

Meet us at WIRED Live this November

BOOK TICKETS

Promotion

For a more productive workplace, make your staff happy

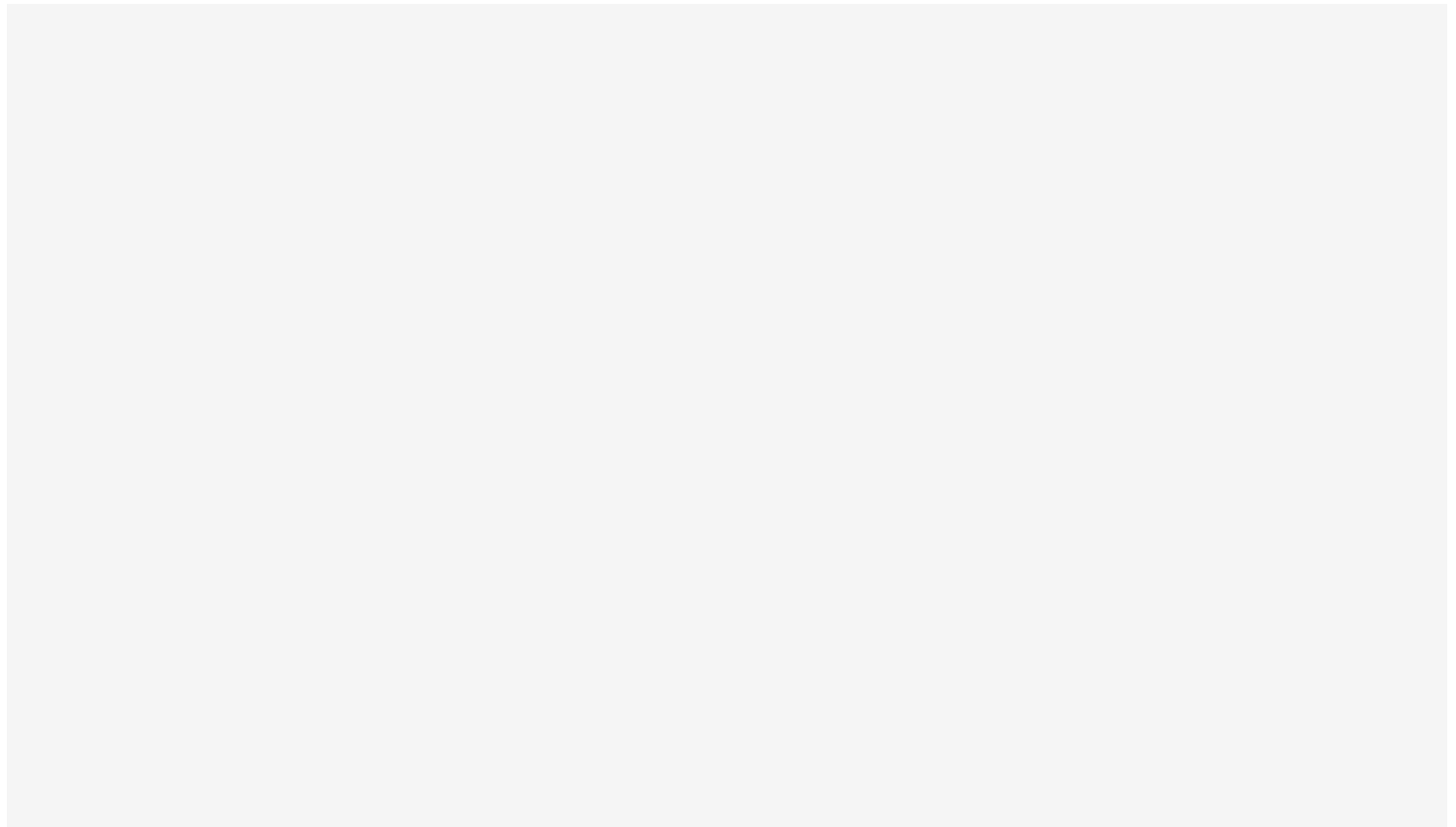
Decades of research tells us that a happy worker is a productive worker, but businesses of all sizes still find it hard to meet their employees' needs, which can leave them feeling disillusioned and unappreciated at work

—

1 day ago

—

In partnership with **DELL**





Credit **Michał Bednarski**

Fortunately, it's easy for small businesses to make flexible, cost-effective changes that will bring tangible benefits to their staff's working lives.

