



Making Happiness Commercially Smart

The overview in 170 words

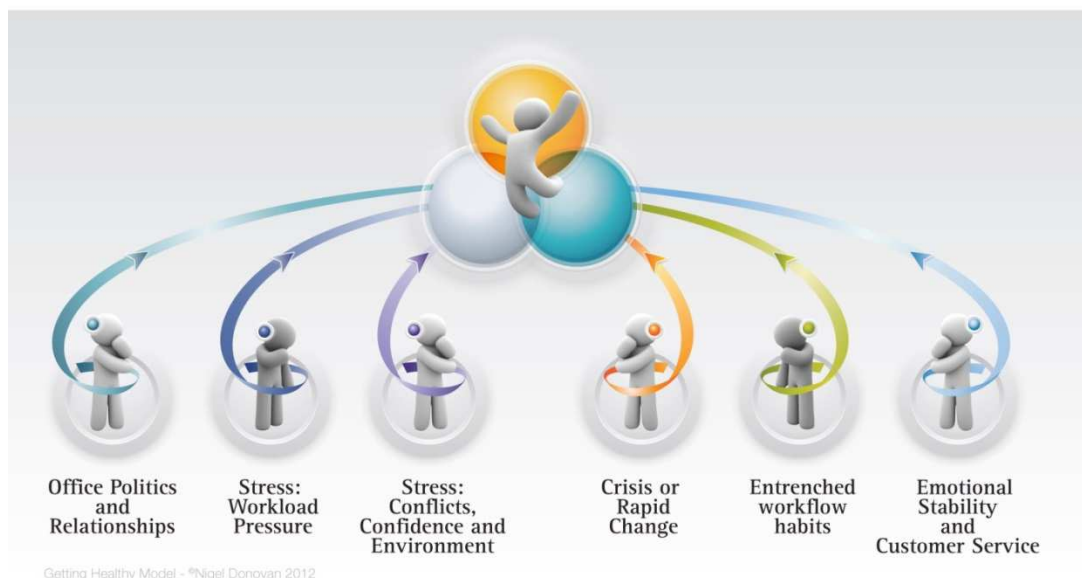
The application of the science of mind as it relates to managing stress, conflict and personal productivity makes happiness a commercially smart objective. Teaching people how to self-manage their responses to situations in the moment provides a significant commercial return.

Skills to improve authentic happiness are teachable. These skills reduce stress and the possibility of conflict whilst also improving resilience, customer service and productivity. It's like fitness training for mental health.

My approach is specifically designed to teach people the skills to self-manage and improve their mental health. Imagine what your workplace would be like if your key people were fully engaged and firing on all their mental cylinders more of the time. Like a hydrofoil; they rise above the chop of daily life and enjoy a powerful and smooth run.

The deliberate focus on teaching people how to apply the science of mind to build authentic happiness will do more for the morale, effectiveness and attitude of your key people than any other type of personal leadership development.

Skills for Authentic Happiness solve a wide range of problems



Key Challenges

In a world of increasing automation, highly processed workflows, instant information and constant change the only thing that remains true is that the most important dynamic in your business is the way your people manage themselves and their interactions with others.

Leading businesses are remembering that people are still their most important asset, still the biggest expenses line item on the PnL and still the most variable and enigmatic part of the business. The MyAtaraxy™ Programmes address a wide range of the issues that businesses face when improving productivity of modern professionals, project leaders and key personnel. Here are just three.

1. Effective Under Pressure – over the medium term

The modern professional has to achieve more and more with less. The rise in competition and connectivity means the client expectations are high, deadlines are short and the workload never ends. Those who rise through technical skill also need the skills to adjust to the pressure of leadership. Helping your key people to stay clear of mind and not become mentally fatigued over the medium term is a key challenge.

Australian professionals, project managers and leaders are among the hardest working in the world¹; staying effective and optimistic under this pressure is key to the organisation's productivity, work quality and competitive advantage.

2. Engagement = Happiness @ Work

Staff engagement remains one of the key success factors; increasing productivity, customer service, innovation and reducing the cost of conflicts, low morale and high staff turnover. Human resources departments, recruitment companies and training companies have espoused the importance of *staff engagement* for years. Afraid that serious business is no place for a word like happiness, the term engagement is used as a euphemism. Engagement means that your people enjoy coming to work, that they are prepared to help beyond their specific narrow job role; they contribute to others in a positive manner and are more likely to stay and grow with the firm.

The MyAtaraxy™ Programmes improve the happiness (sorry - *engagement*) of your people.

