

Why it is a bad idea for managers to attempt to engineer office friendships

为什么公司管理人员企图设计促进办公室友谊是一个错误的主意

Friends make employees more engaged. That's no reason for companies to get involved



Scholars of happiness have found that close relationships are one of the critical ingredients of a contented life. What is true in general is also true of the workplace, according to research by Gallup. The pollster finds that having a “best friend at work” is closely associated with all manner of good things, from greater employee engagement to higher retention and better safety records.

a contented life : 心满意足的生活

例: The Browns live a **contented life** (布朗一家过着幸福的生活)

manner of : 各种不同类型的事物

例: The store sells **all manner of** goods. (这家商店出售各种不同类型的商品)

engagement : 婚约, 订婚; 约会, 约定; 交战, 战斗; 演出任务; 聘用, 雇用; 参加, 从事;

例: engagement ring (订婚戒指)

At some level, that is unremarkable. Spending time with people you like makes most things more appealing, including work. If a job is sufficiently humdrum, camaraderie among colleagues can be the main draw. The support of friends can also encourage people to try new things. A study from 2015 by Erica Field of Duke University, and her co-authors, looked at the impact of business training given to Indian women. Women who attended the course with a friend were more likely to end up taking out loans than those who came alone.

unremarkable : 平凡的 ; 不显著的 ; 不值得注意的 ;

例 : The essential thing is to appreciate the seemingly **unremarkable** in your life. (重要的是去欣赏生命中看上去平凡的事情)

humdrum : 单调的 ; 无聊的

例 : The accountant said it was the most **humdrum** day that she had ever passed. (会计师说这是她所度过的最无聊的一天)

camaraderie : 友情 ; 同志之爱

例 : Team Spirit - Create an environment of **camaraderie**. (团队精神——创造一个充满友好同志关系的环境)

taking out loans : 借贷 : 从银行、金融机构或个人处借款的行为

研究幸福的学者发现，亲密的关系是幸福生活的关键因素之一。根据盖洛普的研究，这条生活中的准则在办公室也使用。民意调查发现，在工作中拥有关系亲密的朋友能带来很多好处，比如员工更加敬业、更高的员工雇佣率和刚好的安全记录。

在某种程度上，这并不引人注意。和喜欢的人共事会让很多事情变得更加有吸引力包括工作。如果一份工作过于单调，那同事之间的友谊会成为这份工作主要的吸引力。朋友的支持也可以鼓励人们尝试新鲜的事务。杜克大学埃丽卡·菲尔德 (Erica Field) 及其合著者 2015 年开展的一项研究探讨了商业培训对印度女性的影响。和朋友一起参加培训的女性比独自参加培训的女性更有可能获得贷款(创业)。

反之亦然

The reverse also applies. Antagonistic relationships with co-workers are always likely to make working life miserable. A study conducted by Valerie Good of Grand

Antagonistic /æntəˈɡɒnɪstɪk/ 敌对的, 反对的

miserable /ˈmɪzəb(ə)l/ 痛苦的

conducted 实施、进行

Valley State University found that **loneliness** has an adverse effect on the performance of salespeople. Among other things, they start spending more on wining and dining their customers. The only thing worse than a salesperson who sees you as a way to make money is one who wants your company.

/ 'lʊnlɪnəs / 孤独、寂寞

adverse effects和**side effects**都是指药物、治疗或其他干预方法可能产生的不良反应

两者的区别是**adverse effects**指的是更严重、不可预知的不良反应，而**side effects**指的是轻微、可预测的不良反应

So friends matter. The problems come when managers see the words “higher employee engagement” and leap to the conclusion that they should try to engineer work friendships. In a report published last year Gallup gave the example of an unnamed organisation which has a weekly companywide meeting that spotlights one employee’s best friend at work. It’s not known if, in the q&a, others pop up to **sob**: “But I thought we were best friends at work.”

leap to : 立即作出

leap to a conclusion : 一下子得出结论；贸然断定

q&a : 问答环节

pop up : 突然出现、弹出

例：Don't **pop up** new Windows. (不要弹出新窗口)

