

# Well-Being the PERMA Way



In your wildest dreams, would you ever have imagined the whole world struck by a pandemic that kept us lockdown for over a year? As millions of lives were lost and we sheltered in place and worked from home, COVID has taken a toll on every person and every business. The sheer amount of adapting and learning new ways of living and working has proven to be a major challenge for many people. In fact, a recent Harvard Business Review [article](#) reported that 89% of employees felt a decline in their mental health over the course of 2020. Several other articles showcase that many leaders' chief concerns are the well-being of their employees and are taking steps to increase the support they provide them. There are many ways to positively contribute to mental health and well-being in the workplace, and in this article, we will explore one: the "PERMA" model.

## **P is for Positive Emotions**

Imagine a workplace where most if not all team members experienced gratitude, joy, hope, and inspiration. Messages of inspiration that provide hope for an impactful future go a long way in lifting people's spirits and keeping them motivated. Appreciation and cheerfulness are infectious when practiced. What would happen if you started a meeting by making it a point to recognize one person on the team for who they are being and the contribution they make? What would your organization look and feel like if you baked recognition into your culture? Likely, a ripple effect would start to cascade across the company.



## **E is for Engagement**

E is for engagement, which indicates the level of enthusiasm and dedication a person feels toward their work. The higher the engagement, the more willing they are to give discretionary effort toward the quality and extent of its completion. Work offers people a tremendous opportunity to develop their unique talents and contribute them dynamically while they grow into the person they ache to become. When you learn to “see” and appreciate each person on your team for the one-of-a-kind individual they are and constantly look for ways to help them grow into their potential, you get a very motivated and uplifted human being that performs exceedingly well.

## **R is for Relationships**

Strong, healthy relationships often characterized by a shared sense of trust and belonging cement a team together. Leaders who create an environment where team members feel they’ve got each other’s backs and dynamically create together that which couldn’t be done alone excel at persisting through problems and innovating solutions. Employees are more willing to go the extra mile to serve customers and help fellow team members in other parts of the company. People may join a company, but they often stay for their team. People like feeling needed, appreciated, and part of something bigger than themselves. To create this safe environment, leaders can model vulnerability and authenticity and train employees on ways to fortify their communication efficacy and emotional intelligence.



## **M is for Meaning**

Living and working in the Purpose Economy, as author and business leader Aaron Hurst has coined, translates to people craving meaning and purpose in their work. When you can help team members feel good about the work they do, you give them access to energizing meaning which increases engagement and well-being at the same time. Learn to step back and see the larger picture of the work a person does and articulate his or her role in serving the company mission, and you will unleash a powerful passion in that person to give their best. The vitality of a person's life at every stage depends on his or her supply of meaning, which is available in each moment and across life. The opportunity is to get present to it and let its energizing effects wash into and through us. The better you become at speaking and celebrating the contributions of individuals and the team to showcase their work in support of expressing the company mission, the more access you provide to vitalizing meaning.

## **A is for Accomplishment**

Finally, A is for accomplishment. Achieving results, having something to show for your efforts is incredibly fulfilling for people. Celebrating it and being recognized is often the difference in a team member staying or leaving the organization. Accomplishments are incredibly meaningful to people, and when they are shared with those we feel connected to, especially at work, the experience is very motivating and often unforgettable.

What difference would folding in even some of these strategies and approaches make in your organization? Showing your employees you care about their individual well-being through intentional positive communication, finding ways to make their work more meaningful, providing more ways for them to collaborate and connect, and celebrating their achievements is a great start. Everyone wants to know they matter, and you, your team, and the company all win when you make the effort to ensure they do.

If you are looking for a solution that meets the standards of the PERMA model, I encourage you to check out [WorkProud](#). Its smart technology aligns your core values, goals, and objectives with the aspirations of your employees, so they remain engaged, loyal, and proud.

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About the author: Dr. Alise Cortez is the chief purpose officer at Alise Cortez and Associates (management consulting) and chief ignition officer at Gusto, Now! (a multi-lingual e-learning platform offering well-being and leadership development courses). She is also an inspirational speaker, social scientist, author, and host of the Working on Purpose radio show. Having developed her expertise within the human capital / organizational excellence industry over the last 20 years, she is focused on helping companies, leaders, and individuals across the globe to live with “gusto” and make the most of their one, precious life. She is the author of Purpose Ignited: How Inspiring Leaders Unleash Passion and Elevate Cause, and the Curator of Passionately Striving in “Why”: An Anthology of Women Who Persevere Mightily to Live Their Purpose.