

# Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority

# **"THRIVING AT WORK" GUIDE**

#### Get inspired from promising practices!



Through our research, we found that **positive working environments** have the power to **enhance practitioners' feeling of satisfaction and productivity**.

We uncovered several promising practices that have undertaken relevant efforts to enhance working environments in an innovative and practical way.

As such, the ECA developed this guide to showcase some of these promising practices as well as to provide employers with actionable suggestions to create more supportive, positive and rewarding workplaces based on the findings from these promising practices.

We hope this guide serves as a valuable resource, guiding you through the next steps to enhance the well-being and productivity of your employees, thereby fostering a positive and supportive work environment.



#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS (1/2)



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	a	u	-	**

Introduction	n to positive working environments	age #
What <b>defin</b>	es a positive working environment?	6
What are th	e benefits of a positive working environment?	6
Four eleme	ents to consider within working environments	7
Promising	practices to consider for enhancing working environments	8
Summary of	of key interventions across the four elements	9
	Satisfaction, appreciation and recognition	11
	1.1 Connect & Engage	12
	1.2 Diversity & Inclusion	12
Contraction of the second seco	1.3 Inspiration	13
	-	13
A CONTRACTOR	1.5 Wellness day	14
	1.6 Working on wellness	14
	1.7 Building compassion and resilience	15
	1.8 Employee Forum	15
	How can I start to think about implementing these interventions in my workplace?	16



# TABLE OF CONTENTS (2/2)



			Page #
	2. Wo	rk-life balance	17
	AND A	2.1 Flexible working styles	18
	4	2.2 Four-day work week	18
	hand a	2.3 No meeting week	19
		2.4 Work-from-anywhere	19
		2.5 Pursuing your passion	20
		How can I start to think about implementing these interventions in my workplace?	21
<b>8</b> 3	§) 2 3. Ber	nefits	22
	R. Z	3.1 Family first parenting	23
		3.2 Healthcare and childcare bridge	23
		3.3 Help at home while you work	24
	Real Contraction	3.4 Holistic care	24
		3.5 Your financial wellbeing	25
		How can I start to think about implementing these interventions in my workplace?	26
ALL THE	4. Pro	ofessional development & relevant support	27
		4.1 Empower tech learning	28
		4.2 Learn anywhere	28
		4.3 Learning month	29
	<b>⊗</b> ®⊗ ∰	4.4 Pathway to success	29
		4.5 Staff college	30
		4.6 Health Academy	30
		How can I start to think about implementing these interventions in my workplace?	31

# INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENTS



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#### WHAT DEFINES A POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

A healthy workplace is one in which workers and managers collaborate to use a continual improvement process to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of all workers and the sustainability of the workplace

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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

Benefits of a positive working environment go beyond employee satisfaction and positively affect and improve organizational outcomes



WE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING FOUR ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER WHEN THINKING ABOUT WORKING ENVIRONMENTS...

#### PERSONAL SATISFACTION, APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION



Encompasses how comfortable, healthy, valued and recognized employees feel within their organization, including aspects like involvement in decisions and having a supportive and respectful work environment

#### **Key Outcomes**

Physical and mental health

Trust and integrity

Sense of belonging and contribution

Inspiration and creativity

BENEFITS

#### WORK-LIFE BALANCE



Targets the equilibrium that an employee achieves between their work responsibilities and personal life, ensuring that employees have sufficient time and flexibility to engage in personal activities and family commitments

**Key Outcomes** 

Productivity

#### PD & RELEVANT SUPPORT



Covers a range of additional perks and supports provided by an employer that go beyond salary, such as health insurance, retirement benefits, parental leave, and other support policies

#### **Key Outcomes**

Access to healthcare

Family support

Retirement support

Focuses on the training opportunities and resources provided to employees for skill enhancement, including access to training programs, mentorship, and performance feedback mechanisms

#### **Key Outcomes**

**Skills development** 

**Career opportunities** 

Access to accredited training

# PROMISING PRACTICES TO CONSIDER FOR ENHANCING WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

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#### We identified the following 24 interventions from global promising practices to enhance working environments (1/2)

