

# Diary of the Happiest Employee on Earth

52 Provoking Thoughts for Creating a Great Workplace



**Author Unknown**

Foreword by Rich DiGirolamo

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## Foreword by Rich DiGirolamo

### **THIS SECTION IS A MUST READ!**

While out riding my bike one day I came upon a diary resting on a park bench. I opened it hoping to find some information that would lead me back to its rightful owner. There was no such information.

Being nosey, uh inquisitive, I decided to read a few pages.

It was a diary written by an employee; an employee of a very interesting company; a company that most people only dream about. It's about a place where people love to show up to work every day; where you would rather be at work even when given the opportunity to work from home; where the true sense of team is alive; where people know how to have fun while getting the work done. I don't know the name of this company, but for a guy who works with companies big and small to create better employee experiences, I was intrigued.

So I took a recess from my ride and continued to read. It wasn't a long diary. I couldn't stop reading. When I put it down I

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smiled. Somewhere on this planet was The Happiest Employee on Earth and I missed out on meeting him or her. The lessons in the diary are abundant. The opportunities to create great workplaces are endless. The ideas were so in line with my thinking it was as if the writer and I were one and the same. Maybe we were separated at birth? Mom, you reading this? Did you forget to tell me something?

Whether you're an executive, leader, manager or front-line employee there are ideas in this book to make you smile, laugh, and imagine possibilities. There are opportunities to make small or big changes. In some cases the ideas are obvious. In other cases you'll have to read between the lines, scratch your head and think. But if you're willing to test ideas and try new approaches when the status quo has been nothing but a recipe for low morale, disengagement, declining productivity, layoffs and other ills, the payoff could be huge. Low turnover, low absenteeism and perhaps even skipping in the hallways might be yours after this simple read. On the other hand, if you're the status quo safe thinker you might be in for some feelings of uneasiness.

Some of the ideas in this diary are already in place by companies we envy. Some are newer and being implemented by companies big and small, right now as you are reading this foreword. A lot of the experiences this employee writes about

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are not new to me; heck there are times I said to myself I could have written this book.

When I finished reading I put the diary in the back pocket of my cycling jersey and pedaled home. I couldn't let this diary go unpublished. And with the writer's permission I did just that.

Enjoy!

But more importantly, implement some of what you are about to read. You and your workplace have so much to gain.

Rich DiGirolamo

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**Before you begin reading.....**

**To get the most out of this diary I suggest you do one thing at the end of each recorded entry. Take a few moments and answer these questions (you have my permission to make a copy of this page):**

1. How would your organization implement the idea (or something similar) presented in the diary entry? How would you make it even better?
2. How could implementing all or part of the writer's experience described in the entry create a workplace where people looked as forward to the beginning of a workday or week as they do to the end of it?
3. Does the idea presented in the entry make you feel uncomfortable? If so, ask yourself why, tell yourself you have nothing to lose, and then go back to questions #1 and #2.
4. Did your own idea for creating a great workplace pop into your head as you read the diary entry?

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Dear Diary,

Tomorrow I start my new job in the marketing department of what might be the greatest company on earth. I'll be working on new product rollouts. If all the things shared with me during the interview process are true I think I am going to be here a very long time; and my days of writing a resume are over.

I promised myself I would keep a diary at the end of each week to celebrate and recognize what makes a great company (and to make sure that me and the company live up to the expectations and promises we had of one another.) Who knows, maybe someday I'll publish the diary and executives, leaders, managers, and employees everywhere will use it as a model for business success.

Signed,  
ME

P.S. If you are reading this page it means I lost the diary. You have my permission to publish it.

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### Week #1

Dear Diary,

This was the most unbelievable, amazing, and cool first week of a job ever! When I arrived on Monday there was a welcome banner at the door; with my name on it! Not just some generic welcome banner, but one with my name. I was led to my office by my new boss where he told me there was an urgent meeting we needed to attend right away. All I could think was talk about being thrown into the fire.

