

# **Happiest Workplaces Around the Globe 2025**





# ELEVATE WORKPLACE HAPPINESS

At Happy Place to Work<sup>®</sup>, our conviction runs deep: happiness transcends mere emotion, becoming the cornerstone of unparalleled success.

Our showcase of the globe's happiest workplaces serves a greater purpose—to light a beacon for companies worldwide, urging them to elevate employee well-being and satisfaction to the top of their agenda.

These illustrious examples underscore a critical business truth: prioritizing the happiness of your team transcends moral duty—it catalyzes profound business advantages.

# WELCOME

In January 2014, Happy Place to Work® (HPW) partnered with the Wellbeing Initiative—a nonprofit committed to advancing global standards in workplace well-being—to launch a bold mission: to identify the happiest workplaces in every country and uncover what truly drives lasting happiness at work. While happiness is widely accepted as a universal human aspiration, it remains underexamined in the realm of organizational science. Most existing efforts still reduce workplace happiness to limited proxies such as engagement scores, benefit schemes, or employee satisfaction.

Conventional workplace rankings often reflect only fragmented dimensions of well-being, missing the complexity of what it means to truly thrive at work. In response, this report integrates cultural insights, empirical research, and scientific models to deliver a multidimensional, globally relevant evaluation of workplace happiness. Spanning regions, industries, and organization sizes, this initiative stands as the most comprehensive global assessment of employee well-being to date.

The Happiest Workplaces Around the Globe 2025 report is built upon an extensive meta-analysis of national and international workplace awards, interpreted through the lens of the PERMA Model of well-being by Prof. Dr. Martin Seligman. This model—Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment—serves as the foundation for our conceptual and analytical framework.

In countries where public rankings were limited or methodologically inconsistent, HPW deployed a proprietary well-being survey aligned with the PERMA model. These surveys allowed us to directly measure employee happiness and organizational climate. In select cases, we used a hybrid model—merging survey results with meta-analytical insights—to ensure methodological rigor, cross-cultural relevance, and local validity.

Ultimately, this report is both diagnostic and prescriptive: it offers a snapshot of where global workplaces stand today, and a roadmap for how organizations can evolve into truly happy, high-performing ecosystems. By adopting the data-driven strategies and human-centered principles outlined here, any organization—regardless of geography or sector—can begin creating a workplace where people don't just succeed, but thrive.

As part of our in-depth analysis, we assessed the stock market performance of companies recognized as the happiest workplaces across the USA, UK, Canada, Germany, and France—benchmarking them against their national indices. The results were striking: these organizations consistently outperformed their country averages, providing compelling evidence that workplace happiness is not just good for people—it's good for business.

This strong correlation underscores a vital truth: employee well-being directly influences financial performance. Companies that prioritize a positive and supportive culture don't just foster engagement—they earn investor confidence, enhance resilience, and unlock sustainable growth.

Our integrated approach not only spotlighted top-performing employers but also confirmed their deep alignment with the full spectrum of holistic well-being. The message is clear: cultivating happiness at work is no longer optional—it's a strategic and economic imperative.

# KEY

## **1. Human-centered experience eclipses compensation as the key differentiator.**

In 2025, the happiest workplaces shifted focus from perks to purpose. Employee experience is now built on autonomy, trust, and belonging. Listed companies design agile, inclusive environments where people shape how and when they work. This shift is strategic: 88% now integrate well-being into engagement efforts. In uncertain times, emotional connection outperforms compensation. The most resilient companies foster meaning and recognition—turning work into a source of purpose, not pressure.

## **2. Leadership pipelines are fortified through adaptive learning ecosystems.**

As AI and hybrid work transform business, HPW-listed firms have scaled leadership development. 81% boosted learning budgets, emphasizing digital skills, empathy, and cross-generational communication. Learning is now continuous—through micro-courses, peer mentoring, and AI-powered feedback. This prepares employees to lead with confidence in complexity, strengthens internal mobility, and secures long-term agility.

## **3. Well-being becomes a design principle, not a benefit.**

As hybrid work matures, the most successful organizations are integrating well-being into daily systems and culture—not as a perk, but as a core design feature. HPW-listed companies now offer adaptive wellness ecosystems combining AI-supported burnout tracking, self-directed well-being plans, and integrated mental health services. These efforts are underpinned by leadership modeling and inclusive policy structures. In contrast to unstructured wellness initiatives, this embedded approach ensures participation and drives trust.

## **4. Happiness-focused companies sustain higher performance through turbulence.**

Despite market shocks and instability, HPW-listed companies outperformed national stock indices by 12% on average. Their secret? Consistent culture investments, trusted leadership, and motivated employees. While others cut back, these firms preserved internal strength—showing that workplace happiness isn't soft. It's a buffer, a differentiator, and a proven path to operational resilience.

## **5. The workforce divide grows—retention depends on emotional climate.**

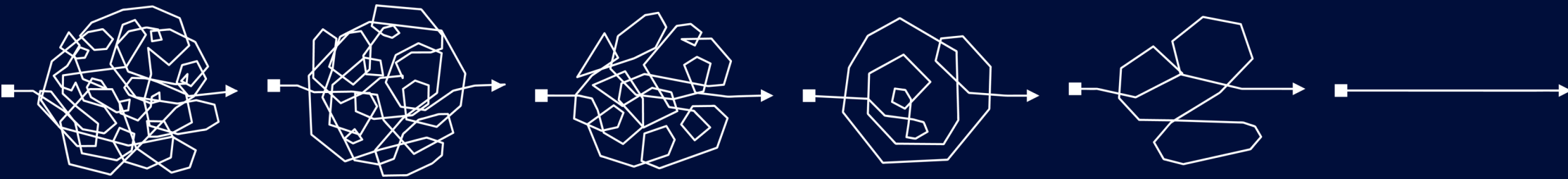
In 2025, the gap between happy and unhappy workplaces widened. Only 60% of HPW-listed firms struggled with talent retention, compared to 87% of others. Why? Happier companies offer safety, voice, and values. Employees in these cultures stay longer, refer others, and grow with the organization. Retention now hinges less on recruitment and more on emotional connection.