Research by the University of Warwick Department of Economics has found, in a range of [experiments](#), that making people happy encourages them to put in more effort, increasing their productivity by somewhere in the region of 12 per cent.

That's huge – a 12 per cent increase to the UK's 2017 GDP would add 24,046 million pounds to the national economy. The same kind of boost could apply to your business's profits, and that comes on top of the practical efficiency improvements that you can make by giving your staff the right equipment to do their jobs.

In the [Dell & Intel Future Workforce Study Global Report](#), research firm Penn Schoen Berland found that "as communications and productivity technology advances, (employees) are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with workplace capabilities. Though they still rely on analog equipment like landlines and desktops, they're ready for a workplace that can accommodate their changing lifestyles."

Millennials – workers aged between around 22 and 38 – and younger Generation Z, just coming into the workplace, are interested in the potential of technologies including augmented and virtual reality, business calls that can be taken on their own smartphones, and even artificial intelligence and machine learning systems to streamline processes.

For small businesses, the most relevant of those are communications and remote working technologies; greater

support for mobile devices; a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) workplace that makes it easy for staff to work using phones, tablets and laptops they're already comfortable with, and quality-of-life improvements ranging from standing desks to dual-monitor setups.

First, it's important to establish exactly what your staff need, rather than just splash out willy-nilly on the latest shiny tech. In its [advice for small businesses](#), Dell advises that you should "specify your employee requirements, including data-intensive work, specialized software, dual monitors, or more."

For example, if a staff member works with large spreadsheets, video editing software or needs to keep multiple reference windows open while writing a paper or document, a dual-monitor setup can radically [boost their productivity](#), improving efficiency by an average of 18 per cent and user happiness by a massive 91 per cent.

Improvements in [remote working technology](#) mean that key employees can work from home just as though they were at the office, with secure VPNs connecting them to your network and VoIP telephony keeping them on the company phone system. It's a particularly valuable option for firms that don't want to lose the talent of young parents.

Meanwhile, a clear and flexible [bring-your-own-device](#) policy can not only save you money on issuing company mobiles, but almost means that staff can use hardware they know and love, while a mobile device management service lets you can control exactly how much access their devices have and easily lock them out of your systems if lost or stolen.

Small changes can bring great benefits to your employees' working lives. The flipside of that is that, according to Penn Schoen Berland, 32 per cent of all workers and 42 per cent of millennials say they're more likely to quit a job with substandard tech.

In [Are happy workers more productive?](#), Dr Eugenio Proto of the University of Warwick writes that "experimental laboratory studies and real-world evidence both validate gains to companies from paying attention to employees' well-being. Happiness seems to motivate greater effort, increasing output without affecting its quality and thus boosting productivity."

Dr Daniel Sgroi [writes](#) that boosting workplace happiness can be achieved using a range of methods, including "improvements in the working environment, better interaction between workers, between management and workers, and positive feedback or encouragement."

To help companies make that happiness boost a reality, Dell's [small business productivity](#) services provide advice and resources for firms that want to improve the working lives of their staff, from up-to-date hardware to guidance on the best ways for your remote workers to telecommute to your network. They also have a full suite of [Pro-Support services](#) that can give small businesses peace of mind too.

By listening to your employees and acting on their needs, you can help make them happier, more productive and more likely to stay with your business for the long haul.

--

For more information on Dell [click here](#).