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THE HAPPY COMPANY CONCEPT

HAPPINESS IS A POWERFUL TOOL IN BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY

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Is happiness meaningful in business?

In the highly competitive business world, new technologies and finding better ways to do things have always been decisive factors for success. Almost immediately after advances in science occur, a new generation of businesses pushes out those companies that previously dominated the market.

Today, many of the biggest breakthroughs in science come from neuroscience, the science of the mind. While the world is ruled by humans, we humans are directed by our brains. Thus, new insights into how our mind works can profoundly affect how we interpret our lives, work, interactions, and of course our businesses.

If there is one goal that every human understands and seeks it is *happiness*. Imagine if we could use this powerful, albeit elusive, term to help us construct a practical guide for happiness and success.

What is the Happy Company Concept?

"Happiness is the frequent experience of positive emotions combined with an overall sense that life is good and meaningful."

From studying neuroscience, we know that pleasure, joy, satisfaction, contentedness are mental rewards. We get rewarded because our brains know that some important tasks have been fulfilled or will be fulfilled. The reward is then the emotional pleasure we perceive.

Seeking these rewards is the fundamental driving force behind every decision and action of humans. As a result we make complex calculations to try and find the optimal path towards these rewards.

The Happy Company Concept (HCC) uses fundamental brain activities to evaluate and improve lives and business performance. The HCC aims to harness this core human desire for happiness to produce major business and technological benefits.

The HHC: two basic rules

The HCC is founded on these two basic rules:

- 1 For a company to serve its purpose it must please its stakeholders.
- 2 A company cannot have any other purpose than to please its stakeholders.



But what does pleasing stakeholders mean? How do we make them happy with the company's performance, and how do we assess this as a business performance? The answers come from understanding positive human emotions. In other words, all positive feelings are rewards formed in the individual brain, and individuals make personal judgements when they evaluate a company.

In this case, stakeholders extend further than owners, investors, management, staff, customers and suppliers. Stakeholders also include the members of our society and to our planet's other residents.

Not all stakeholders' personal happiness has equal weight in the HCC, but none is excluded. Of course, the larger the stakeholder group, the harder it is to please everyone, but while the stakeholders are individually subjective, jointly they can be accepted as authoritative.

What are the traits of a **Happy Company**?

- 1 Stakeholders are generally better off and happier because of the company's existence and activities.
- 2 The company explicitly includes increasing happiness in its core values and goals.

The benefits of these efforts must manifest in direct material ways and in creating happiness through further explicit means. Direct material ways can be profits, productivity, good work environment, good standards of living, great products and services that help further build and sustain happiness.

Note: Happiness is far from being a brief slapdash sensation in the HCC. HCC's foundations are rooted in science and technology. The more brain rewards a company helps people experience, the more long term success the company will likely experience. These rewards drive people to support the company to survive and thrive, while displeasure drives people away or makes them want to hurt the company.



A company cannot serve its purpose for long if it doesn't sustainably turn a healthy profit. Improving the bottom line is a competition between revenue and costs, where (preferably) revenue goes up while the relative costs go down.

Productivity and efficiency are fundamental in this equation because low productivity is wasteful and thus, needlessly hurts profits. High productivity results from using a business's resources as effectively as current technology and expertise allow.

There is a very strong human element in productivity, which depends on knowledge, cooperation, and most of all, attitude. In all three of these categories, the emotional states set by our brain play a crucial part.

Knowledge

If we own a business, we naturally want our staff to gain the highest level of expertise and proficiency in their jobs. This proficiency requires knowledge. The speed of gaining and refining this knowledge increases exponentially if we enjoy and care about what we are doing. This is not a coincidence, but is a direct consequence of the purposeful activity of the brain.

When the brain deems a task important, it swings into action with its available tools. The joy we perceive is the reward, and the caring we feel is the motivation, all supported by concentrated focus and ample new storage (memory) to help the entry of new data.

We can look at enjoyment as a marker. If enjoyment isn't there, we are left outside of the defensive walls of our staff's mental castle, or we will have to rely on threats. And the problem with threats is, that they are costly to maintain and create numerous negative side effects.