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Elements	A Intervention	Description	Promising practices adopted glob
Personal satisfaction, appreciation	CONNECT & ENGAGE 1.1	Implement <b>activities</b> (e.g., monthly office meetings) to <b>improve internal</b> <b>communication</b> and <b>transparency</b> across the organization	
and recognition	DIVERSITY & INCLUSION 1.2	Launch activities to <b>foster diversity</b> and <b>inclusion</b> , promoting <b>respect</b> and <b>collaboration</b> among employees	
	INSPIRATION	Conduct community engagement activities twice a year to promote employee volunteerism	
	MIND YOUR WELLNESS	Launch <b>therapeutic support activities</b> to boost the <b>mental</b> and <b>physical well-being</b> of employees	
	WELLNESS DAY	Allocate <b>one day</b> of each <b>quarter</b> for employees to <b>conduct non-work-related</b> <b>activities</b> such as workshops, yoga, etc.	
	WORKING ON WELLNESS	Provide wellness activities (e.g., cultural days) to foster the overall health and well- being of employees	
	BUILDING COMPASSION AND RESILIENCE 1.7	Nurture the resilience of healthcare workers through workshops and trainings on compassion and set up gratitude sharing channels	
	EMPLOYEE FORUM	Launch a forum by which employees can raise issues or ideas to management to be discussed along with ways to address the issues raised	
Work-life balance	FLEXIBLE WORKING STYLES	Adopt <b>flexible working styles</b> (e.g., flexible working hours) and offer <b>benefits</b> to promote a better <b>work-life balance</b> for employees	
	FOUR-DAY WORK WEEK 2.2	Offer a four-day workweek per quarter, while maintaining the same level of workflow	
	NO MEETING WEEK	Implement a <b>meeting-free week</b> to enhance employee <b>flexibility</b> in <b>task management</b>	
	WORK-FROM- ANYWHERE	Enable employees to work <b>remotely</b> from any location for a designated <b>period each</b> year	
	PURSUING YOUR PASSION PROGRAM 2.5	Offer flexible vacation plans for employees to pursue their passions in addition to subsidies for activities that help develop these passions further	

interventions from healthcare employers/ private sector.

We identified the following 24 interventions from global promising practices to enhance working environments (1/2)

Elements		Description	Promising practices adopted globally
Benefits	FAMILY FIRST PARENTING 3.1	Offer <b>support</b> and <b>benefits</b> to help <b>parents</b> balance <b>career</b> and <b>family life</b>	
	HEALTHCARE AND CHILDCARE BRIDGE 3.2	Support <b>employees</b> and their <b>families</b> by offering <b>financial assistance</b> and <b>benefits</b> tailored to <b>address healthcare</b> and <b>childcare challenges</b>	
	HELP AT HOME WHILE YOU WORK 3.3	Boost employee <b>well-being</b> by offering <b>support</b> for managing <b>home</b> <b>responsibilities</b>	
	HOLISTIC CARE	Offer a range of <b>benefits</b> , including discounted services (e.g., car rentals, hotel accommodations) to <b>enhance stability</b> for <b>employees</b>	
	YOUR FINANCIAL WELLBEING	Launch a program that offers a <b>range of</b> <b>financial services and benefits</b> for employees	
PD & relevant support	EMPOWER TECH LEARNING 4.1	Offer virtual trainings on digital topics (e.g., AI) that equips employees with skills to effectively utilize advanced technologies	
	LEARN ANYWHERE	Provide a comprehensive set of <b>digital</b> <b>libraries</b> containing <b>courses</b> on <b>different</b> <b>topics</b> (e.g., leadership and management)	
	LEARNING MONTH 4.3	Implement a <b>month-long program</b> focused on <b>skill development</b>	
	PATHWAY TO SUCCESS	Develop leadership skills for employees transitioning into management roles and supporting early career professionals	
	STAFF COLLEGE	Form a <b>college dedicated to employees</b> to provide specialized <b>training programs</b> , offering a wide range of <b>courses</b> and <b>resources</b> for <b>employees</b>	
<b>P</b>	HEALTH ACADEMY	Design a <b>dedicated online learning</b> <b>platform for employees</b> , hosting a variety of exciting resources to help them flourish in their roles	

interventions from healthcare employers/ private sector .



# SATISFACTION, APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION

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#### How can this help?

Increase inclusion in decision- 👝 making processes



Enhance transparency and open communication

#### 1.3 INSPIRATION





### 1.5 WELLNESS DAY



# 6 WORKING ON WELLNESS





Interventions from healthcare employers

1.7 BUILD	DING COMPASSION AND	RESILIENCE 🎠 🔀
Description	Design a program to facilitate resilience through workshops and trainings. Air compassion a way of living and foster employees. Program includes a a grati visitors and other employees to thank h compassion through delivering gratitud components include:	n of this program is to <b>make</b> r the intrinsic motivation of tude platform that allows patients, ealthcare professionals for acts of
	Online training modules on compassion, healing, restoration and resilience for practitioners	
	Experiential workshops run for practitioners in small groups	Gratitude and <b>recognition</b> <b>boards</b> for the practitioners
	Seminars featuring external guests restoration an	
How can this help?	Enhance community engagement and sense of belonging	

#### 1.8 EMPLOYEE FORUM

#### Description

Launch a forum by which any employee can raise an issue or idea to the Executive team. Requests are collected all year round through relevant representatives and these representatives then run a quarterly 2-day workshop to discuss the most pertinent issues with the Executive team and agree on initiatives / next steps to address the issues raised. Potential topics to be raised through the channel include:

Parental leaves and employee related policies

Communication and ways of working

Training needs and professional development requirements

Working norms and getting more flexibility in the workplace

Enhance

transparency and

communication

How can this help?



