

# Workplace Interrupted

## Key Points and Takeaways

1. University of Chicago study found that people in America are unhappier than they've ever been. This study showed that only 14% responded that they are genuinely happy. Social distancing and social isolation are taking a significant toll on Americans.
2. Recognizing that we have always lived in a state of uncertainty is important to keep in mind as we deal with this period of living in a pandemic and making sure we keep everything in perspective. We can all be better if we learn to Work to Live not live to work.
3. Leaders are facing an amplified version of leading in a crisis. The kinds of thinking for strategic leadership requires deep thought, and this is harder to come by in a crisis, but it's essential.
4. Video conferencing takes a toll and can be tiring and stressful. Leaders shoulder a lot more during a work from home environment and it's critical that leaders know they are employees too.
5. Every one of us must remember that we are all human beings with needs and all of our lives have been disrupted. And basic needs are front and center: shelter, income, unemployment, food scarcity. Considering Maslow's hierarchy of needs is playing out for many of us while we also deal with stages of grief coincidentally.
6. Common signs of stress for employees working from home: changes in behavior and things that are not common for an employee historically; may be evident in being able to compartmentalize work from life and having a difficult time disconnecting from one to another.
7. Best practices for staying healthy while working from home: getting outdoors and enjoying nature and shifting from human frame to the natural frame. Exercise, keeping the body as active as our minds; staying focused on the present and focus on what's in your control. Healthy diet and managing consumption of substances that can create issues when over consumed.
8. Have a culture that values wellness – employees can do this at home on their own and employers can easily pivot to a conversation about a culture of wellness. The fact that things are all changing living in a pandemic, is a source of stress and it can also be a source of innovation. Engage employees in creating the systems to create a culture of health and wellness.
9. As companies face re-entry – we are toggling between two worlds. Managing these phases of return from home must have a constant vigilance on safety. Employees want to know and fully understand what the company is doing to make safety and health a top priority. Be sure and get clarity on which roles are critical to be in the office and then message appropriately to those employees while sharing rationale with all employees. The one key principle on all of this is FLEXIBILITY.
10. Challenges for Global companies – need to understand differences in culture in terms of comfort level talking about mental health. Understand the culture and or unique approaches that various countries use in dealing with mental health.
11. Continue to reinforce core values – example at Otter, core value is servant leadership. Use a 1 hour meeting to allow “otter” to acknowledge each other and show love for one another.
12. Critical to understand the basic needs of the employees and address them if you can