Note: This is the axis of the Happy Company Concept. Instead of fighting an expensive contest with stakeholders' minds, we take into account what's actually happening in the brain and cooperate with it effectively.



Cooperation

Cooperation is the second essential ingredient to improving productivity. Thankfully, we don't have to force people to collaborate - in providing the circumstances and goals, humans naturally cooperate. Our brains reward cooperation and actively search for opportunities. (This is a chief reason behind the human race's colossal success.)

For example, if a company creates an environment where staff can gain respect and increase their sense of security, these are already good starting points that will spark cooperation. Our brains value safety and respect very highly, and will urge us to invest more of our own resources and cooperate. The brain will then provide rewards through emotional prizes like contentment and satisfaction.

Attitude

Attitude arguably is the most important element of productivity. However when we get people to work with whip or money, we create an invisible us-versus-them tension between profiteers and labourers. These opposing sides, consciously or subconsciously, will try to hurt each other. In a civilised work environment this will be well hidden but will still exist.

But when a company repeatedly promotes happiness, the us-versus-them tension dissolves. This is because by definition our enemies don't try to help us, and will never try to make us happy.

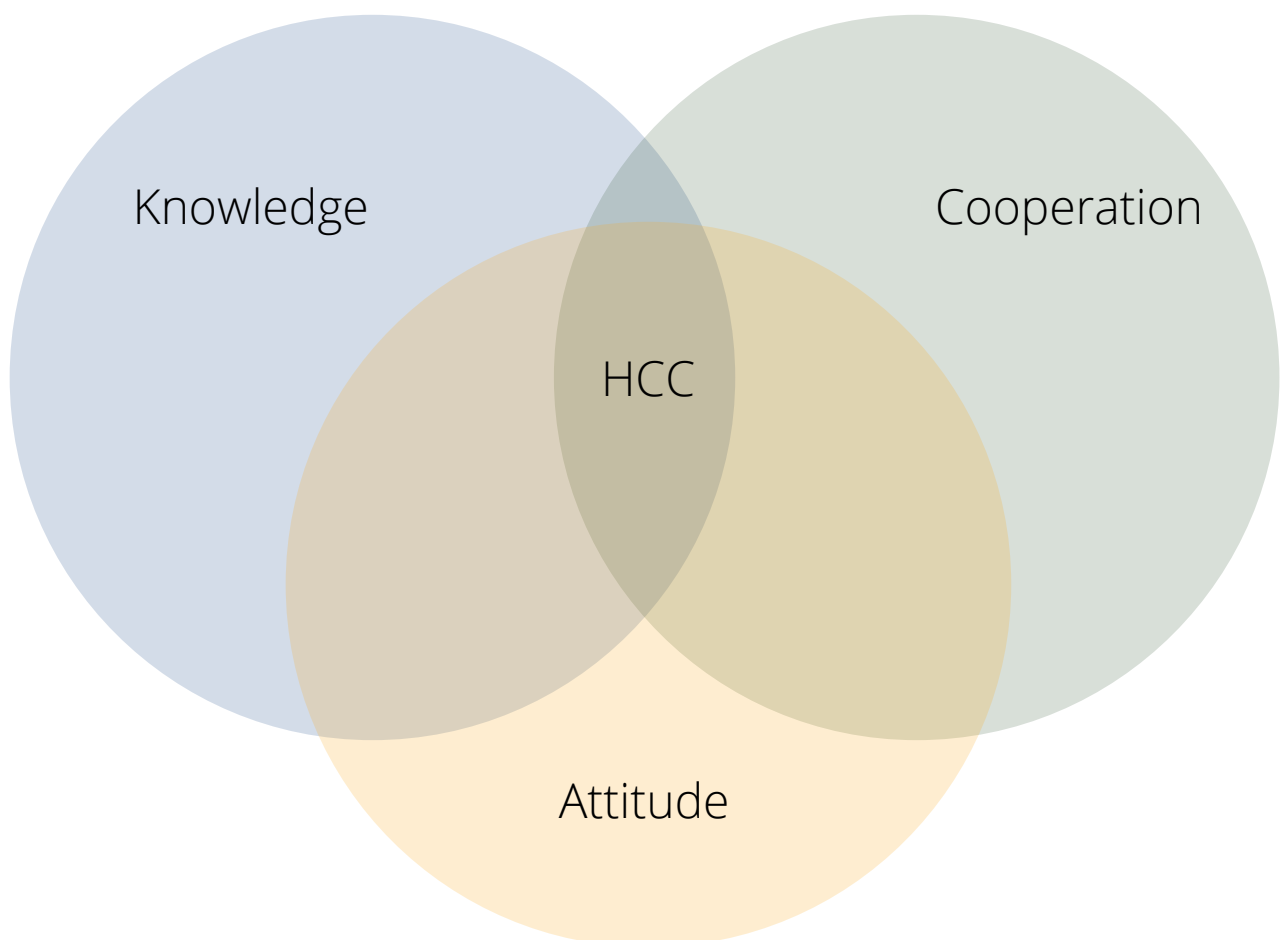
With enmity taken out of the picture, employees are willing to go above and beyond their job descriptions, aligning with the company's goals and actively helping to achieve them.

