

Radisson Exhibition Center Shanghai  
Grand Opening Package from RMB 588\* per room night

Radisson  
EXHIBITION  
CENTER SHANGHAI  
上海展览中心

For more information, please visit Radisson.cn



Follow us @ | Shanghai Call Center: 962288 | Mobile Version | TUE, JUN 14, 2016

Sign Up | Login

Advanced Search

上海日报  
ShanghaiDaily.com

Shanghai  
Sunny  
°C | °F 19°C 30°C

诺德安达双语学校上海闵行区  
NORD ANGLIA CHINESE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
SHANGHAI  
安达励志 志在高远  
Be Ambitious  
咨询 Apply Today

Home | Business | Metro | Nation | World | Sports | Feature | Opinion | Sunday | Viral | PDF | Subscribe |

IDEALShanghai

Latest news: Graphite industry helps trigger industrial revival in NE China

The story appears on  
Page A6  
June 14, 2016

GET THIS PAGE IN  
PDF

Free for subscribers  
View shopping cart

Global Lens on China  
外媒看中国



Mickey Who? China's  
Richest Man Opens  
Theme Park With  
Warning for Disney  
中国首富所建主题乐园  
开园，竞争迪斯尼

[View more »](#)

Photo Sets

Queen  
Elizabeth II's  
90th birthday

Stunning  
fireworks show  
at Shanghai  
Disneyland

Feeding time

Giant pizza  
goes for  
Guinness world  
record

[View more »](#)

HOME » OPINION » CHINESE VIEWS

## Happier workers could be more productive

By Sun Xi | June 14, 2016, Tuesday | PRINT EDITION



Sun Xi

NOBEL-PRIZE winning economist Paul Krugman once said: "Productivity isn't everything, but in the long run it is almost everything."

So far, many strategies used in China to raise productivity are fairly conventional: capital investment, labor increment, skills training, and technological and business innovation. However, one unconventional factor has been underestimated — the power of happiness.

-ADVERTISEMENT-

OPENING IN MAY 2016  
PUXI, SHANGHAI  
  
PARKSIDE  
SERVICED SUITES  
by  
JANSON PLACE

You May Like

Promoted Links



Attractive opportunities  
in used luxury market



Her Dress Dropped Jaws  
At The 2015 Met Gala  
StyleBistro



Better late than never,  
German football club  
aims to score points  
with Chinese fans



Warwick Homeowners:  
This Brilliant Window  
System Saves £1000s  
Eco Experts

by Taboola

Most Read

Today

1

Happiness is a mental, or emotional state, of well-being defined by joy, satisfaction, contentment, enthusiasm and interest. Many psychologists have pointed out that happiness promotes the capacity of innovation, improves memory and leads to greater altruism.

There have been clear and positive links between workers' happiness and their productivity — happiness makes workers more productive.

A recent study led by Andrew Oswald, Eugenio Proto and Daniel Sgroi from the Department of Economics at the University of Warwick found that happy workers were 12 percent more productive, while unhappy workers were 10 percent less productive. The research was based on four different experiments with more than 700 participants.

Based on statistics from 1994 to 2009, Fortune's list of the 100 best companies to work for in the United States outperformed their peer group by 2.3 percent annually. According to Prof Alex Edmans at the London Business School, this is not a mere correlation, but a direct causation between happier companies and shareholder returns.

Happy workers even make better sandwiches. The British sandwich chain Pret a Manger, which takes its employees' well-being very seriously, attributed its impressive 16 percent annual sales growth in 2014 largely to workforce happiness. Its staff are even given a special bonus for being happy during work.

### Middling result

In the World Happiness Report 2016 Update by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, China was ranked the 83rd happiest country among 156 countries.

In the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2016 by Swiss business school IMD, China ranked 25th out of 61 on a list of the most competitive economies. It also ranked 26th for business efficiency.

To boost productivity, tripartite partners (employers, workers and government) in China need to cooperate with one another closely and continuously.

First, employers are at the center of creating a happier workforce. They should follow a simple "EMOTION" approach — Employee engagement, Maximizing satisfaction, Optimizing culture, Trust building, Individualization, Opportunity creation and Non-monetary incentives.

At Google, employees are given competitive salaries, free Wi-Fi on shuttle transport, free ice cream and healthy snacks, free lifts to work, and the opportunity to spend 20 percent of their office time on "passion" projects.

Other practical measures adopted by top companies include work-life balance, flexible hours, training opportunities, challenging assignments and clear career progression, so employees feel stretched professionally and valued personally.

Second, workers play a key role in their own happiness, since in essence one's personal perception of their job affects satisfaction. Everyone can follow a "HAPPY" recipe — contributing to Harmony at workplaces, working with Appreciation, staying Positive, pursuing your Passion and focusing on improving Yourself instead of competing with others.

### Measuring happiness

Third, the government should consider measuring happiness in the workplace and society, as only "what gets measured gets managed," in the words of Peter Drucker, the founder of modern management studies.

Police name suspect in airport blast

2

Man detained for taking pictures of woman's underwear at Metro station

3

As opening day nears, Mickey has a challenge to win children's hearts

4

Weak economic data signal Q2 GDP growth below expectations

5

Father 'grieved by rampage'

In this regard, the United Kingdom could be considered a role model.

In the UK, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Well-Being Economics was formed in 2009. In 2010, the National Well-Being Programme was launched. Since 2012, it has published annual statistics on well-being. Since then, reported personal well-being in the UK has been improving and year-on-year differences are statistically significant.

In 2014, the What Works Centre for Well-Being was set up in the UK to promote greater understanding of what government, business, communities and individuals can do to improve well-being. A similar mechanism could be formed in China. For a start, government should consider officially collecting and publishing annual national statistics on workforce well-being, measuring not only overall satisfaction with work but also fulfillment across different occupations.

To effectively use workforce well-being data, public dialogues and stakeholder engagement are necessary to communicate the likely impact of policy initiatives on workplace happiness and to help employers create conditions for employees to work happily.

So far, China has enjoyed a tremendous increase in material prosperity. Perhaps it's time for the pursuit of happiness, even if it is harder to quantify. In return, a happier society will be beneficial for realizing higher productivity.

The writer, a Chinese alumnus of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, is a senior investment analyst and independent commentary writer based in Singapore.

Chinese Views



You May Like



**Policeman Loses An Arm, Not His Tenacity**



**China reviews 2012-2015 human rights progress, pledging greater effort**



**Man detained for taking pictures of woman's underwear at Metro station**



**Laser Eye Surgery From Only £9 per Month, per Eye. Clai...**  
Optical Express



**Sparta : The Best Free and Addicting Online Strategy Game**  
Sparta Online Game



**Why Did Nobody Tell Us About This New Life Insurance Rule?**  
Insured For Life

Sponsored Links by Taboola