3. Productivity through transition and focus management

The conscious brain is a big user of energy, the constant and regular transition in and out of areas of focus is like city driving compared with freeway driving. It takes more energy and creates more wear and tear to start and stop the car than it does to maintain a constant speed. Not only is it *less efficient*, multi-tasking is a cause of fatigue and stress.

¹ Australia at Work study, compiled by the Workplace Research Centre at the University of Sydney Business School. Among employees in professional roles; almost 2/3rds (61%) usually work unpaid hours on a regular basis, with one-in-six (18%) working greater than 10 unpaid hours per week and a further 16% work between 6-10 unpaid hours a week.

Poor transitions from one interaction to the next also have serious impacts on customer service, liability and safety. When you expect more and more incidental interactions between your team and their customers you should ensure they have the skills to switch their focus from the previous encounter to the one they are experiencing right now.

Teaching people how to intentionally STOP multi-tasking and to attend to the present moment is to teach people how to be more productive, more focused and less stressed. Plus it ensures that their mind is on their current experience, not the conversation they have just had or the one they are about to have.

What makes Happiness such an effective goal?

Now is the time for people to realize that commercial interests are best served by a deliberate focus on improving the mental health of their people. Developing skills for Authentic Happiness is the most effective way to strengthen mental health in otherwise healthy people. Below are seven reasons why making happiness the goal is such a smart strategy.

1. *Competition for Talent – People Matter and they expect more*

It is no longer good enough to host the odd social function or staff team building exercise. Stress relieving and team building events may temporarily mitigate the pressure of the modern workplace but they do nothing to address the cause of the stress. The pile of work is still there on Monday, strained relationships are still simmering unresolved and people's self-doubts are still tethering them to their current level of competence.

Teaching people how stress, conflict, habit and self-image are caused and how to restructure their thinking to remove the suffering provides ongoing relief.

2. *Happy people are easier to manage*

The best employees are the ones that take the smallest amount of energy to manage. You want to support these people more, but your time is too often monopolised by people who require more support. Like a parent, you tend to intervene where there is a problem.

People who understand themselves, who can self-manage their relationships, their workload and stress and who are mature enough to seek help, without embarrassment, at the right time, simply do not require the same amount of mental energy to supervise.

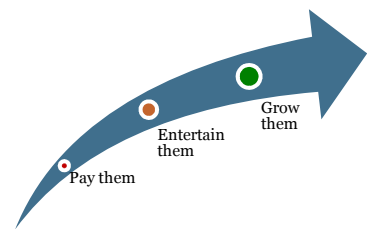
Imagine if your team was more content with the past, happy in the present and optimistic about the future - more of the time. You can actually mentor more and medicate less.

3. *Focus on being – not having.*

It is easy for people to forget that achievement (including promotion) is achieved through what we actually do, not through what we expect or hope to do in the future. We need to plan and devise strategies but we only have the present moment in which to take action and effect changes.

So much has been made of achievement and status that people are focused on what they want to *have* not how they need to *be*. The MyAtaraxy™ Programmes show people that it is their way of being that drives their happiness, achievements, their relationships and productivity.

Reaching the summit of the mountain is highly satisfying, but the state of mind, the challenge, the concentration and effort in climbing is the fun bit.



4. *Happiness is a universal reference point*

In the same way that fitness training helps both the very fit and the very unfit, so to building skills to for emotional and mental health helps the rising star, the problem child and everyone in between. There is nothing about a person's current state of being that cannot be improved through a better understanding of their mind and their reactions to situations. They will be able to make better decisions in the moment when it matters, regardless of their starting point.

What other high end personal goal can be more universal and more universally desirable than to improve a person's experience of life? Authentic happiness **requires**; achievement, compassion, empathy, respect, a focused mind, curiosity and an ability to see different perspectives². All of which make for a very effective employee.

*Authentic happiness **requires**; achievement, compassion, empathy, respect, a focused mind, curiosity and an ability to see different perspectives*

Clearly any workplace that can develop a culture akin to this will be a place where people want to work and where achievement with a positive attitude is the habit.

5. *Treats the cause – not the symptom*

Most of the 'soft skills' training people undertake is wasted because the training does nothing to address habit and the choices people make in the moment when it matters. No time management process works without the person actually working the process. No enhanced listening skills training works unless the listener has the emotional maturity to withhold judgment and actually listen.

Skills for mindfulness and habit change mean that people can make changes in actual behavior at the time when it will make a difference.

