

## Bringing happiness to the workplace

Valerie Sheppard offers tips on how employees can find greater happiness in the workplace



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It's no surprise that many Americans really aren't that happy with their current job situation. Because of the recession, Americans have taken on non-traditional positions and career paths just to get the bills paid. A recent survey showed that only 45 percent of workers were happy at their jobs, making for an all-time low in the last 22 years.

Valerie Sheppard, "Sherpa of Happiness" and CEO of [The Heart of Living Vibrantly](#), provides tips to help employees find greater happiness while at their workplace by "putting heart into your work environment, cultivating optimism, adding laughter and more."

Sheppard embarked on a transformational journey to happiness after taking a "radical sabbatical" from her 28-year corporate executive career working with Fortune 500 companies. She pursued what truly brought joy to her life—helping others live vibrantly, and is now on a quest to help others discover their happiness.

Valerie shares these tips to bring happiness to the workplace:

1. **Put Some Heart Into the Environment:** People are mired in their analytical, logical left brains and totally disconnected from their hearts. Importantly, heart intelligence can aid people's discernment and decision-making. Allowing people to engage at an emotional or feeling level while also bringing the rational, process-oriented intellect into the equation can bring more balance and fulfillment in them, while deriving better action plans for the organization.
2. **Cultivate an Optimistic Culture:** Workplace culture leaders should bend over backward to find the positives in any situation. This doesn't mean ignoring what needs to be fixed. Just actively look for ways to acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate even the smallest of positive happenings no matter the gravity of any situation.
3. **Resist Making Everything so Serious:** A leader who can resist the temptation to make everything "urgent-important" or "mission-critical" can help diminish stress within the team. Create realistic timelines, let go of language that reinforces heaviness like "do or die," and be willing to classify some items on the To Do list as not very important at all.
4. **Create Opportunities for More Laughter:** Start an improv comedy club and host shows during lunch, offer onsite laughter yoga classes, or encourage joke exchanges before meetings to get people laughing and feeling lighter and more present.