

## BALANCING TOMORROW, TODAY™

by Stacie L. L. Morgan, Ph.D.



**W**hat does "happiness" have to do with a business' bottom line? How can you increase your long-term success by making your employees happy? Let's look at how businesses can balance tomorrow's success today, by spreading a little happiness!

One of the most costly aspects of running a business is finding, training, and retaining good employees. Let's face it, we cannot run our businesses without them. We need the division of labor that can only be addressed by entrusting others with our brainchild, our livelihood, and our vision.

In addition to needing employees to help us run our businesses, we also depend on them to help us gain and maintain our customers. It is most often our employees who have the direct contact with our customers. They represent the business and are responsible for how customers experience our businesses. Our success can be seen as residing on the shoulders of our employees. So shouldn't our top priority, as business owners/leaders, be to support our employees, to make sure they understand how important they are to us and try to make them happy?

Now I've just about come full circle, because supporting employees, as I previously stated, is one of the most costly aspects of running a business. The cost factor, as I've illustrated, is not just in dollars spent during the recruiting and training process, but in the cost of lost opportunities if even one employee misses the mark in creating a successful customer experience.

How then, can "happiness" be achieved within your business environment and how can it impact tomorrow's success, today? First of all, happiness is a subjective experience. What makes me happy, for example, may not make you happy at all. So what is a business owner to do? Ask! That's right; we all need to invest in our employees by getting to know what they value and what makes them happy. A great idea is to incorporate questions into your interviewing/hiring process so you can identify what type of work experience each prospective employee is looking for and then put together a compensation package based upon each individual's value system, not just straight dollars per hour or per year.

For most of us, however, our employees are in place and we would like to make sure we retain our investment in their training and increase the efficacy of their interactions with our customers. So how do we make them happy and keep them happy so our investment in them appreciates and our customers have such a good experience that they can't help but tell everyone about it?

- Share your vision and their value in it. *Even though we all value different things, understanding what the business is about and your importance to that vision are essential building blocks for self-worth and team effort.*
- Learn what is important to each employee. *Happiness is not all about money. Flex-time, parking, specific hours, a desk by the window, potted plants, a different title, child-care assistance, new paint on the walls, etc. are just some examples of what can make people happy. Take the time to find out the simple things you can do today, that can increase employee satisfaction and productivity tomorrow!*
- Involve your employees in some of the decision-making. *Whether you have hourly workers or salaried employees, people work better when they do not feel powerless. No matter what kind of work your employees perform, a happy employee is an engaged employee. Make sure you show your respect for your employees and their value to your business by involving them in some of the decision-making. Take advantage of their expertise and let them advise you or actually make decisions in their areas of expertise. It is one thing to tell them they are valued, but it's quite another to show them!*
- Help them find and use their gifts. *People are always sensitive to any type of job change that is not labeled a promotion. Yet even a promotion can be unwanted and de-motivating. Try establishing an environment of exploration in your organization. Let everyone know that you are looking for the best fit for each individual, from a personal as well as professional point of view. Create the expectation that both the employer and the employee will be evaluating the fit and tweaking the position as time goes on.*

We spend so much of our time working that tomorrow's success is much more likely when each employee can find happiness on the job.

Remember, balance is a process...not a destination. *Feel free to email me and let me know what you find difficult to balance and I'll take a crack at it. All correspondence will be kept confidential.*

You can see Dr. Stacie on national television this Friday morning, April 7th at 10:00 a.m. when she appears on *Living the Life*, a thirty-minute magazine-style talk show which airs on the ABC Family Channel. Dr. Stacie will be talking about *Balancing Tomorrow, Today - AT HOME*, the first release in her three book series on balancing. For more information, log onto [www.livingthelife.com](http://www.livingthelife.com).

*Dr. Stacie L. L. Morgan is a strategy consultant, international speaker, author, and media personality. For more information visit her website at [www.balancedmanagement.com](http://www.balancedmanagement.com) or e-mail her at [stacie@balancedmanagement.com](mailto:stacie@balancedmanagement.com).*