反之亦然。敌对的同事关系总是会使生活变得更加痛苦。大谷州立大学的瓦莱丽·古德 (Valerie Good) 进行的一项研究发现，孤独感会对销售人员的绩效产生不利影响。除此之外，他们开始花更多的钱来赢得和招待顾客。只有一件事比销售人员把你当做赚钱的方式更糟糕，那就是他还想要你陪。

所以朋友很重要。但是如果公司管理者一看到“更高的员工敬业度”这个词并贸然得出需要把控职场友谊的结论时，问题就来了。盖洛普在去年发布的一份报告中举了一个未具名公司的例子：该公司每周举行一次全公司会议，重点关

注一名员工在工作中最佳好友。在问答环节，不知道是否有人突然抽泣起来：我认为我们俩才是工作中最好的朋友。

初创公司 Startups also offer services to encourage work friendships. One monitors the depth of connections between people in different teams. It identifies shared interests (gluten-free ^{无麸质} ^{/sɜːr'veɪləns/ 监视、监察} surveillance) between baking, say, or workplace ^{/ˈkrʌmpɪt/ 松脆饼} crumpets between employees who don't know each other and arranges meetings between them. You thought life was bad? At least you are not making crumpets with a stranger in finance.

It is a mistake for managers to ^{/ˈrɒiəli/ 庄严的} royally wade into the business of friend-making, and not just because it ^{royally} misses the point. The defining characteristic of friendship is that it is voluntary. Employees are adults; they don't need their managers to arrange play-dates. And the workplace throws people together, often under testing conditions: friendships will naturally follow.

初创企业也会提供一些服务来鼓励工作中的友好关系。有一家公司会检测不同员工之间联系的紧密程度。它先确认陌生员工之间的共同兴趣爱好（比如无麸质烘焙、当老板的眼线），然后给他们安排会议。你以为生活很糟糕吗？至少你不会和财务部的陌生同事一起做松饼。

管理者涉足交友业务是一个错误，不仅仅是因为他完全没有抓住要点。友谊本质的特征是自愿。员工是成年人；他们

shared interests : 共同兴趣

例：So you **Shared interests** with him? (你和他有共同的兴趣?)

surveillance : 监视，监察

例：The wife is under **surveillance** and has not developed symptoms. (正在对其妻子进行监测，尚未出现症状)

crumpet : 松脆饼；煎饼

例：Would a carrot **crumpet** make you feel better? (来块胡萝卜松饼能让你好点吗?)

wade into : 形容某人开始积极参与或介入某个活动或争论，通常有强烈的态度或行动

例：The new mayor wasted no time in **wading into** the ongoing debate about affordable housing. (新市长立即积极参与了关于可负担住房的持续辩论。)

royally : 形容某人受到盛大、豪华或极为优待的方式。它可以表示某人被以皇家的方式对待，或者表示某人受到极高的尊敬或待遇

例：We were **royally** entertained by the host of the party. (我们受到了主办方的盛情款待。)

defining characteristic : 最重要、最具代表性或最具区分性的特征

例：Honesty is a **defining characteristic** of a good leader. (诚实是一个优秀领导者的重要特征。)

不需要他们的管理者来安排闲暇时间。而且工作场通常会将人们置于考验条件下，友谊会自然的形成。

The bigger problem is that workplace friendships are more **double-edged** than their **advocates** allow. They can quickly become **messy** when **power dynamics** change. The transition from friend to boss, or from friend to **underling**, is an **inherently awkward** one ("This is your final warning. Fancy a pint?").

And friendships have the potential to look a lot like **cronyism**. A clever study by Zoe Cullen of Harvard Business School and Ricardo Perez-Truglia of University of California, Berkeley, found that employees' social interactions with their managers could give their career prospects a boost relative to others.

更大的问题是，职场友谊比他们的提倡者所允许的更加具有双重性。当权利结构发生变化时，职场友谊可能迅速变成一团乱麻。从朋友转变为上司，或从朋友转变为下属，本质上是一种尴尬的转变（“这是你最后的警告。喝一杯怎么样？”）。

