

NAVIGATING COMPLEXITY MINDFULNESS IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE

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Abstract

Corporate world today is facing daunting challenges of great complexity and the global nature of today's world is demanding immense deal of people and organizations and one source of energy for meeting the demand will be the well-spring of Spirituality in the Workplace and specifically, Mindfulness. This paper discusses Mindfulness as a best organizational practice. The central aim of this holistic new mantra is to enable employees to connect themselves harmoniously and positively with other people in organizations, and to develop the workplace into an enjoyable and blissful environment. Thus one of the hallmarks of winning and successful organizations of today is the capacity to develop more holistic and spiritual understanding of the age old practice "Mindfulness" in the workplace for competitive advantage.

Keywords: *Spirituality, Mindfulness, Workplace, Well-being.*

Introduction

In today's chaotic business landscape, employees are looking at the workplace to fulfill their spiritual needs, while organizations are looking for positive and fruitful work outcomes. Spirituality is an attempt to help the employees experience and understand themselves and to face changes not only in their personal lives but also at work where they spend a large amount of time. Hence spiritual practices are required for them to reduce perceived job stressors on work-life and work balance issues and employee wellbeing. Spiritual practices and person-centered stress management techniques are followed in corporate nowadays and they

include Mindfulness, Tai chi, quiet room, yoga, Pranayama, Visioning exercises, and Auto-suggestions, promotion and counseling. meditation; centering exercises such as deep breathing to reduce stress; visioning exercises

Mindfulness

The term "Mindfulness" has been used to refer to a psychological state of awareness, the practice, mode of processing information and a character trait. Mindfulness is "to be aware and attentive of what occurs in the present". It is the state of inner consciousness in which an individual is aware of his own thoughts and actions moment by moment. Mindfulness is about his mind being present and not drifting with past, future thoughts or other distractions. It is important to note that Mindfulness is about acting with awareness; therefore, it stands in contrast to notions of 'automatic pilot' or acting without awareness

Understanding Mindfulness

Marque (2008) suggests that, Mindfulness, offers an individual an opportunity to quiet the mind and be at peace with the present moment. In doing so, the individual can be at an emotional harmony not only with the self but with their environment as well and it leads to a reduction in stress and an understanding of life's experiences and situations. Yeganeh and Kolb (2009) posit that practicing 'Mindfulness' enhances physical and mental health, creativity, wellbeing and contextual learning. As employees learn to foster more Mindfulness in the workplace they are more likely to manage their stress and emotions more effectively, thereby improving their likelihood of success at work. In addition, the increased positive affect generated through Mindfulness would be expected to increase problem solving and creativity at work, as suggested by Fredrickson's (2000) research on positive affect and the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotion. Davidson and colleagues (2003) found that those who are trained in Mindfulness meditation exhibit significantly greater activity in the prefrontal cortex even while not in meditation. Mindfulness meditation shifts people's ability to use emotion regulation strategies in a way that enables them to experience emotion

selectively, and it may be processed differently in the brain (Farb et al., 2010) Mindfulness meditation practice and self-reported Mindfulness were correlated directly with cognitive flexibility and attentional functioning was positively associated with the ability to express oneself in various social situations (Moore and Malinowski, 2009).

Organizational Practice of Mindfulness: A Snapshot

Schumpeter the noted columnist (Times of India) writes that, one of the most popular classes at Harvard Business School is conducted by Michael Puett. He teaches Classical Chinese Ethical and Political Theory. Students flock to his course because they believe it gives them counter-intuitive ideas. A new study by researchers in Wisconsin, Spain, and France reports the first evidence of specific molecular changes in the body following a period of intensive Mindfulness practice. In India, Maharishi Institute of Management Studies conducts such programmes for the benefit of corporate Leaders. Companies like Reckitt & Colomon, Tata Chemicals, and Indian Petro Chemicals are the beneficiaries of such programmes.

Google deserves special mention for its best organizational practice of Mindfulness. Being led by Chade- Meng Tan, who is gloried as Jolly Good Fellow, Google introduced a program to increase emotional intelligence using Mindfulness — and backed by scientific research. It's called Search inside Yourself and is now offered to organizations outside the Googolplex. At organizations like the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Contemplative Outreach, Ltd, and Parallax Press (publishers of Buddhist books), members share in meditation and contemplative prayer time during the work day, and often use the insights from these practices to frame their interactions.

Bill George, a former boss of Medtronic, a medical-equipment company and a board member at Goldsman Sachs, is introducing the

concept of Mindfulness at Harvard Business School. Keisuke Matsumoto a Buddhist monk has got his MBA from Indian School of Business, Hyderabad and applying its principles to revitalize temples back home. Apple computers in California have a separate meditation room where employees can meditate for half-an-hour every day to keep the stress at bay. Prentice-hall has established a "quiet room" where employees can meditate in a relaxed manner to bust their stress

Benefits of Mindfulness

Mindfulness enhances emotional intelligence, notably self-awareness and the capacity to manage distressing emotions. It also delivers these measurable benefits:

- ✚ Reduced stress Levels and less depression and anxiety.
- ✚ Lower blood pressure, More cognitive flexibility and Boost to working memory ✚
- ✚ Greater optimism, self-esteem, Increased life satisfaction, vitality power.
- ✚ Increases competence physical, mental health and physical well-being.

Conclusion

Mindfulness-based Spiritual practice improves employees and managers' life, morality, business decisions, leadership values, and interrelation with their employees. Although this spiritual concept Mindfulness is based on Buddhist doctrine, this spiritual practice can be applied to everybody, regardless of their beliefs. Hence the surge of interest in Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy has become not only accepted but also seen as "cutting edge."

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