

Have a Good Workday



...a better way to manage

the
happy
manager

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HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

Have a Good Workday

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How to be a Better Manager...

Have a Good Workday is one of a series of practical, thought-provoking guides, designed to help you deal with a wide range of management ideas, activities and situations. Whether you are a new manager, or one who wants to hone or develop existing skills, we're sure you'll find something valuable in any of these guides.

This series of e-guides is published by Apex Leadership Ltd. The guides have been developed by a team of professional managers, consultants and educators. The full range of titles is available from [Apex Leadership Ltd](#), or from [the Happy Manager.com](#). Use these guides to benefit from our wealth of management expertise. Let us help you find: **a better way to manage...**"

Phil Higson & Anthony Sturgess
Directors, Apex Leadership Ltd

Using the guides

Each guide contains information, insight and inspiration on essential management topics. The best way to use the guides is to read through each section in turn, ensuring you pause for reflection wherever you see the "Consider..." points. Be sure to answer any questions posed, wherever they appear - they are there for a reason!

Consider ...

Tools ...

After you've worked through the guide, work through the tools. These have been designed to help you use and develop the advice given in the guide. Click on the tool buttons where they appear for an in-text hyperlink to the actual tool. At the end of each tool you can simply click on the "return" link to get back to your place in the guide.

Tool 1 is the summary checklist. This both summarises the contents of the guide, and gives you actions to take to ensure you use it!

[Tool 1](#)

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Have a Good Workday

Have a Good (Work) Day applies happiness principles to help you to do just what the title says. It contains our tips on how to have a good day at the office. It uses "WORKLIVES" our simple tool to help you remember our easy-to-use tips, each working day.



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Have a mediocre day?

When people exchange pleasantries or say goodbye, often you hear them say: “have a good day”. Nobody says: “have a mediocre day” or worse! We all start off intending or hoping to have a good day at work, but we can easily be knocked off course.

So, where do you start? First try this simple exercise. Think back to when you had a great day at work. A time when you felt really energised, excited and motivated in your job. What was it that motivated you?

Use tool 2 to write down some of the things that made that work day a good day.

[Tool 2](#)

Here are some possible answers:

- It's more than likely that you were doing something that **really interested you**, or that seemed especially **worthwhile**.
- It might be that you had a **lot of freedom** to get on with things, in a way you saw fit.
- You may have been **energised by the people you worked with**, or the way in which you were led or managed.
- It may have been the **satisfaction of knowing you did something really well**, or someone recognising your efforts and praising you for them.
- Or was it that **you felt good about helping someone out**, or
- Doing something to **make someone else's day a happy one**.

What helps to make a good day at work can often be the small everyday things. The tips in this guide may be easy-to-use but that doesn't necessarily mean they are easy to do! They will take some thought, focus, and practice.

We think the results will be well worth the effort though!

Often it's the small everyday things that make a good day at work

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Recognising happiness

Happiness is something we all know when we are experiencing it, but we don't necessarily find it easy to recognise how that happened. Happiness and well-being are about feeling good and functioning well - flourishing. The two go together. When we're feeling good we tend to function well; both crucial to having a good day at work.

There are numerous factors that impact on our happiness, but there are two that have been shown to be particularly important:

- The way we think
- The things we do

When we're feeling happy, we are experiencing feelings of:

- Enjoyment,
- Curiosity and
- A sense of engagement.

When we are functioning well, we usually have:

- Positive relationships,
- Control and choice over what we are doing and
- A sense of purpose in what we do.

We can be much more in control of how we feel and function than we probably recognise. So when you get to work, don't expect others to make your day - and don't let others spoil it. Make a conscious effort to have a good day, each day.

Decide then do - choose to have a good day, and then do something about it.

Consider ...

"Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

Abraham Lincoln

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Why does happiness matter?

Why does happiness matter? Let's start with the obvious, that by definition you feel better. Feeling better about yourself and about work and life shouldn't be underestimated or undervalued. Besides the obvious, though, happiness matters because it's been proven to make such a big difference to our lives. There is a long list of benefits. Happy people:

- Tend to live longer,
- Are healthier and
- More successful in their personal and professional lives.

