

Want to Be Happier at Work?

Ten tips to make work more enjoyable

Our brains are wired to focus and dwell on all the things that frustrate us about our work (and our life). And the more we think about the things we don't like, the more we notice them! This negative bias was important to survive all the dangers we constantly encountered back in prehistoric times. However, today it can leave us feeling miserable with a bad attitude towards our jobs. If we want to be happier at work, all we have to do is start paying more attention to the good stuff. Easy, right? Definitely not!! But there are things we can do to make it easier. Here are a few to try.

1. Start creating a list of all the good things about your work. It could be something big or very small. It could be related to a person, a project, a situation, a benefit, etc. Try adding something new every week or every time you notice something.
2. Read your list of good things every morning before you start your workday. Take a moment to think about and appreciate each one.
3. Thank someone for something they did or tell them what you appreciate about them. Be sincere and specific.
4. When you start getting frustrated or find yourself dwelling on the negative, distract yourself. Talk to a friend, go for a walk, go outside for fresh air, listen to a favorite upbeat song, read a funny or inspiring story or article, etc.
5. Smile and say "Hi" to twice as many people as normal – be genuine in your smile.
6. Post a new upbeat poster, picture or quote at your desk where everyone can see it.

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7. Start off a meeting by first sharing something positive that is going on in your group, project, work, etc. (ask others to do the same).
8. Find some occasion to celebrate with others (project milestone, birthday, new house, etc.). Pass around a card for people to sign or make a sign.
9. Remember the meaning and purpose in what you do and how you add value to your organization/customers/clients/students/ patients. Remind yourself and others why your jobs are important.
10. Intentionally add something positive to your day. Keep it simple. It could be listening to a favorite, upbeat song, talking with a friend, stepping outside for some fresh air, or taking time for your favorite cup of coffee or tea.

Make copies of this article and leave them in the lunchroom or anonymously on people's desks. Feel free to highlight any specific tips you think they should notice.

Pick the tips that work best for you and keep practicing or using them for at least a couple of weeks. Pay attention to see if you notice any changes in your attitude about work. Be patient! Changing our focus and how we think about our jobs is a process that takes time. If you can't find anything good, you should seriously consider finding a different place to work.

Tina Hallis, Ph.D., is a Professional Speaker and Consultant. Her company, The Positive Edge, is dedicated to helping people shift their thinking so they can achieve more in their work and in their life. Sign up for her weekly tips, short messages to help you stay focused on the positive at www.thepositiveedge.org/blog

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