



Come to Gather: 3 Ways Positive Coworker Relationships Benefit your Business

For the majority of organizations, the once-standard 40-hour workweek seems to have officially become obsolete. Gallup research places most full-time workers in the United States at clocking roughly 46-47 hours per week, cementing our place as one of the leading countries in terms of average hours worked.

With offices starting to feel more like second homes, and phrases like “work family” more commonly being used to describe coworkers, it’s not surprising that many employees would rank the quality of their relationships within the office to be just as critical to their happiness as those outside it.

But while one might assume it’s solely in the best interest of employees to seek out and nurture workplace friendships, it turns out those relationships also have major business implications in regards to employee productivity, satisfaction, and retention. So as you find yourself making decisions that impact workplace environment—such as how heavily to weight culture fit against competency when hiring for an open position, or how much water cooler conversation is appropriate to encourage—it’s important to consider how your answers may impact the development of meaningful interoffice relationships.

While you may instinctively feel that workplace friendships are important, below are 3 definitive ways they positively impact your business:

They lower employee stress.

Today, nearly 3 out of every 4 workers manage a mental health condition related to stress, and those conditions cost American businesses nearly \$300 billion annually in healthcare costs. According to a study by *Psychosomatic Medicine*, both giving and receiving coworker encouragement are effective ways to help relieve this costly stress, making mutually supportive friendships a true win-win.

They increase engagement.

If you’ve ever taken Gallup’s famous Q12 survey, you may remember the line “I have a best friend at work”. This question was selected for inclusion based on a clear correlation that exists between employees who have at least one go-to work companion, and those who are happier and more engaged in the workplace. Not only

can having a best friend in the office build excitement around coming to work each morning, but it can also provide that extra boost of motivation to maintain productivity throughout even the longest workdays.

They cultivate more committed employees.

According to *Business News Daily*, “Research shows that people who fit well into their companies express greater job satisfaction, perform better and are more likely to remain with the same organization for a longer period of time.” To top that off, a study by Officevibe reports that 70% of employees cite having friends at work as the *single most crucial* element to a happy working life. Not surprisingly, happy employees report being significantly more committed to their companies, not to mention more likely to encourage others to join them.

So what does this all mean?

At the end of the day, work relationships matter. When you consider that most people working between 30 and 50 hours per week spend more time with their coworkers than their families, it’s certainly easy to understand why interoffice dynamics are so vital.

For business leaders, it’s no longer enough to merely hope employees make meaningful connections with one another; rather, it’s important to proactively encourage them. When managed properly, an increased focus on interoffice relationships doesn’t detract from—but actually contributes to—overarching business goals. Like any healthy relationships, employer-employee relationships are reciprocal. If you can commit to running a business where employees feel wholly supported, it’s likely you’ll find yourself with a loyal team of employees dedicated to supporting your organization’s mission and vision in return.

Do you feel that your business could benefit from stronger interoffice relationships? If you need help getting started, give us a call today at #708-738-5040, or visit our website at RRGExec.com