There is also increasing research evidence that happy people make a more significant contribution in the workplace. For example happy people are more likely to:

- Secure job interviews
- Show superior performance and productivity
- Be evaluated positively by their supervisors
- Handle managerial jobs better

Besides this, given the choice, where would you rather spend your work day? A place where:

- People grind out a living,
- Where pressure and stress dominate,
- Where many are over-worked,
- Others are bored, and
- People are generally unhappy and disgruntled?

Or would you rather work:

- In an enjoyable atmosphere,
- Where people feel enriched by their work,
- Know their contributions are recognised, and valued
- Support and encourage each other

There seems little to argue against happiness, why would you? Yet some might say you weren't recruited into your job to make people happy.

But being happy doesn't just make sense it makes business sense.

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Happiness at work

We spend a considerable amount of our time at work, so it's well worth making the effort to be happy when we are there. But you may wonder if there's any point. Especially if you think your efforts are insignificant compared to what's happening around you?

There may be some big issues for organisations to address if they want to become serious about happiness at work. Some of these issues may be within the organisation's control, such as attitude, systems, policy and culture. Others may be more difficult for them to control, especially during difficult or uncertain economic times.

Regardless of these factors, the important thing is that you work at having a good day at work. True, it may be hard to feel happy if you think you're being treated unfairly or in an uncaring manner. However, there's still much you can do for your own benefit, regardless of what else is happening around you.

It is not the intent of this guide to address an organisation's approach to happiness at work (that's for another guide). But we do want to make the point that it's managers who are best placed to build the conditions for a happy productive workplace. Managers often have a far bigger impact on us than the organisation. Survey after survey has shown that people are more likely to leave their jobs because of their line manager, than because of dissatisfaction with the organisation.

The ideas in this guide are based on current thinking and research into what will help us to be happier. We recommend you use it in two ways:

- Take these simple steps to help ensure you have a good day at work.
- Discuss it with your colleagues and your manager - spread the word that happiness at work matters, and it's up to all of you to foster it together.

Why? Because as Cynthia Nelms said:

"Nobody really cares if you're miserable, so you might as well be happy."

The aim of this guide is to help you find ways to have a good day at work. Or better still, to have a good day every day! You can do this by remembering your WORKLIVES...

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Work to your strengths

You will be much happier at work if you focus on your strengths. A strength is something you're good at and that you do consistently well. There must be clear evidence to indicate that this is the case, either from results or from feedback. Try to build your work, or as much of it as you can, around your strengths.

As Peter Drucker said: "It takes far less energy to move from first-rate performance to excellence than it does to move from incompetence to mediocrity."

Offer your help

The old adage: "it's better to give than to receive" applies in the workplace as much as elsewhere. There is growing evidence to show that helping others helps makes them happy, which in turn makes us feel better. So make time for others at work wherever you can. Offering your help, support, positive words, or signs of appreciation will make both you and your colleagues feel better.

Relationships matter

Is there on thing that is most likely to help people find happiness? The answer is surprisingly clear – feeling connected with other people. The bonds we form with others can make a crucial difference to our happiness. Working hard in the workplace isn't just about the pursuit of targets. Make sure you work at developing strong, rewarding relationships with colleagues and customers. Try to ensure you routinely do things at work with other people, especially those you work well with. One great way to build relationships is to become an active team member.

Keep it real

Sometimes a healthy dose of pragmatism is needed in the workplace. Some things can't easily be changed and, whilst they may cause you angst or frustration, often don't seem to go away. In such situations use a sense of pragmatism to help you keep things in perspective. Remember, at the end of the day, a job is just that – a job. Do your best at work but if you can't change things, change the way you feel about them. Adopt a healthy indifference as a way to cope with anything you can't easily change. Remember Oliver Hart's famous quote:

"Give us the fortitude to endure the things which cannot be changed, and the courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to know one from the other"

Use tool 3 to think about having a good WORK day

Tool 3

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Look after yourself

Keeping yourself in good physical shape is one of the keys to happiness. There is a clear link between physical and mental health. Build exercise in to your work routine. Apart from keeping you in shape, exercise will release endorphins which will make you feel better. A healthy, balanced diet will provide you with the energy and incentive to be more active - maybe use part of your lunch break to exercise!

