

9 Simplest Ways to Be Happier at Work

The happiest--and most productive--people focus more on what they do, not on what they have. Here's how it works in practice.



Many people think happiness, both professional and personal, is based on having a bigger house, nicer car, larger income. It's all about better, faster, higher, *more*.

Yet the happiest people I know focus a lot more on what they *do*, not on what they have. They see a great outcome as a wonderful by-product of a personal journey and not a primary goal. In short, their perspectives and beliefs are different.

To live a more joyful life, try adopting a few of those beliefs:

1. The best success is shared success.

Solo success is rewarding.

Achieving something with another person or a team is awesome. Not only do you feel good about yourself, you feel great about other people--and you create a connection that can last a lifetime.

And if you do fail, you fail together, which makes that failure a lot easier to take and provides the support to help you try again.

2. Comparisons kill.

No matter how successful you are there will always be someone who is more successful. No matter how big your business gets, there will always be a bigger business. Unless you're Serena Williams or Stephen Hawking or Bill Gates, there will always someone better or smarter or richer.

To be happy, only compare yourself to the person you were yesterday--and to the person you hope someday to become. You may never be the best, but you will gain incredible satisfaction from being the best *you* that you can possibly be.

That's all you can control--and all that really matters.

3. A body is a terrible thing to waste.

When you were a kid you sometimes ran simply for the joy of running. You jumped and rolled and skipped because it felt good. Without thinking, you used your body as a way to celebrate being alive.

Now you don't.

Try something for me. Go ride a bike. Or jump on a trampoline. Sure, it's a little awkward now, but it's still really fun. Or swim, or play a game, or take a hike or a long walk.

You might get a little bummed because you'll realize you're no longer young but you'll also find out you're not as old as you think.

And you'll realize there's still a kid inside you. That realization alone will make you happier and, in time, will help you see the world and your place in it in a different and better way.

4. Luck is the worst thing to wish for.

Why? The things you earn are infinitely more gratifying.

If you saved up to buy your first car you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you worked and hustled and saved and finally had enough to buy your car, you appreciated it. You took care of it. It was *yours*, both practically and emotionally.

If you were given a car, that was pretty cool--but you didn't really *feel* anything. (Except possibly gratitude.)

If you want to wish for something, wish for the strength and perseverance to earn the things you want. Don't wait for luck to bring you that enabling client; work your butt off to land that enabling client.

That way you'll not only enjoy the destination, you'll appreciate and be fulfilled by the journey.

5. Fear is a sure sign of life.

Nothing beats how you feel immediately after you put a fear aside and take a plunge. And that feeling lingers for a long time. Think about the speech you dreaded giving; immediately after, even if you bombed, you felt a sense of relief and even exhilaration. You did it!

Facing a fear makes you feel alive. The more alive you feel, the happier you will be.

Pick a small fear and stare it down. I promise you'll feel awesome afterward. Keep doing it and in time you'll open yourself up to new experiences, new sensations, new friends--and a richer, more fulfilling life.

6. Silly and irrelevant makes the life go round.

You're incredibly focused, consistently on point, and relentlessly efficient. Your life is dialed in.

Your life is also really, really boring.

Remember when you were young and followed a stupid idea to an illogical conclusion? Road trips to nowhere, trying to eat six saltine crackers in one minute without water, staying up all night just to see who fell asleep first. You dined out on those stories for years.

Going on a mission was super pointless and super fun. In fact the more pointless the mission, the more fun you had because missions were all about the ride, not the destination.

So do something, just once, that you no longer do. Drive eight hours to see a show. Get up really early and buy your seafood at the dock. Ride along with a policeman on a Friday night (easily the king of eye-opening experiences).

Do something no one else thinks to do. Or pick something that doesn't make sense to do a certain way and do it that way. You'll remember the experience forever.

The joy of possession comes and goes. The joy of experience, especially an unusual experience, lasts forever.

7. Good people deserve their just reward.

Don't wish someone else had gotten the recognition they deserved. Don't someday regret not having let people know how you felt, how you cared, or how much you appreciated them.

The act of recognition is just as fulfilling as the receipt. Make someone else feel good and you instantly feel good, too.

Best of all, you can do something good for someone else and the joy you feel will never, ever diminish.

8. Values create the springboard for actions.

Few things create greater trauma and stress than when what we do doesn't match what we value.

Pick three things you value most. You might value pride, or sincerity, or faith, or family, or cooperation, or adventure, or camaraderie, or humility, or independence--the list is endless. Pick three.

Then determine how much of your time--and how much of your money--is spent on those values. The more time you spend fostering and honoring your values, the happier you will be.

Live your values and you can't help but be happy and more joyful-- because in those moments, you are exactly who you truly wish to be.

9. Subtraction creates addition.

Everyone wears armor: armor that protects but in time also destroys.

The armor we wear is primarily forged by success. Every accomplishment adds an additional layer of protection from vulnerability. In fact, when we feel particularly insecure we unconsciously strap on more armor so we feel less vulnerable.

Armor is the guy who joins a pick-up basketball game with younger, better players and feels compelled to say, "Hi, I'm Joe--I'm the CEO of ACME Industries." Armor is driving your Mercedes to a reunion even though taking your other car would be much more practical. Armor is saying, at the start of a presentation, "Look, I'm not very good at speaking to groups... I spend all day running my huge factory."

Armor protects us when we're unsure, tentative, or at a perceived disadvantage. Armor says, "That's okay. I may not be good at this but I'm really good at *that*. (So there.)"

Over time armor also encourages us to narrow our focus to our strengths so we can stay safe. The more armor we build up the more we can hide our weaknesses and failings--from others and from ourselves.

Take off your armor. Sure, it's scary. But it's also liberating because then you get to be the perso

n you really are and, in time, start to really like the person you really are.
Which is the surest road to happiness