## **6. DE&I progress retreats amid global polarization.**

Across both listed and unlisted companies, momentum behind diversity, equity, and inclusion slowed in 2025. Only 38% of HPW-listed firms now cite DE&I as a strategic priority—down from 45% last year. Budget reallocations, public backlash, and internal fatigue contributed to the decline. In unlisted companies, structured inclusion efforts nearly vanished, with just 22% reporting active programs. This erosion was especially pronounced in countries facing heightened political polarization. Yet many HR leaders warn: disengaging from DE&I compromises innovation, psychological safety, and reputation. For happiness to remain credible and inclusive, organizations must recommit with clarity and courage.

# FINDINGS

**Employee  
happiness simply  
comes down to  
“how we feel  
during work.”**



# Understanding Employee Happiness

**Employee happiness is key to unlocking an organization's greatest potential, yet senior leaders often struggle in defining happiness in a way that can elevate performance, improve business results, and fulfill their organization's purpose.**

## **What is Employee Happiness?**

Few things are as vital yet challenging to capture as employee happiness. Senior leaders aim to harness this happiness for better performance and results, while employees seek jobs that fulfill and environments that nurture their well-being. Customers, in turn, prefer the company of content employees, understanding that happiness at work fosters a positive atmosphere. This collective aspiration underscores a universal truth: happy workplaces are the bedrock of a thriving society.

Not surprisingly, there are probably as many definitions of "employee happiness" as there are people trying to define it. Some adopt a descriptive stance, focusing on tangible aspects like salaries, benefits, and the physical work environment. Others prefer a dynamic perspective, seeing happiness as intricately linked with leadership styles and organizational ethos. But these approaches predominantly treat employee happiness as a company's responsibility to fulfill. HPW, however, sees it differently, asserting that employee happiness is fundamentally about "how employees feel during work." This perspective broadens the responsibility, suggesting it should be shared between the company, its leaders, and the employees themselves.

**UNIQUENESS:** Workplace happiness is unique to each employee: Organizations dedicate much time and energy to diagnosing their workplaces and devising improvements. Often, they employ standard surveys that box their environment into predefined categories of "good" or "bad," ignoring the nuanced feelings of individual employees. These methods not only overlook the unique aspects of each employee's experience but also lack in providing leaders with a clear, actionable plan for fostering a truly happy workplace, sometimes even leading them further away from this goal.

Nevertheless, contemporary research underscores the uniqueness of each workplace and how strategies for employee happiness differ by organization. Recognizing this, HPW adopts an experience-based approach to fostering workplace happiness. Identifying employees' feelings about their work experiences is the first, and often most effective, step toward creating a happier workplace.

**FULFILLMENT:** Employee happiness begins with meaning. Genuine happiness stems from engaging in meaningful tasks, not just financial gain. Higher salaries offer only temporary happiness and don't lead to better performance. Employees stuck in meaningless jobs display lower productivity, staying more out of necessity than choice. Yet, meaningful work isn't the only ingredient for happiness. Employees also need to see their work's impact and feel their potential is fully utilized. The balance between being challenged and leveraging skills fosters an optimal state of flow, where work becomes deeply engaging, boosting both happiness and performance.

The individual attention leaders show to employees, recognizing and appreciating their achievements, along with relationships built on trust with colleagues and a collaborative work environment, ensure the sustainability of happiness that comes with flow.

“Money, social status, plastic surgery, beautiful houses, powerful positions – none of these will bring you happiness. Lasting happiness comes only from **serotonin**, **dopamine** and **oxytocin**.”

YUVAL NOAH HARARI, SAPIENS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF HUMANKIND

# The chemistry of workplace happiness

## 01 Dopamine

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**Dopamine is the chemical of success.** It is triggered when employees feel successful in their roles. The sensation of success requires: engaging in meaningful work that generates value, utilizing one's full potential while performing tasks, seeing the outcomes of one's work, and learning and developing through the work process. The feeling of achievement is a result of the individual's interaction with their work.

## 02 Serotonin

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**Serotonin, the pride chemical,** is stimulated when employees' efforts are recognized and valued by their managers and celebrated by their colleagues. Additionally, increases in status and working under a prestigious employer brand can trigger serotonin, enhancing feelings of pride. Therefore, pride is fundamentally connected to how employees interact with their leaders, their teams, and the broader workplace environment.

## 03 Oxytocin

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**Oxytocin is the chemical of trust.** It is activated when employees receive personalized attention from managers, establish collaborative relationships with colleagues, feel supported by their leaders and team members, and can be themselves at work. The sense of well-being and peace at work can only be achieved with the presence of oxytocin.

Therefore, while salary and benefits are important, they do not bring lasting employee happiness. Sustainable happiness in the workplace can only be achieved by creating an employee experience that triggers serotonin and oxytocin.

**We reviewed 18,325 companies to make The World's Happiest Workplaces list.**