Inquisitiveness

Just as a healthy body will help us to be happier, so will a healthy mind. One way to do this is to think of yourself as a life-long learner. Maintain an inquisitive mind about your job, the people you work with, your customers, your employer and their situation. Make an effort to continue learning at work, not just by attending courses but as part of your working routine. Knowledge can also be gained from shared experience. Don't overlook the resources which surround us each day. Learn and draw inspiration from the pool of experience that surrounds you at work.

Value what you do

Happiness is not just about pleasure; it's about meaning and significance. One way to add to your happiness is to think about the value of what you do. There will be obvious value in terms of what your job does for you – money, support for your family and life, friendships, self-esteem, etc. There is also value in terms of how your work has significance to others. Even the most routine job will be providing value for colleagues or customers. We're happier when we value what we do, often because we can see that something meaningful is being achieved.

Enjoy what you do

One interpretation of happiness is a combination of pleasure, meaning and significance. So next time you go to work: enjoy, engage and excel. Try to enjoy your work. Amidst all the things you have to do, make sure you find time for things you want to do. Engage with your work by being productive, not just busy. Excel – make a significant impact at work by doing something really well. Even better, make it something that's important to your role and the team's goals.

Smile – it's infectious

The simplest action you can take to be happier at work is to smile more often. The very act of smiling makes us look and feel better. It can make the people you're with feel better too. Make a conscious decision to smile more often. Look for things to help you and your colleagues smile, as often as possible.

[Tool 4](#)

Use tool 4 to think about actions to implement the LIVES part of the model.

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A day in the life

Surely simple things built into a daily routine can't make that much of a difference? We started this guide thinking about when you have had a great day at work. A good day at work should be what we plan to have on a regular basis, and that starts with today and then tomorrow.

Here are three thoughts which capture the idea that there is much we can do to make today a good day at work:

"For yesterday is but a dream
And tomorrow is only a vision,
But today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day!
Such is the salutation of the dawn."

Indian dramatist, Kalidasa.

"If you could do something that would make people happy, and it would cost you neither money nor time, would you do it? If that same thing made you happy, would you do it? What is this magical thing that will brighten your day and the days of people around you and yet cost you nothing? A smile."

David Niven

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It's well worth thinking about how we can make today a day well lived!

For more on how to be happy at work, read our e-guides written especially for that purpose....

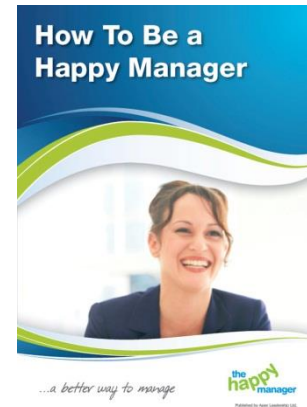
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How to Be a Happy Manager

You weren't hired to be happy! Or were you....?

Find out why happiness is good for managers, the people they manage, and the organisations that employ them. Make an instant impact on the way you manage with answers to questions like:

- Why does happiness matter to you and to your business?
- Can being happier really make me a more effective manager?
- What makes a happy manager?
- How to be a manager people are happy to work for?



This guide will show you how happiness is good for managers, the people they manage, and the organisations that employ them. It will make an instant impact on the way you manage – for the better! Find answers to the questions that will show you how to become happier at work. Questions such as:

- Why does happiness matter to you and to your business?
- How can I be happier and more productive at work?
- Why is work-life balance so important and how can I achieve it?
- Can being happier really make me a more effective manager?
- What makes a happy manager?
- How do I become a manager people are happy to work for?

Being serious about happiness is a win-win situation! The evidence suggests that happier people are more likely to be successful and more productive at work than others.

Happiness is good for you and good for business!

This guide is essential reading for anyone looking for a better way to manage. It's easy to read, with insightful tips, inspirational quotes, and practical actions to help you make an immediate impact.

