



Purpose is the new currency

The only real way out of the cubicle nation.

When we think of New Work, most of us picture a 20-something in a lounge chair, effortlessly balancing laptop and latte, engaged in a lively conversation at the company café. Alternatively, a foosball-setting comes to mind, loosened ties, an echo of laughter, and a hint of carefreeness in the air. Yet, despite these glossy stock-photo images, recent studies show that a staggering 87% of employees worldwide are not engaged or actively disengaged at work (Gallup). The rise of work-stress related illnesses is overthrowing health insurance calculations and depression is considered the new normal. Suddenly it doesn't seem like a coincidence that in many languages the current word for 'work' is a direct descendent of the Latin word *tripalium* - a torture instrument. In our attempt to escape the tyranny of the cubicle nation, we confuse purpose with pleasure, nurturing only our instant gratification monkey.

There must be more than work hard, play hard

It is time for a reframing of how we perceive and experience work. Moving away from anywhere, anytime, anything, towards working in our sweet-spot - the place where passion and added-value meet.

The number of inspirational quotes and publications in the last year tells us that we are surely onto something. John Strelecky's "The big five for life" alone sold more than 3 million copies worldwide as of 2018. The book proselytizes the importance of finding one's "purpose for existing" and functions as a modern guideline on creating congruence between personal and organizational goals. And not for nothing. The return on investment of this approach will convince even the biggest critic. The moment we tap into our passion we seek growth, welcome challenges, and enjoy the stretch. We no longer view the things we didn't do as sacrifices or hardship, instead walking the extra mile charges our batteries. New work as the first perpetuum mobile so to say.



Away from Work-Life-Balance to Work-Life-Blending

That leaves us with the question of how to start this movement? Simon Sinek so masterfully said: "Start with the why" and no one has said it better since. As individuals we need to take a step out of our hamster wheel and connect with our inner drivers, and as organisations we should examine our invisible and visible culture, questioning whether we see employees as more than just precarious machines.

As always, context matters. Creating "moments of intimacy and sociability", as designers Barber and Osgerby put it, adds to the sense of meaning we experience at work. In the end, it all boils down to how connected we feel with ourselves, the people around us and the environment we act in.

We now live in a time where purpose is the new currency. How much can you spend?



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Allegro knows that working in an activity-based working environment strengthens social interactions, increases professional exchange, and promotes innovation and development. When employees feel supported in their actions and experience daily work as meaningful and rewarding, their motivation increases and organisation-wide productivity soars.

Three questions you can ask yourself to find your purpose

1. When do I feel energized by work?
2. When do I feel that work is effortless and impactful at the same time?
3. How do I define success?

Three things organisations can do to create a purpose-environment

1. Communicate the bigger picture: define an inspiring vision. "We help to feed the planet " is worth getting up for in the morning, "We make dairy products" is not.
2. Break down the bigger picture: communicate the connection between individual daily contribution and the company's vision. We all want to see how we can make a difference.
3. Delegate responsibility not tasks: allow employees to define the route and to take ownership of the results. If they truly have skin in the game, they will throw themselves at the task with both head and heart.

