

You perform better at work if it's fun or hard work

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Making your work more playful and seeking challenges in your job increases performance, especially on days with lower work pressure, finds new research from BI Norwegian Business School (<https://www.bi.edu/>).

Associate Professor Olav Kjellevoll Olsen, and colleagues, investigated the relationship between job crafting, playfulness in work, and job performance. Job crafting involves employees redefining their job tasks by increasing job demands, such as looking for new tasks and challenges, or seeking job resources, such as asking for feedback and support. Playful work design allows employees to create conditions at work that foster play to give joy or pleasure, such as challenging oneself to complete a task in record time.

Participants completed a diary questionnaire and were also asked to rate the daily job performance of a colleague for 30 consecutive days. The researchers found that seeking job resources, seeking more challenges to increase demands, and engaging in playful work design helps employees perform their job better on a daily basis. Furthermore, seeking daily challenges at work and making work more playful were most effective when pressure was low. Meanwhile, reducing job demands was linked to poor performance.

Prof. Olsen says,

“When work pressure is lower than average and there is little work to do, employees may look for more challenges to increase the meaning of work and be more productive. They may also want to design work tasks to be more playful to avoid boredom, stay focused, and increase productivity. The findings from our study suggest that making these small adjustments in the work environment improve job performance. Therefore, daily job crafting and playful work design are important work strategies that supervisors and managers should encourage in order to improve organisational functioning.”

These findings were published in the Journal of Vocational Behaviour.

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For more information, a copy of the research paper, or to speak with Prof. Olsen, please contact Kyle Grizzell from BlueSky Education on 07904706136 or kyle@bluesky-pr.com