Turns out it was a breakfast in my honor; welcoming me to the company.

YIPPEE!! A party in my honor on day one – as in contrast to the obligatory *Good-bye-and-good-luck-I-never-really-liked-you-anyway lunches* I've attended in the past! I was introduced to everyone in my department, learned a bit about their roles, how long they've been with the company, and some personal stuff. It was great. Come to think of it the entire week involved me being introduced to folks around

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the company. The boss believes that a week of finding out what people actually do all day long would have more value than sitting in my office trying to figure out what the company and its people do. I did spend some time sitting at my desk and working as well. I learned more about this company in a week than most of my past employers during the entire time I was employed. It's Friday night and I feel like I did absolutely nothing this week. Of course the boss thanked me for being such a team player on my way out the door.

Oh, and speaking of thanks, as you leave the building you won't find a sign thanking customers and visitors but rather a funky thank you sign for employees.

*"Thanks for your contribution this week. Enjoy your weekend!"* was today's message. The sign gets turned on every day about 3:00 PM. (Note to self: I guess it is okay to leave at 3:00 should you have a need?) The message is a bit different each day; but it's a thank you for doing your part for organization success.

Signed,

Me, The Happiest Employee on Earth

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### Week #2

Dear Diary,

I arrived early on Monday (7:00AM); wanted to get moving on contributing and doing the job I was hired to do. On my desk I found an office supply catalog with a handwritten note on it:

*Order anything you think will make your job easier. There is a phone number on the back to call with our company account number. Keep this catalog on hand and use it at any time. — C.E. Ohhh*

Woo-Hoo! The words 'anything' and 'any time' were underlined. No bringing in or buying my own supplies like Carla who works for that state agency. I didn't believe it so I took a quick look around (not many people had arrived yet). Without knowing much about the folks it was clear that the workspaces reflected the different personalities that exist in any

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organization. Be who you are was the message; unlike that place on Park Ave years ago where I was told to remove a picture of my dog; that it was not in congruence with the artwork hanging in the hallways chosen by the Chairman's wife. I wanted to tell them she wasn't in congruence with this planet!

At 9:30 Monday morning I received an email with the Subject: **"What are you going to do this week?"** It linked to a calendar of most every meeting going on in the company that week. Status meetings, strategy meetings, budget meetings, benefit meetings, product development meetings. All it said at the bottom of the calendar was:

*"Looking forward to seeing you wherever you think you can make a difference."*

Huh? Pick and choose the meetings you think you want to attend – and just show up? So I did. I picked a few that seemed of interest; where I might be able to contribute and/or learn some things to get my job done.

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Pretty cool concept.

Signed,

Me, The Happiest Employee on Earth

P.S. Purple pens were first on my order form.

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### Week #3

Dear Diary,

Okay, how does this company stay in business? And did I make a huge mistake? Is this a sinking ship that has already sunk? The stock is doing well, but so was Enron's and we know how that story ended. It seems more of a party atmosphere and less of a workplace. People just seem to come and go. Talk about flex schedules! People walk in at noon. Others leave at 3:00. Haven't heard anyone talk about working on weekends or being glued to technology 24/7? And how do I know this? I was in the office 60 hours this week.

And then it hit me....The Eenie-Meenie-Miney-Mo Meeting Schedule Thingy. Maybe there is something here. Maybe the message is get your work done and be present when you think you need to be present? I'm not so sure I can do that right now; just yet.

I guess with all this flexibility people don't feel the need to tell you they worked all weekend; whether at

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home or in the office. It's not how things were at *Who Worked The Most Hours This Week, Inc.* Come to think of it; I wonder how Jason at *Who Worked The Most Hours This Week, Inc.* is doing. Got to call him this weekend and say hi.

Signed,

Me, The Happiest Employee on Earth

P.S. I do have to admit I was relieved to see the noon arrivers still there at 7:00 PM however.