Include employees in decision making

Identify solutions to working environment issues like night shifts and long working hours Ensure required support for employees is voiced and provided for

open





#### HOW WOULD IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS ACROSS THE SATISFACTION ELEMENT LOOK LIKE FOR ME?



# WORK-LIFE BALANCE

#### 2.1 FLEXIBLE WORKING STYLES



#### FOUR-DAY WORK WEEK



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# 2.3 NO MEETING WEEK



#### 2.4 WORK-FROM-ANYWHERE



#### 2.5 PURSUING YOUR PASSION PROGRAM



#### **Description**

Offer flexible vacation plans to give employees the chance to pursue passions outside the workplace in addition to providing subsidies for activities that help employees develop these passions further. Potential components include:

Floating holiday plans allowing employees that celebrate certain holidays not given by the local laws to take time off (e.g. Diwali) Mandated time off forcing employees to take a minimum number of days during the year and adding it as a KPI to be measured for departments

Subsidies for courses and activities that help employees pursue their passions (e.g. music classes, gym memberships, musical equipment, sports equipment, websites to build digital content)

How can this help?

Increase personal time available for employees Provide flexibility in the workplace, including for working mothers

Enhance work-life balance

Encourage employees to pursue their passions

Improve in-kind benefits and incentives





#### HOW WOULD IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS ACROSS THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE ELEMENT LOOK LIKE FOR ME?







## 3.1 **FAMILY FIRST**



Description	Provide comprehensive so career and family life, en productivity. Potential componential compone	hancing <b>men</b>	tal well-being	•
	Employee-led group to for policy changes wi organization (e.g., introd shared parental lea	ithin the duction of	employ	al support to assist yees with childcare ses (e.g., AED 7500 annually)
	Access to professional counselors specializing in family therapy and parenting challenges			18,000 in assistance to ees adopting a child
	Sponsored <b>family ev</b> family-friendly loca	ents at ations	work on a	w mothers to return to part-time basis for up onths post-maternity leave
How can this help?	Increase access to specialized health services	Enhance fa benefits an incentives		Expand non-basic support policies (e.g. paternity leave,
*	Increase work flexibility	Improve edu assistance f employees'	or 📢	shared parental leave)

# 3.2 HEALTHCARE AND CHILDCARE BRIDGE



Description	Assist <b>employees and their families</b> by providing <b>financial support</b> and <b>benefits</b> to <b>navigate healthcare</b> and <b>childcare challenges</b> , enhancing <b>financial stability</b> for employees, and reducing <b>childcare burdens</b> . <b>Potential components include:</b>			
	Daily allowance for employees taking care of sick children or parents, set at ~AED 150 per day	Discounts for childcare centers, offering employees up to 40% reduction in fees		
	Travel reimbursement for regionally unavailable medical services for employees, parents or children	Subsidized virtual care (e.g., video calls, live chats) for employees residing in areas with limited high-quality healthcare providers near their home		
How can this help?	Improve access to specialized medical care	Enhance family benefits /incentives		
	Facilitate balance between profession responsibilities	onal and personal/ family		

# 3.3 HELP AT HOME WHILE YOU WORK



Description	Enhance the overall <b>well-being</b> of <b>employees</b> by providing essential <b>suppor</b> for <b>managing home responsibilities</b> , promoting a <b>healthier work-life</b> <b>balance</b> , and leading to better <b>employee satisfaction</b> . <b>Potential</b> <b>components include</b> :			
	Financial assistance to cover part of the cost of care for children, adults, or pets for up to 25 days	Subsidized services related to household tasks (e.g., cleaning, maintenance) provided through contracted professional service providers		
	Grocery shopping service for employees' families with a monthly allowance of up to 500 AED	Transportation services for employees and their family members (e.g., school drop-off for children), capped at 1k AED per month		
How can this help?	Enhance support for home responsibilities	Improve family benefits and incentives		
	Reduce employees' stress levels	Promote better work-life balance		

