



Happiness and Profit- Well-being as alternative function for business?

Second panel: Managing for wealth or well-being – insights from practice

Speakers:

- Wolff Horbach, *author of Faktor Glück (Happiness Factor)*: Well-being at work
- Kai Romhardt, *Founder "Netzwerk Achtsame Wirtschaft"*: individual perspectives on well being
- Joachim Weckmann, *CEO Maerkisches Landbrot GmbH*: The pursuit of Well-being of Stakeholders
- Faciliator: Gerd Hofielen, *Humanistic Management Center*

Speaker: Wolff Horbach

Wolff Horbach based well-being at work on six building blocks. Using the example of dentist Paddi Brooks who discovered that dentists have the highest suicide rate and consequently focused on improving the atmosphere at his working place, Horbach introduced the importance of corporate culture and working environment. First make your employees happy and then your customers. Another important factor that influences your employee's happiness is meaning. Employees like to think of their work as being purposeful. That is why a worker described Zpunkt as best employer in the world in an interview, as she felt she was taking part in building a better future. The fourth building block highlighted the importance of using your employee's strength, as "People feel best when they know they do their best". Also give your employees autonomy to work on personal projects for example Google and ZPunkt give their employees the opportunity to use 15 to 20 % of working time for personal projects. The last building block concentrated on flow. There has to be a balance of skills and degree of challenge connected with immediate feedback. The workload should neither be boring nor create stress.

Speaker: Kai Romhardt

Kai Romhardt discussed happiness at work from a Buddhist perspective. For 30 years Romhardt lived his life dictated by success and greed until he realized he was far from being happy. So he turned to Buddhism. Buddhism gives a detailed road and tools for happiness. It is important to start with your own happiness and not look for happiness in the future but embrace the happiness of the moment. Many politicians and advertisements promise a happy future. However, if you ask yourself has the happiest moment in your life manifested itself already? Most people will negate that question. So Romhardt's Buddhist teacher asked Romhardt why he thinks the happiest moment will manifest itself in the future? What are the conditions that are missing? Romhardt realized the happiest moment is right now and that we are able to train ourselves to be happy. Happiness can be reached through meditation, the mindful experience of the moment. Romhardt founded the network "Achstame Wirtschaft", which consists of eight regional groups that train business people to be happy, give workshops and offer meditational retreats.

It is scientifically proven fame, money and sex will not increase your happiness but compassion understanding, mindfulness will. In the end Romhardt stated: being happy will make it easier for you to connect with other people and share happiness.

Speaker : Joachim Weckmann

The third session tackled the stakeholder perspective of happiness. Joachim Weckmann is doing an exemplary work of responsibly leading a responsible business. He presented his bakery "Märkisches Landbrot" (ML), which produces whole grain healthy products and uses an integral approach on all levels, meaning responsibility plays a role in selecting raw materials, process of production and in the active communication with all stakeholders e.g. employees, suppliers and customers: "... heal the soil with organic agriculture and serve the people with whole food". To support the well-being of its leadership and workforce ML offers trainings in work skills, leadership, time management and ecology/ sustainability. As well as regular meetings on all levels, bonuses, payment, conditions more than average, transparency in communication and decision making processes, management by walking around, incentive trekking tours, financial support for

wellness, travel and education activities. The leadership acknowledges the support as an incentive, it serves as motivation, improves communication and leadership and team building processes. The people on the factory floor however react differently but all in all positive, which can also be seen by the fact that there is no fluctuation. With respect to well-being of suppliers ML supports the initiative fair & regional and makes prices according to the needs of farmers. Furthermore, the distribution of profit is responsible too, as there is only max 15 % cash flow, donation of minimum 10 % of net profit / aft tax. Weckmann also highlighted the fact that ML participates in the "public welfare economy" score board process, invests in co2 neutrality in 2020 and produces a maximum of 10.000 kg bread on average per day.

Q&A

Q: Is luck a microeconomic or a macroeconomic concept? Improving work culture- is it about the increase of individual happiness or the increase of productivity to increase profits?

Wolff Horbach: Everything we do is to make ourselves happy.

Dr. Kai Romhardt: That is Greenwashing or Happinesswashing. If a human being demonstrates that she wants to help the world others will follow but only if she is being honest and taking it seriously.

Q: What influences luck? How can I secure that my employees are equally happy?

Joachim Weckmann: The foundation is hope. You have to forgive and understand and thereby create a community.

Q: But every person has a different level of happiness. If somebody goes to work unhappy what should I do?

Dr. Kai Romhardt: There is a lack of reflection concerning the things that make you unhappy and what makes you scared. If we are unable to embrace those fears as a community we will not be able to be happy.

Q: Do people have the freedom to be unhappy?

Joachim Weckmann: As CEO it is my responsibility to offer my employees my support

Wolff Horbach: Of course you have the right to be unhappy but it is not a good idea. We are offering our employees those circumstances, which allow him to be happy.

Dr. Kai Romhardt: Why should I share my energy with a business and not with somebody else. That is an individual decision. But of course my business has to be profitable. I am not a fan of people who try to impose luck.

Q: But the employee who takes out the trash still will not be able to do something different and take out trash?

Joachim Weckmann: But he can change if he wants to and we offer trainings to give our employees the opportunity to change their work place.

Dr. Kai Romhardt: I think the problem is that we judge taking out trash and hence make people who take out the trash unhappy. But if you learn to be happy with what you do, you will find peace. I cleaned the toilets for weeks in a convent. At the beginning I found it horrible but gradually I started looking forward to my work. This is what we should reach in our businesses.