

23E IDEAL WORKPLACE

What factors lend toward an ideal workplace?

Creating a positive work environment, where workers flourish in using their skills. Some managers are working to bring these changes about in their firms.

From numerous discussions I would suggest the following:

- A decent salary
- A genuine team spirit
- A good mix of skills
- A good quantity of work accomplished without pressure or threats
- Genuine respect for each other
- Clear expectations
- A lighthearted atmosphere
- A break-room or lunchroom in the building
- A picnic area, walking trail, or basketball hoop on the premises
- Discussions over lunch
- Lunches out, working lunches
- “Bonding” exercises: escape room, inter-office competition, making a humorous video
- An annual event: fishing trip, canoe trip, campout
- Opportunities to keep learning
- Coaching, encouragement, praise from the leader

Healthy workplace

In 2022 the federal government issued a report on workplace mental health and wellness. The five elements (pillars) of the plan were

1. Protection from harm.
2. Connection and community.
3. Opportunity for growth.
4. Mattering at work.
5. Work-life harmony (balance). [1]

These are pretty general, widely-accepted, ideas that a Christian employer can find ways to approach in terms of “loving one’s neighbor as oneself.”

Concepts-

1. Everyone will struggle with something, different at different times
 - Workload and time crunch
 - Health issues

- Financial issues
 - Family concerns
 - Balancing work and family
2. No one should feel alone in what they're going through-
Companies need teams, emergency calls, support groups of some sort.
3. Common issues faced by workers:
- Loneliness
 - Anxiety
 - Stress
 - Burnout
 - Fatigue
 - Addictions
 - Depression
 - Interpersonal conflicts
 - Biggest issue in workplace mental health: doing meaningful work
- (For people of faith: work for God, desire to please God)

4. Strategies for the workplace
- Regular breaks
 - Relaxation to reduce stress (doesn't have to be Eastern meditation)
 - Exercise programs
 - Encourage healthy diet
 - Encourage decent sleep
 - Support groups/network
 - Positive atmosphere
 - Learn to handle emotions
 - Times of fun
 - Avoid hours of screen time
 - Encourage strong families/family activities
 - Encourage "margin"- don't fill every minute with activity
 - Surveys- to assess the baseline
 - Counselor or chaplain available

Primary strategy: Build resilience for everyone, an ability to rebound and keep playing.

5. Share useful material with employees on

- Time management
- Wellness
- Creativity
- Positive approaches to life
- Balanced lifestyles
- Conflict resolution
- Emotional intelligence
- Social intelligence
- Cultural intelligence

6. Where believers can specifically help:

- Continually encourage others
- Be proactive peacemakers
- Pray for others; offer to pray when there's a need
- Provide practical help when needed: meals, visits, transportation.

Reference

1. Office of the Surgeon General, "Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022.