此外，友谊有可能看起来很像任人唯亲。哈佛商学院的佐伊·卡伦和加州大学伯克利分校的里卡多·佩雷斯-特鲁利亚进行了一项巧妙的研究，发现员工与经理的社交互动可以使他们的职业前景相对于其他人有所提升。

double-edged : 指的是具有两面性或两种效果的事物
例：Social media can be a **double-edged sword** – it provides a platform for communication, but it can also be a source of misinformation and cyberbullying. (社交媒体是双刃剑——它提供了交流的平台，但也可能是误导信息和网络欺凌的来源。)

power dynamics change : 权力关系的变化

例：When a new leader takes over, **power dynamics change within the organization**. (当新的领导接管时，组织内部的权力关系发生变化。)

underling : 下属

例：The CEO had a team of **underlings** who handled day-to-day operations. (首席执行官有一支下属团队负责日常运营。)

Fancy a pint : 一种俚语，特指在英国和爱尔兰等地，当人们想要喝一杯啤酒时常用的表达方式。这句话其实是在询问对方是否想要喝杯啤酒。"Fancy"意味着"想要"或"有兴趣"。"A pint"是一种容量为一品脱(约568毫升)的酒杯。因此，这句俚语表示对方是否有兴趣或愿意一起喝杯啤酒
例：A: Fancy a pint after work? B: Sure, that sounds good. Let's go to the pub down the street. (A:下班后想喝一杯吗？B:当然，听起来不错。我们去街上的酒吧吧。)

The researchers looked at promotions of smokers and non-smokers who worked for a large bank in South-East Asia, **hypothesising** that sharing smoking breaks with managers who also **indulged** might give workers a **leg up**. And so it did. Smokers who moved from a non-smoking boss to a **puffer** were promoted more quickly than those who moved to another non-smoker. The authors found that social interactions did not just help smokers; socialising between male managers and male employees played a large role in **perpetuating** gender pay gaps. If firms are going to make friendship their business, they should worry about its **downsides**, too.

Companies should **facilitate** interactions between employees, particularly in a world of **hybrid** and remote working. Social gatherings and **buddy** systems are reasonable ways to encourage colleagues to meet each other and to **foster** a culture. But a high-quality work relationship does not require friendship. It requires respect for each other's **competence**, a level of trust and a desire to reach the same goal; it doesn't need birthday cards and a shared interest in **quiltmaking**. Firms should do what they can to encourage these kinds of relationships. If individuals want to take it further, it's entirely up to them. ■

leg up : 表示给予某人帮助或支持, 以提供优势或帮助他们在某个方面取得成功或进展

例: She got a **leg up** in her career when her mentor introduced her to **important contacts**. (当她的导师介绍她认识重要人脉时, 她在事业上获得了帮助。)

gender pay gaps : 男女工资差距
例: The **gender pay gap** remains a persistent issue in many industries and countries. (性别工资差距在许多行业和国家仍然是一个持续存在的问题。)

facilitate : 促进、便利、使容易实现或发生
例: The government is implementing policies to **facilitate** foreign investments. (政府正在实施政策以促进外国投资。)

social gatherings : 社交
例: My office organizes quarterly **social gatherings** to foster team bonding and communication. (我的办公室每季度组织社交聚会, 以促进团队凝聚力和沟通。)

competence : 具备的技能、知识、能力、专业性以及在特定领域或任务中的熟练程度
例: The job requires a high level of **competence** in computer programming. (这份工作需要在计算机编程方面具备高水平的能力。)

研究人员调查了在东南亚一家大型银行工作的吸烟者和非吸烟者的晋升情况，假设与喜欢吸烟的管理者一起在休息时间吸烟，可能会给吸烟的员工带来一些优势。事实却是这样。从一个不吸烟的上司转移到吸烟的上司的吸烟者比转移到另一个不吸烟者的吸烟者晋升更快。作者发现，社交互动不仅对吸烟者有帮助；男性管理者与男性员工之间的社交活动在延续性别工资差距方面起到了重要作用。如果公司要将友谊作为他们的业务，他们也应该担心其不利因素。

公司应该促进员工之间的互动。特别是在混合办公(现场和远程)的情况下。社交聚会和和好友系统是鼓励同事互相认识并培养文化的合理方式。但是友谊并不是高质量的工作关系的必需品。它需要的是尊重彼此的能力、一定程度的信任以及达成共同目标的意愿，而不是生日贺卡或者对缝制被子的共同爱好。企业应该尽其所能来鼓励这种工作关系，而员工是否想要关系更进一步，这完全取决于他们自己。

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