trying to figure out a problem.

If Google was too strict with their rules and timelines the creativity would be strangled. Even if your company is strict in their rules, you can always find time to sit and chat with co-workers. Coming up with new ideas with other co-workers is a great way to stay motivated and energized.

Google Will Lose Talent and So Will You

Google will lose awesome talent because not everyone will want to stay and work with a large company. The bigger they get the harder it will be for them to stay agile. A lot of employees don't mind working in that type of environment, but many of them dislike it and they will end up leaving.

Wayne Rosing, an early vice president for engineering, has left to pursue his love of astronomy. Paul Buchheit, the celebrated engineer who dreamed up Gmail, "retired" recently. (He's 30.) Evan Williams, the highly regarded founder of Blogger, a Google acquisition, has left to launch another startup. (1)

No company can retain every employee. People's desires change. What made them happy three years ago is different than today. Google understands this and does their best to retain as many employees as possible. They retain about 95% of their employees and that's way above the standard for a technology company.

Google hired the human resources pro Laszlo Bock because they are losing some of their best talent. They are starting their own companies (Friendfeed), or leaving for other companies that offer them a different environment (Facebook), or to pursue their passions such as their old VP Wayne Rosing who left to pursue astronomy. Whatever it is that forces them or entices them to leave, Google is taking an active role in minimizing these loses.

You need to do everything you can to keep the superstars with your company, but as long as you recognize that you will lose some of them then it makes it easier. You don't have to be perfect. You can only do your best and hope that your employees want to stay.

1. Great Place to Work - <http://www.greatplacetowork.com/best/100best2007-google.php>

Closing

Creating a Google-like atmosphere isn't easy, and most companies fail because the leaders don't stick to their plans. They fall back into old habits and the company loses out. Company leaders must stick to their goals to make sure that they create an atmosphere that they truly believe in.

It takes constant attention to detail, which is hard work. Many companies don't want to put in the hard work to create the environment that encourages great results.

Small companies have the greatest advantage when creating an atmosphere that inspires great work. They often have the flexibility to implement ideas and concepts that will help them grow. The larger a corporation gets, the harder it is to turn the elephant around. It gets fatter and more stubborn until it just stops listening and keeps walking until it dies, unless you can trim that fat and get that elephant to expect change.

Working with your employees to help them innovate means:

- Listening to their needs
- Giving them materials to learn new concepts
- Trusting them to do great work
- Giving them audacious goals so they reach beyond their ability and rewarding them for trying
- Having Celebrations that include everyone
- Creating teams that support and challenge each other to be better
- Helping Employees connect to a larger vision
- Encouraging appreciation from co-workers

You have so many tools at your disposal. Whether you are an employee or the CEO, you can improve any work environment. The question is, do you really want it and are you going to be pig-headed enough to make it happen? Are you going to put a plan into place and stick with it or just keep giving lip service? Consistent action gets results.

You have plenty of ideas to build from; now it's time to get those creative juices flowing and put a plan that will energize you.

It's your move.



Work happiness is within all of us, we just need the freedom to let it out. Google does an excellent job of encouraging great work while making the atmosphere fun.

Your company can do this too.

I started Work Happy Now because I've struggled to enjoy almost



every job I've ever had. My previous employers had the potential to create work environments that kept everyone happy and productive, but they never took the time to really listen. In these tough economic times, now is the time to make changes.

I truly believe in the [50/50 Effect](#) (1). Your work happiness is 50% your responsibility and 50% your employer's. As an employee or employer you need to push to make your work more fun and exciting.

I'm here to help, so if you believe your company may be interested in bringing me in to speak to the employees, just visit my [website and contact me](#) (2). I'll be glad to give a presentation or lead a four hour workshop that will give your company that extra boost to get an edge on your competition. We all know...

Happy Employees = Happy Customers

1. Source: Work Happy Now - <http://www.workhappynow.com/2008/10/5050-effect/>

2. Source: Work Happy Now - <http://www.workhappynow.com/contact/>

Work Happy Now