What's in How to Be a Happy Manager? The 15 essential tips are:

1. You weren't hired to be happy...or were you?
2. The making of a happy manager
3. Happiness – good for you and good for business
4. The paradox of happiness
5. Don't let work define who you are
6. Look after yourself
7. Remember who you work for
8. Too busy to be happy?
9. Make work engaging and enduring
10. How to be happier at work
11. Managers make the difference
12. Be a manager people are happy to work for
13. Do what you love
14. Play to your strengths
15. Don't forget: enjoy the experience!

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Workstyle, Lifestyle

As pressure increases on managers to deliver more with less, the need to balance work and life has become more important than ever.

Paying attention to our well-being is crucial because feeling good and functioning well go hand-in-hand.

This guide draws on research and survey data to encourage a fresh look at work-life balance.

It's a great value guide to help you find a better balance between your work-style and your life-style!

Content: 31 pages and 5 tools

Format: Downloadable pdf with in-text, hyperlinks for easy navigation.

This guide will help you to:

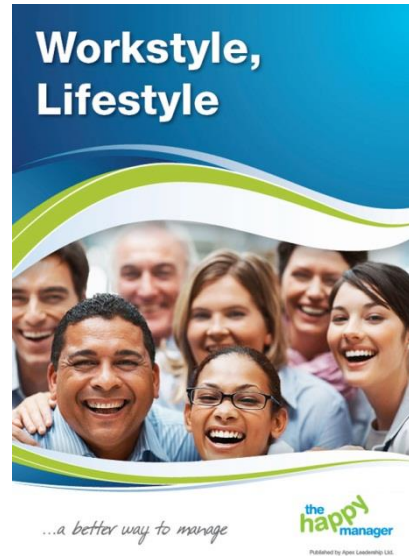
- Articulate the current issues associated with work-life balance.
- Investigate the way success is defined in work and in life.
- Apply principles to encourage well-being at work and living a balanced life.
- Help you to support the needs of those you manage and to contribute to the wider organisation's understanding of work-life balance.

In this guide you will find:

- Work-life balance
- Defining work-life balance
- Confusing activity with productivity
- Work-life balance through the stages
- Work-style / Life-style
- Work
- Life
- Style
- Why work-life balance?

Tools:

- Tool 1: Calculating your work-life balance
- Tool 2: Be inquisitive for life
- Tool 3: Take time to learn
- Tool 4: What is enough?
- Tool 5: The bigger picture



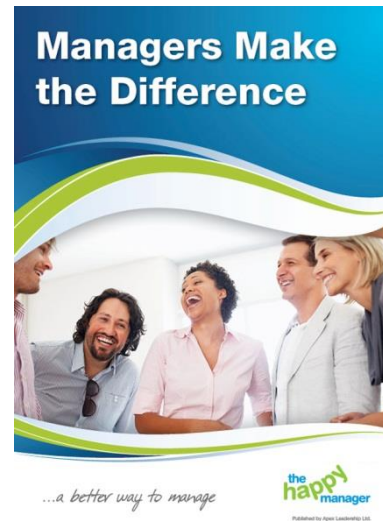
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Managers Make the Difference

The evidence shows us that good managers can – and do – make a significant difference to performance. This applies to the performance of individuals, and teams and even to entire organisations.

It may be relatively easy to summarise what makes a good manager, but what makes a great manager? Perhaps the better question to ask is “what do great managers do differently?”

This thought-provoking e-guide offers you some answers, and some tools to move you from good to great. What do great managers do? They make all the difference!



Content: 27 pages and 5 tools

Format: Downloadable pdf with in-text, hyper-links for easy navigation.

This guide will help you to:

- Develop your thoughts about your own approach to management.
- Review your approach to how you manage people.
- Evaluate an evidenced-based approach to management.
- Plan to improve your management approach.

“What do great managers do differently?” To help answer that question, this guide investigates 6 themes:

Great managers.....

- Adopt a balanced approach, using head, heart and hand.
- Create the right conditions.
- Learn from the best, and keep learning.
- Combine success and effectiveness.
- Do the simple, the mundane and the obvious.
- Ask the right questions.

Tools:

- Tool 1: How to be a balanced manager.
- Tool 2: Assess your learning from the best.
- Tool 3: Think about the obvious.
- Tool 4: Great managers ask great questions.
- Tool 5: How to be a great manager.