With a sense of purpose in an emotionally safe environment, employees are more likely to take calculated risks and are inspired to propose creative solutions. Often these prove to help solve the organisation's needs and highlight gaps in the market or in company processes.

Job enjoyment goes hand-in-hand with being good at a job. Additionally, happy employees make their company a magnet for the best talent available, and staff loyalty multiplies.

Because work-related mental disorders negatively affect our immune systems, happy companies enjoy the opposite effect, and the time and money the company has invested into its employees are better protected. Such a business will experience less sick leave, and their people will contribute more years to the company's success.

You will still have times of setback, debate, and frustration, but when hard times hit, people in happier workplaces are more willing to see the bigger picture, making them less stressed, and more likely to support the company, even if this sometime means tolerating lower personal earnings.





Customers

Without customers, there is no business. Most leaders are keenly aware of this, often choosing to maximise customer satisfaction. Because customer satisfaction is a positive mental reward, one controlled by customers' brains, it already fits right in to the Happy Company Concept.

But how do we optimise our efforts and try to find the best ROI?

From a neuroscientific point of view the brain is looking for tasks that make life easier, safer, healthier, richer, more meaningful, more fun, or better. Satisfaction as a reward will come when the brain sees the fulfilment of some of these tasks. The brain is capable of finding fulfilment in past memories, in present conditions and actions, and even in the vision of the future.

Customer satisfaction is not linearly linked to costs and difficulties. A small gesture at the right time can create in the customer a life-long attachment to the company, while the biggest discount, or even a truly outstanding performance can in some cases alienate customers. The brain recognises and thus judges its needs and fulfilment, and rewards are based on these judgments.

For example, price can matter if money is tight or frugality is important to that person. Solving a problem for a client matters if they experience their situation as dire or very frightening. Other customers appreciate joy and fun if the customer desperately needs to re-focus their attention, or escape boredom.

Random acts of kindness matter to customers, if they are already frustrated with their relationships, feel disrespected, or are lonely. Having a conversation with the customer, and thus giving them a vision of a safer, better future could make all the difference if all they see is trouble, frustration and confusion.

Customer Satisfaction Strategy

Every segment of our customer interactions should be aligned and contribute to our chosen Customer Satisfaction Strategy. This should guide our marketing, sales, product development, and customer service.

Our past, present and future with the customer can help us improve our relationship with them. Every interaction should remind the customer of a good memory, give relief or joy in the present moment, or present a beneficial vision.

Unhappy employees tend to spoil this interaction unwittingly or deliberately, so here again it makes good business sense to keep employees happy, within the company's goals and interests.

Suppliers: Mirror Customer Satisfaction Strategy

Suppliers, like staff, are an essential part of a business's success. Some of the rules that apply to staff also apply to suppliers.

However, in our relationship with suppliers we are the customers. A good starting point is to apply our Mirror Customer Satisfaction Strategy. This strategy can help our suppliers keep us as satisfied customers.

