

Happy Workers are Good Workers

According to an extensive study in 2019 by the Oxford University's Saïd Business School, a conclusive link between happiness and productivity was found — happy workers are 13% more productive.



“Happy workers are good workers.” I wish I had been the one who said that, but that succinct wisdom was stated by Dave Seabrook, IT manager at Micron Manufacturing Company in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dave was sitting with other PMPA IT Committee members enjoying dinner after a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee and the discussion turned to workforce. Dave mentioned how much fun they have making their Christmas video each year and then told us about the SocialKnots team that organizes monthly fun events for the shop: January board games, February pizza party, March bowling outing, April hot dog lunch, May horseshoes with burgers, June ice cream social, September ladder ball and hog roast, October chili cook-off, November no turkey pot luck, and a December food drive.

As the conversation continued, Kevin Coffman, president of Champion Screw Machine Engineering, Inc. in Wixom, Michigan said that at one point he paid for a premium fantasy football league for everyone to have fun talking about it with each other. Now that the league is free, he buys beer and food for the fantasy football draft along with a trophy for the winner of the league. About 10 years ago, he bought an iPad for Christmas for everyone so they could learn the then-new technology and tell their friends and family about it.

The conversation rattled around in my head the next day while we were traveling to Horn USA for a tour. When PMPA committees meet, we like to coordinate a tour of a fellow member's facilities and Horn USA in Franklin, Tennessee was generous enough to open their doors. They built a new facility and Duane Drape, Horn USA's national sales manager, was proud to explain that their employee's needs were at the forefront when designing the space — even when selecting the location. They mapped where their employees lived and chose a property within a quarter of a mile of the former facility so that travel wouldn't be a concern. Keeping with the employee's needs, Horn USA



The snack shop at Horn USA in Franklin, Tennessee.

houses a snack shop and the company gives each employee an allowance to spend in case they need a little pick-me-up. Amongst other improvements, Horn built a beautiful cafeteria and a special room for mothers with newborns. Horn also built rooms with standing tables for those quick meetings that usually happen in the hall and interrupt others. They also built special tables for the shipping department so they could be raised and lowered depending on the employee's height.

Facility or morale improvements that are made with thoughtful decisions with employees in mind can improve productivity. We don't want our people to think of work as only a paycheck. We want them to feel valued, be happy, to stay and be productive. Not only are happy employees more productive, but they tell others and word-of-mouth is the most effective recruitment tool. ⊕

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