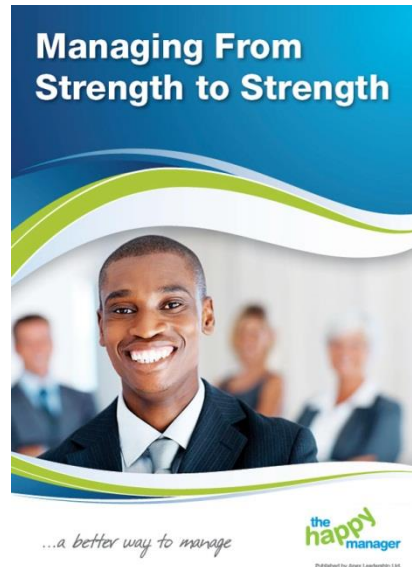
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Managing from Strength to Strength

How do the best managers create happy, high-performing workplaces? Some might say it's one of management's best-kept secrets. But it needn't be – the answer is in this guide!

What makes the most effective contribution to good performance? The combination of individual strengths. Simple? It should be but what we intuitively know, we don't often see in practice.

If you want to transform performance in your team, apply the strength-based principles in this guide. Insights, tools and techniques to get people improving what they're already good at.



Content: 22 pages and 5 tools

Format: Downloadable pdf with in-text, hyper-links for easy navigation.

This guide will help you to:

- Apply strength-based principles.
- Develop your own role based on a strengths approach.
- Support the development of your team to build on their strengths.
- Implement a strength-based approach to improving your team performance.

Contents:

- Strength-based thinking
- Managing individual strengths
- Managing team strengths
- Organisational strengths

Tools:

- Tool 1: Identifying your strengths
- Tool 2: Minimise your weaknesses
- Tool 3: Organisational strengths
- Tool 4: Future strengths
- Tool 5: Appreciating strengths

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Making Change Personal

Managing change is no easy task. How can managers implement change, given that it's not always well received?

One key is to remember that change is personal. We all react differently to a changing environment. People are far more likely to embrace change if it can be made relevant to them personally. How can you do that?

This guide is packed with insights and tools to help you make change personal. Be more than a manager who endures change – be a leader who shapes it.

This guide will help you do just that: shape change positively. Use it to:

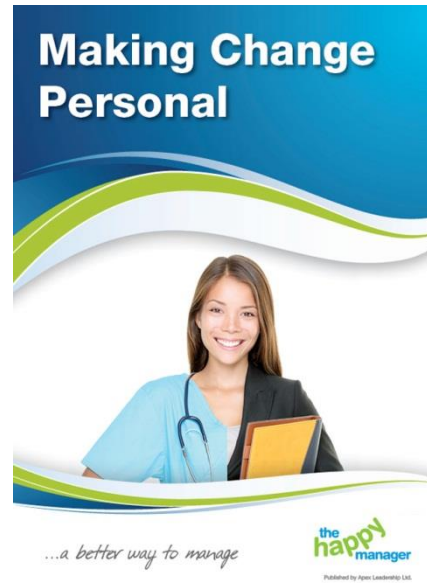
- Assess your own approach to change.
- Recognise the need for personal change.
- Develop skills to manage the transitions through stages of change.
- Maintain energy to cope with change.
- Make the most of changes.
- Cope with uncertainty.
- Find your own motivation to shape change positively.

Content:

- Personalising change
- How do you make change personal?
- Responses to change
- Changing yourself
- The need to change
- Change and transitions
- People view change differently
- Change and energy
- Shaping change positively
- Shaping change through principles

Tools:

- Tool 1: Check-list for making change personal
- Tool 2: Personalising change
- Tool 3: Using your head, heart and hand
- Tool 4: Changing yourself
- Tool 5: Change and transitions



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Tool 1: Checklist for have a good workday