We should encourage and help our suppliers provide our desired outcome. We need to make quality, price, and deadlines clear and sustainable because these elements also fit into our own Customer Satisfaction Strategy.

But we must also recognise our suppliers' needs so they can serve us well in the long run. It is in our interest to help them do this. Rather than making working with us difficult, we need to support our suppliers and tell them how best they can serve us.

We should consciously avoid behaving like our own worst customers.

Good relationships don't appear spontaneously: they take a concerted, daily effort to create and maintain. When we neglect relationships, they almost always go bad. Instead of teamwork and mutual appreciation, mistrust, conflict, bickering, and selfishness arise.

These negatives take a huge toll on all involved and can even create enemies. And at the first chance, people try to escape or seek revenge. These human needs and reactions hold true across all cultures, and across all types of employees, for both men and women, and for young and old.

However, if we can master these relationships, these same forces can start working in our favour.



Finally, if our society and planet is sickly, our company is going to become sick as well. And if we run out of raw materials or our market keeps shrinking, our business's perspective becomes bleak.

A far more subtle, yet just as potent, threat happens when we merely perceive future turmoil in our environment. This perception can adversely affect our sense of well-being even before physical problems begin.

Our minds are constantly searching for potential threats. When we perceive unpredictability, untangible mess, or angry people around us, this sets our brains on edge. And the concept is also engrained in us that when we cause harm and damage, that harm comes back to hurt us.

The trouble is that when our brain anticipates threats it acts immediately. It takes away our rewards and will use emotional deterrents like unease, fear, guilt and frustration.

If we do not understand what is happening, we can misread these feelings. But it is unwise to ignore, suppress, or override most of these feelings. For the human race this perceptivity to danger, including what is happening in our greater environment and to other humans, is essential.

Today the business world has a greater impact on society and the planet than anything else. This relationship can't be ignored anymore as we have reached the limits of the planet in several aspects. For example we use more resources annually than can be replenished by the planet, or with carbon emissions change the climate from its current ideal conditions to something far less welcoming,

A healthy business is aware of the forces that will hurt its bottom line or risk its stability. So, if a company contributes to environmental degradation or human misery, we business leaders should take stock and realise that we can't escape the consequences.

The Happy Company Concept considers the company's relationship with the environment and society as they have a determining effect on the stakeholders' sense of well being. Unhappy stakeholders demand more compensation from the company in financial and non-financial, direct and indirect means. Because the HCC's goal is to produce major business benefits, this is a serious problem that demands attention.

There is no simple, quick solution to make this work favourably for us. The planet, society, and businesses create a web of intricate intertwined dependencies. Solving an apparent problem in one place can cause havoc somewhere else, yielding unexpected consequences.

A good starting point is to look at how our company affects the following:

- 1 People's security and safety
- 2 Physical conditions
- 3 General well-being
- 4 People's sense of respect

If we do examine these regularly and with an open mind, we'll soon see a guiding picture emerge.

Stubbornly ignoring the issues however, will not make them go away. Even if our metrics are spectacular, not knowing about problems coming our way can jeopardise our chances of achieving a good life.

When there are no simple, magic solutions to complex problems, we can break them down to smaller manageable parts. In some cases, small adjustments will quickly improve things; in others, wide-range cooperation is necessary and results will require time to manifest.

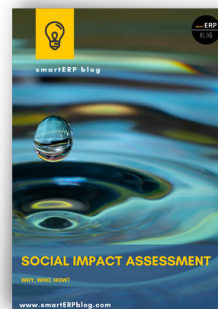


The Happy Company Concept is part of the The Genesis Project

The Genesis Project is an inclusive planetary global project that aims to serve humanity to the highest standard and to create the best possible planetary environment. Rather than fighting life and the world, this project aims to work in synergy with the individual, the environment and different cultures. It is built on the latest in neuroscience and supported by the best in augmented AI to create a harmonious and synergistic planet for all.

The Happy Company Concept integrates business efforts into the The Genesis Project.

Also in the Genesis Series



This series is about the well-being of individuals, companies, communities, society, the planet, as well as the necessary science, education and technology to make a bright future happen.



The Planet