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Yoga is not a new concept. In fact, it's an ancient practice that began an estimated 5,000 years ago in Northern India and landed in the United States as early as the late 1800's. Corporate yoga programs, however, are a hot topic in recent years.

Yoga and meditation efforts have been adopted by major corporations like Nike, Google and Apple, just to name a few. As companies large and small place a heightened importance on cultivating a positive culture, employer-sponsored yoga initiatives have grown in popularity, and for good reason. Top companies are jumping on the yoga bandwagon because the benefits are wide-ranging, and the implementation of these programs requires a relatively tiny investment of both time and budget.

Why Corporate Culture Matters More Now Than Ever Before :

- Top talent is hard to find (and even harder to hold on to). Attracting and retaining top talent is a challenge facing businesses across all industries on a global scale. While the talent scarcity is especially pervasive in fields like technology, engineering and health, it is creeping into most other areas. Creating a strong, positive and empowered culture is one-way businesses-in-the-know are finding a recruiting (and retention) edge on the competition.

- Millennials seek positive culture in their careers (and they rule). Millennials now make up the largest demographic in the global workplace. This majority rule will continue to grow for the near term, making attracting this group into the fold more important than ever.

Millennials are a unique group that have qualities that differ from the age segments that came before them. They crave deeper connections from their places of employment and seek more than simply a good salary. They want to be a part of positive cultures, empowered teams and socially-responsible corporations. Adding perks that go beyond free snacks or life insurance (such as corporate yoga initiatives) can be the deciding factor for the coveted millennial employee.

- Reputation matters (and is more transparent than ever before). In pre-internet days, employees took somewhat of a leap of faith that their potential new employer was what they said they were. In today's culture full of Glassdoor reviews, social media and Google reviews, it is easy for the jobseeker to take a sneak peek into the inner workings of the company without ever stepping foot inside. Branding now encompasses a business's online reputation, as seen by customers as well as potential employees. The incorporation of wellness-minded initiatives like corporate yoga demonstrates that the organization not only "walks the walk" but "talks the talk" in terms of caring for employees' well-being.

All these factors and more create a perfect storm of sorts elevation culture to a top agenda item for companies of all sizes, in all industries. While many elements that go into cultivating a positive company culture, mindfulness, meditation and yoga programs can support these goals – and in a big way.

How Corporate Yoga Classes Help You Cultivate Your Business's Culture :

- Combat the physical results of sitting – The phrase, "sitting is the new smoking," has been coined to describe the detrimental impact of the global worker sitting at his or her desk all day and spending hours commuting (in a seated position) to and from work. Conditions such as chronic back and neck pain to diabetes to heart disease have been linked to sedentary lifestyles imposed by oftentimes by our office work life. Many of yoga's most basic asanas, also referred to as poses, if practiced consistently, can work against and offset the negative health impact sitting for eight to ten hours each day can have on our health.

- Prevents burnout – Burnout in the workplace is an increasing problem in the global workforce for both employees and employers. Why? Many factors contribute to the prevalence of burnout, including the fact that employees in India work longer hours and take less vacation than the rest of the world. In addition, a large portion of Indian businesses do not place real emphasis(only lip service) on work-life balance initiatives. The combination leaves employers facing reduced productivity, the effects of toxic culture created by unhappy employees and the exodus of top

talent. Corporate yoga programs are an amazing (and easy to implement) tool to combat the factors that contribute to burnout.

- Can increase productivity – Your happier, more relaxed workforce will be empowered emotionally and physically to excel at their jobs. This healthy, strong group can, not only produce at optimal levels for your organization, but they can also find higher levels of innovation and deeper collaboration with their co-workers – a win-win for your bottom line.

As businesses grapple with ways to facilitate a positive culture inside their four walls that permeates into their recruiting efforts and, ultimately, their bottom lines, yoga becomes an easy-to-implement tool in their toolbox that provides far-reaching benefits.



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