The Happy Manager – WORKLIVES Model

W	Work to your strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try to do more of what you're good at ✓ Build on those strengths wherever possible
O	Offer your help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It's better to give than to receive ✓ Giving is good for others and good for you, so offer some time, words or actions each day
R	Relationships are the key	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong personal and professional relationships are perhaps the biggest factor affecting happiness at work ✓ Build and maintain them as a priority
K	Keep it real	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remember why you're working and who you're working for ✓ Keep a sense of perspective - it's a job! ✓ At the end of the day, tomorrow is another day!
L	Look after your-self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you don't look after yourself first, how can you help anybody else? ✓ What we do — or don't do — with our bodies influences our mind ✓ Regular exercise, adequate sleep, and healthy eating habits are keys to physical and mental health
I	Inquisitiveness is worth it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A healthy mind is as important as a healthy body, so adopt an inquiring mind ✓ Lifelong learning is an important element in the pursuit of happiness
V	Value what you do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remember what you have to be thankful for in your job – its value to you ✓ What good does your organization contribute, and what is your role in this – your value to others
E	Enjoy what you do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enjoy yourself - it's your choice how you feel each day ✓ Engage – spend more time on things that engage you, that use your strengths productively ✓ Excel – Everyone likes to do something well
S	Smile – it's infectious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The very act of smiling has been proven to make you and others feel better ✓ So choose to smile and enjoy your WORKLIVES

Tool 3: Activities for a good WORK day

This tool suggests things to do for the first four letters of our model: WORK.

<p>Work to your strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Make a list of your proven strengths, both professional and personal.✓ Think about how you can make more use of them at work and use at least one strength today.	
<p>Offer your help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ List 5 specific ways you can offer your help to others at work. Do them today.✓ Reflect on how you've done, and how it made you feel while doing it.	
<p>Relationships matter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ List the people you relate to each working day. Do you have a good balance of social interaction and professional contact? Make a point of doing something supportive today.✓ Make the effort to talk to someone from beyond your normal working or social circle.✓ Think about volunteering for a team or other group at work	
<p>Keep it real</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ List the 3 main things at work that are causing you stress or anxiety.✓ Can you change them? If so, how, and is it worth the effort?✓ If you answer "no" to any of the last points, think about how you need to change the way you think about the things on the list, or the way you act in response to them.	

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Tool 4: Actions for “LIVES” to have a good work day

This tool suggests things to do for the second four letters of our model: LIVES.

<p>Look after yourself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you don't exercise regularly, try building some extra effort into your work routine. For example, use the stairs rather than the lift. ✓ Make the effort to analyse what you eat. Resolve to eat responsibly for one full week then reflect on how you feel. 	
<p>Inquisitiveness is worth it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Investigate opportunities to develop yourself, both professionally and personally. ✓ Practice asking questions at work and engaging in conversation with colleagues, with a view to learning. 	
<p>Value what you do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Think about and appreciate what your job allows you to do with your life. ✓ List the things that your organisation does for its customers and community ✓ Reflect on how your particular job contributes to this. 	
<p>Enjoy what you do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Think about what you enjoy at work and how you can add it to your routine as often as possible. ✓ Reflect on the last time you did something really well. How did it make you feel? Do it again. ✓ Think about team goals and how your strengths and interests can best be applied to them. ✓ Even if you're having a bad day, make sure you do at least one thing you enjoy. 	
<p>Smile – it's infectious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try smiling and reflect on how it uplifts your mood. ✓ Make a conscious effort to be positive with your colleagues – try to make smiling habitual. 	

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HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

Updates

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Join the conversation: bookmark the Happy Manager blog.

(www.the-happy-manager/blog) Leave any comments, suggestions or examples of your own experiences for the benefit of other readers.

Titles available:

How to be a Happy Manager
Have a Good Workday
How to Build a Happy Workplace
Workstyle, Lifestyle

Build a Better Team
Team Building Exercises
Team Health Check
The Problems with Teams
Why is Teamwork Important?

Leadership Essentials
Defining Leadership
Leading with Style and Focus
Leading Insights

Transformational Change
Sustaining Change
Making Change Personal

It's All About Performance
15 Performance Management Tips
Managing Performance and Potential
Performance Management Skills
Performance Management Toolkit
Conducting a Performance Review
Manage Your Own Performance
Motivating Performance

Managing for Strength to Strength
Managers Make the Difference
Re-defining Middle Management
Do More with Less
Managing Time and Priority
Extreme Thinking: Unlocking Creativity
SMART Goals, SHARP Goals
Making Better Decisions
What's the Problem?

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