6. *Life doesn't end at work*

The subconscious mind doesn't care whether you are at work or at home. Stress, conflict and pressure in one context are carried into the next. Those who have a greater ability to manage their relationships and to meet challenges and knocks that the world dishes out from time to time are at an advantage in times of crisis. Their home life is less impacted by their work and their work life is less impacted by their personal lives.

² Martin Seligman, a leader in this field for over 40 years and head of the School of Applied Positive Psychology at Philadelphia University, describes authentic happiness of employees at work through the acronym PERMA: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Achievement.

7. *Improves capability, autonomy and it works in the moment – any moment*

People with these skills and knowledge are more adaptable and effective in just about any context. They have the ability to deal with the world as it is. They can clearly see the difference between;

- The stuff they do (habits/programming)
- The stuff they know (semantic knowledge and comprehension of the world), and
- The stuff they pay attention to

This people are highly self-aware, they can understand what is happening in their mind in almost any situation and provide a clear methodology for making changes.

MyAtaraxy™ Meta Model

Why do we do what we do when we know what we know?

We often know what we should do, but are frustrated by the unseen power of habit and our subconscious mind. It is not a lack of understanding of the problem directly in front of us, but the understanding of a system created by 100,000,000 years of evolution and a few dozen

years of experience; the problem of conscious experience.

It is not good enough anymore to blame people who don't change by saying it is just a matter of willpower and attitude. This is a statement made from the envious vantage point of someone who already has these traits in their game and it is insulting to those who are trying hard to effect change.

The thing I am most proud of with the MyAtaraxy™ model is that it doesn't tell you how to be, it doesn't tell you which values are the best. I teach you how to understand the complexity of brain function, habit creation, perception, mindfulness, and the nature of consciousness through simple models, concepts and case studies. Then show you how to apply this understanding to your situation in a way that you can *actually use* to improve your experience of life moment by moment.

The MyAtaraxy Model provides you with tools that make a difference in the moment. You learn how to evolve your brain with Authentic Happiness as the goal, and effectiveness, sincerity, empathy, strength, relationships and wellbeing as all happy side effects.

By understanding the interactions between the things you do, the things you know and the things you pay attention to you can make changes that make a difference to your effectiveness and way of being.

Next Action:

1. Subscribe to the MyAtaraxy™ Blog (via website)
2. Speak with me about how to bring these skills to your business
3. Enroll in the MyAtaraxy Programme

Warm Regards

Nigel



About: Making Happiness Commercially Smart

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You can subscribe to the MyAtaraxy Blog via the website.



From the Author:

If you had asked me 10 years ago about my life’s purpose, I would have said “to lighten the mood” and not much has changed. I have been studying, training and coaching people in personal leadership and business for well over a decade and I maintain that helping people enjoy their experience of life is what my life is all about.

I am a coach, mentor, trainer, author and speaker; a thought leader in the commercial application of the science of habit and happiness.

My real passion is for understanding human behaviour.

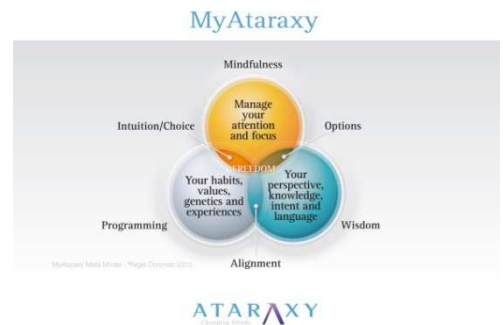
I love distilling complex ideas in neuroscience, psychology, philosophy, biology, physics, history, literature and modern human behaviour and then make these ideas practical and usable in everyday life. To help people build a deeper understanding of themselves and the people around them.

This passion gets channelled through development and delivery of workshops, mentoring programmes and speaking engagements. For example; “*The Stress, Workload and Fatigue Management*” workshop helps people cope with the constant pressure that modern professionals experience or the *MyAtaraxy™ 90 day Mentoring Programme* which delivers one-on-one targeted support to improve the effectiveness of you and your leaders.

Like a personal trainer I help you improve what it feels like to be you; applying my knowledge to your situation to make a difference to your life, effectiveness and productivity.

My unique approach applies the science of mind and the MyAtaraxy Meta Model (pictured) to address the hard questions in professional development:

1. How do you change behaviour?
2. How do you get your team, and yourself, to behave differently to their habit, *in the moments when it matters?*
3. How do you change what it *feels like* to be you?
4. How do you improve what it *feels like* to work at your site?



You get the knowledge and skills to actually make a difference to the way you and other behave.

Contact me for information about speaking engagements, or how to apply this technology to your situation.

Yours Sincerely

Nigel Donovan