

Want to Boost Employee Engagement and Wellbeing?

Have a cup of coffee



More and more companies are devoting real estate to in-house cafés and other informal gathering places where a cup of coffee is so much more than just a beverage.

The reason is as simple as it is powerful. We can go online and catch up on news, participate in discussion boards and conduct a fair amount of business without leaving our desk. But in doing so we miss out on important intangibles: the qualities that make an organization successful—personal relationships, trust, teamwork, as well as organizational culture—that are developed in person, rubbing shoulders, talking over a cup of coffee.

“Drinks have different roles throughout the day. For example, they can soothe, inspire or accelerate. Our average day is marked by the drink experience, offering structure and continuity,” says Dr. Tracy Brower, global vice president of workplace vitality for MARS DRINKS, a 100% workplace-focused division of Mars Incorporated.

MARS DRINKS recently commissioned a global study of 3,800 people, across industries and companies of all sizes, to identify the factors that contribute to organizational success. The research identified four pillars—collaboration, engagement, wellbeing and productivity. These pillars are interconnected, and combine to create a vibrant and thriving work environment.

“We discovered that collaboration, engagement and wellbeing correlate with greater productivity. Their presence tends to drive greater productivity. The reverse is not true, though. Greater productivity doesn’t lead to greater collaboration, engagement or wellbeing. In fact, according to our research, too much emphasis on productivity to the exclusion of collaboration, engagement or wellbeing has a negative effect on motivation,” says Dr. Brower. The solution is ensuring there is an emphasis on all four of the pillars and their interconnectedness.

Organizations are getting the message and replacing tired break rooms with inspiring café spaces and refreshment bars that are welcoming and productive places for employees, clients, visitors and external resources.

MARS DRINKS’ research also shows that employees place importance on the availability of coffee and on having different choices in coffee. Dr. Brower says research shows that 22 percent of people will leave the office to get great coffee if they can’t get it in the office.

“Just think about the effect on productivity. If people are leaving, it’s not only the loss of their working time, it’s also the lost opportunity for them to connect with colleagues,” commented Dr. Brower. “Just the presence of the coffee experience can help drive collaboration, productivity, wellbeing, and engagement in the workplace.”

Through their research, MARS DRINKS is inspiring people at work to think differently about the workday—to think about the potential for what it can be.