# 3.4 HOLISTIC CARE

Description	Provide various <b>benefits</b> (e.g., discounted services) to <b>enhance</b> the <b>mental</b> <b>stability of employees</b> , ensuring that every employee <b>feels supported</b> , leading to a more <b>sustainable workplace</b> . <b>Potential components include</b> :			
	Discounted services, including car rentals and hotel accommodations	Maternity or paternity leave for up to <b>12 weeks</b> at the full base rate of pay for new parents		
<b>d</b> 12	Annual <b>profit-sharing plans</b> and monthly operational <b>incentives</b> that can total up to <b>\$1,200</b> <b>annually</b>	Option to <b>extend insurance</b> <b>coverage</b> to <b>include family</b> <b>members</b> at reduced rates		
How can this help?	Enhance support to balance work and personal life	Alleviate financial stress with improved incentives		
	Extend full family insurance coverage	Boost employee sense of value and support		

#### 3.5 YOUR FINANCIAL WELLBEING







#### HOW WOULD IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS ACROSS THE BENEFITS ELEMENT LOOK LIKE FOR ME?



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & RELEVANT SUPPORT

#### 4.1 EMPOWER TECH LEARNING

Description	Set up virtual <b>digital trainings</b> that each <b>knowledge</b> necessary to <b>effectively</b> broaden <b>professional capabilities</b> , the <b>promotion</b> . <b>Potential components</b> in	utilize advanced technologies, and hereby enhancing prospects for
	Workshops covering fundamental digital skills on productivity software (e.g., Excel)	<b>Courses</b> covering topics such as how to <b>use cloud services</b>
	Basics of <b>AI</b> and <b>machine</b> <b>learning</b> , explaining how they can be <b>utilized</b> in your <b>job role</b>	Data analytics training to teach employees how to interpret data and make informed, data-driven decisions
(E	coverage) for accredited profes	I training opportunities (e.g. 40% ssional development programs to Is and qualifications
How can this help?	Improve understanding of emerging technologies	Expand professional growth opportunities
	Outline clear career path progression	Bridge technology competency gap

#### 4.2 LEARN ANYWHERE



### 4.3 LEARNING MONTH

#### Description

Implement a month-long professional development program with themed weeks designed to enhance skills, boost productivity, and promote a learning culture through online courses, webinars, and workshops. Potential components include:

Online courses that employees can complete at their own pace

Webinars that enable live engagement between trainers and participants

In-person workshops where employees can discuss topics in small groups

How can this help?

Provide structured career development opportunities

Expand training resources

Enhance skills and competencies

# 4.4 PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

Description	Launch a program aimed at developing <b>leadership skills</b> for <b>employees</b> <b>transitioning into management roles</b> and supporting <b>entry-level</b> <b>employees</b> , fostering <b>leadership capabilities</b> , and a <b>supportive</b> <b>environment for new employees</b> . <b>Potential components include</b> :			
	Focus group discussions on leadership challenges and best practices Online courses on leadership and management		Social gatherings to help new joiners build relationships	
			Assigning a <b>mentor</b> and having one-on-one sessions focused on career goals and personal development plans	
How can this help?	Enhance support from supervisors	Prepare employees for management roles		Help new joiners adapt to workplace culture and understand their roles

# 4.5 STAFF COLLEGE

#### Description

Establish a dedicated **training ground** for employees providing access to an extensive array of **courses** and **online resources**, enhancing their **skills** & **capabilities** across various **topics**, and **assisting** them in achieving **successful annual reviews**. Potential components include:

Online **library** of **courses developed** in collaboration with leading **online learning platforms** (e.g., Coursera, LinkedIn) Pairing less experienced employees with mentors who can provide guidance, feedback, and support

Trainings for **senior employees** with **flexibility** to choose between attending training sessions in **person** or **virtually** 

# How can this help?

Expand opportunities for professional growth and career advancement Develop pipeline of trained leaders

Bridge technology competency gap





# .6 HEALTH ACADEMY





#### Description

Design a **dedicated online learning platform for employees** to help them flourish in their roles. **Certain courses on the platform are also mandated to specific employees based on their performance review**, with outcomes from the course reviewed as part of their next performance assessment cycle. **Potential components include:** 

Online professional development courses and training opportunities

Mentorship programs that pair more experienced practitioners with new practitioners

Professional qualifications and apprenticeships that practitioners can take on based on their needs

# How can this help?

Upskill practitioners

Expand available resources for training and professional development

Enhance accountability of practitioners on professional development opportunities





**EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE** 

HOW WOULD IMPLEMENTING INTERVENTIONS ACROSS THE PD & RELEVANT SUPPORT ELEMENT WOULD LOOK LIKE FOR ME?



# We hope You continue to refer to this guide and find it beneficial!

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# THANK YOU

#### **Contact the ECA**

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