

Positive Psychology's PERMA(H) Model

What is Positive Psychology?

Martin Seligman developed the concept of 'Positive Psychology' in the 1970s after becoming frustrated with psychology's overly narrow focus on the negative of what was going wrong for people but not nearly as much focus was dedicated to happiness, wellbeing, focusing on strengths, and ways to flourish or thrive at work and in life.

The PERMA(H) Model

During the birth of Positive Psychology, came the PERMA Model.

"PERMA" is the acronym for the five pillars of positive psychology according to Seligman, these 5 pillars or elements are: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment.

These five pillars of the PERMA model are measurable and vital for achieving an overall sense of wellbeing. These ideas can be put into practice in the workplace to improve employee happiness and wellbeing and increase their sense of psychological safety.

The Addition of H for Health

Positive Psychology also recognises that wellbeing goes beyond the five elements initially proposed in the PERMA model - which is where the 'H' for health comes in. This includes physical health which requires physical activity, a healthy lifestyle, good nutrition and sleep, but also mental health.

P

POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Finding ways to ignite more positive emotions in staff

E

ENGAGEMENT

Harnessing more motivation with job roles and opportunities that excite and impassion staff

R

RELATIONSHIPS

Building strong relationships amongst staff and preventing and addressing any potential conflicts

M

MEANING

Creating a shared sense of purpose, establishing a vision and providing direction

A

ACCOMPLISHMENT

Goal setting and review, promoting feelings of success, and providing affirmation

H

HEALTH

Looking after, promoting and supporting staff physical and mental health

Working across all of these pillars is more likely to increase staff psychological safety and improve feelings of wellbeing.