

Five Ways to Create a Better Office Environment

Sean Spear | Hughes Marino Blog

Did you know that employee wellness and employee performance are linked? Yes, this is completely true and proven through research. It has been scientifically proven that a culture of wellness actually drives results by helping to create an engaged workforce. Employees that enjoy their office environment have been shown to outperform competitors in categories like productivity, profit and employee retention. WOW! It actually makes me smile when I think about it. The data states, if you create a better work environment and invest in your employees and office space, your company WILL ACTUALLY BECOME MORE SUCCESSFUL. Great news!

What type of office environment do you have? If you work in a negative environment, it has a huge impact on your health and ability to perform. I read a recent study that stated “new nurses bullied by veteran nurses and doctors put forth less effort and develop less empathy for patients. Service employees who are subject to customer aggression report more mental and physical health problems and are less committed to their jobs...a twenty-year study that tracked six thousand British civil servants found that when their bosses criticized them unfairly, didn’t listen to their problems, and rarely praised them, employees suffered more angina, heart attacks and deaths from heart disease.” A toxic work environment can literally kill you.

So how do we change a bad work environment or make our already great environment even better? Here are five recommendations proven through research and my own personal experience.

1. Invest in Your Team

When is the last time you brought a motivational speaker or expert in to speak to your team? I’ve seen personally how



Hughes Marino’s office in West Los Angeles.

bringing in a thought leader can have a profound impact on a company’s culture. Every year Hughes Marino brings in speakers to talk about personal development and how to create a better culture at the office space—how cool is that? The executive team is investing in each individual and striving to help create a better environment. I know I’m not the only one that has walked away from these experiences feeling inspired and having an overwhelming sense of gratitude for our company and team. With that said, I must warn you, this can backfire—I’ve heard horror stories of companies bringing a speaker who was less than qualified, don’t do this. Invest in someone credible and with a proven track record—one person I really like is Mike Robbins.

2. Get Up and Move!

According to the University of Cambridge, being sedentary is just as dangerous as being obese (what?). The study found that a lack of exercise accounts for twice as many deaths as obesity among European males. Yikes! Get up and move people. Maybe, instead of hosting a meeting in the conference room, you ask your colleague or prospect



At every team meeting we recognize team members for going above and beyond with our inspiring WOW cards.

if they would be open to the idea of going for a walk-meeting and talking business outside (I actually do this all the time and get a refreshingly pleasant response from people). Steve Jobs was famous for doing this. You could also hold a step competition or create breaks throughout the day which allow employees to get some vitamin D! Another idea is to play music throughout the office—we do this at all of our offices and it creates a nice vibe, while also welcoming the spontaneous dance-off (I'm still waiting for my team to award me best dancer!).

3. Fuel Up with Great Food

Put garbage in, and you get garbage out. Do you have healthy snacks at the office? Unfortunately, most traditional employers are still offering low-quality food options—candy, soda, and other snacks loaded with sugar, saturated fat, and chemicals. Brutal! These options ruin productivity with energy crashes and they also seriously impact employees' health in the long run. Invest in healthy options, it really does matter. A company that we use and love is Snacknation—check them out.

4. Become Dog Friendly

Allow our furry, four-legged friends free reign of the office (I'm not referring to cats, they have actually been proven to kill happiness and productivity...kidding!). Central Michigan University found that the mere presence of a dog in the office improves collaboration. Dogs have also been linked to helping increase productivity and reduce stress in the workplace. So don't be afraid to embrace the bark!

5. WOW

I was recently on a podcast talking about office environments and what makes Hughes Marino so special,

and I responded by saying "WOW cards." The Hughes Marino "WOW cards" have become almost famous in the business community, the concept was created by our amazing President & COO Shay Hughes. If you're not familiar with our "WOW cards" concept, I would encourage you to visit our website to learn more. The short and skinny is, at team meetings our employees will recognize another peer for going above and beyond, and for truly creating a "WOW" moment by giving them a "WOW Card." That "WOW card" also has a monetary award attached to it. Super cool stuff, right?

Remember, not all employee wellness initiatives are equal. These are my top five, and you may have some others you might want to consider, and that's perfectly fine. My hope with this article is to get the creative juices going on how you can create a better office environment. Feel free to reach out to me directly if you have any questions at sean@hughesmarino.com. □

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Our San Diego office features an outdoor lounge area, basketball court and dog run!



Dogs are linked to helping reduce stress in the workplace, and we love when they come to visit!



Hughes Marino business coach Mike Robbins speaking with our team about appreciation in the workplace during an all-team meeting.