



Mindful Work: How Meditation Is Changing Business from the Inside Out

David Gelles

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A *New York Times* reporter reveals what business leaders around the country are already discovering: Meditation may be the key to fostering a happier, more productive workplace.

For the past few years, mindfulness has begun to transform the American workplace. Many of our largest companies, such as General Mills, Ford, Target, and Google, have built extensive programs to foster mindful practices among their workers. *Mindful Work* is the first book to explain how all sorts of businesses and any kind of worker can benefit from meditation, yoga, and other mindful techniques. As a business reporter for the *New York Times* who has also practiced meditation for two decades, David Gelles is uniquely qualified to chart the growing nexus between these two realms. As he proves, mindfulness lowers stress, increases mental focus, and alleviates depression among workers. He also offers real-world examples of how mindfulness has benefited companies that have adopted it — from the millions of dollars Aetna has saved in health-care costs to the ways Patagonia has combined leadership in its market with a pervasively mindful outlook.

Gelles's revelatory book picks up where bestsellers like *Thrive* and *10% Happier* leave off, by detailing how mindfulness works in and for the companies that adopt it, revealing the profound impact mindfulness can have on the world of work. *Mindful Work* goes beyond other books on the subject by providing evidence for the practical benefits of mindfulness and showing readers how to become more mindful themselves.

Mindful Work: How Meditation Is Changing Business from the Inside Out Details

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Dan Harris says

fantastic, informative, exhausting-researched book about all of the ways in which some of the most interesting and effective people in our culture are using meditation on the job. full disclosure: the author, david gelles, is a friend. nonetheless, i think think the fact that he is a longtime meditator as well as an ace business reporter for the new york times makes objectively gives him standing to be a authority on this subject.

???? says

I only liked the chapter (More Focused), and how meditation helps athletes such as basketball players to make split-second decisions by forgetting lost shots, moving with the rhythm of the game, and focusing on the present moment.

Rama says

Meditating in the corporate boardroom

The author defines "Mindfulness" as the ability to see what's going on our heads without getting into it. He defines mindfulness as means of being aware of our experiences, observing without judgment and responding from place of clarity, compassion rather than fear, and insecurity and corporate greed. In short, he proposes mediation as a way to lower stress, increase mental focus, and alleviates depression among workers. He cites many examples where companies like Aetna have saved health-care costs to the ways Patagonia has combined leadership in its market with a pervasively mindful outlook.

Steve Jobs was America's mainstream meditating CEO and a disciple of Zen Buddhism. He was a keen student of Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism, According to the author, mediation is now practiced widely in corporate America. He recalls that Steve Jobs' business approach was not a fringe movement when he addressed Apple Fest in 1981. Meditation was not a new age movement but an increasingly a prominent part of the cultural landscape of corporate America. Mediation is a powerful tool, says the author, and Zen, a school of Mahayana Buddhism translates into deep absorption in a meditative state and control of the mind. It emphasizes insight into the nature and the personal expression, and deemphasizes knowledge and favors direct understanding through concentration and achieving peace through a meditative state. In chapter 7, the author discusses that many companies are embracing social responsibility for improving conditions of workers and health benefits and boosting morale of the workforce through meditation. He takes us inside the leading companies like Google, General Mills, Aetna, and Patagonia and show how meditation is transforming workplaces. This is a powerful alternative message for profit-oriented corporate America

Umeshikad says

I loved the first few chapters of the book. The author stress out the importance of being mindful but does not share the tactics and tools a beginner can use or put into practice.

Joe Burton says

I really enjoyed this. Gelles shares his personal journey as well as how mindfulness is transforming the business world. We could all use more of this - and to hear insights from an accomplished writer of his caliber is something special.

Kevin Kim says

Weird it may sound, due to my lack of concentration and daily changing taste I tend to jump reading one book to another while reading them half way through. To the books currently awaiting their turn to be finished up I committed another misconduct, by instinctively picking a new book I had little intention to read when skimming through the bookshelf in a local library.

Well, meditation has been a hot topic to me recent years with the key influencers being Yuval Harari, the author of *Sapiens*, and Sam Harris, the author of *Waking Up*. Half in doubt but more with blind hope, I started practicing self meditation but soon faced the hurdle where I didn't seem to earn much benefits all the meditation gurus preached enthusiastically. I would've stopped as most of the beginners would do at that stage, saying this nonsense cult is not my thing. So I was almost stopping the regular routine of mediation and it was early this year that I came across a free 10-day Vipassana course held in near Tokyo. Free? why not then, nothing to lose, there I went.

Since then my life has totally changed!!! Ha ha is this what you were expecting as the feedback of the course? Nah, unfortunately those sensational, transcendental, or surreal moments didn't happen. I am still struggling the same anxiety and going through unhappy minutes and hours whenever the mad monkey in my mind plays up. But I do start seeing slight changes - less angry, more focused, and more compassionate. This book *Mindful Work* describes how the people are experiencing the same shift, where this global trends happen led by who, not to mention why meditation is earning much popularity these days in relation to the very distracting and addictive nature of mobile devices.

Rachel Cunning says

Gelles' focus is on how companies can improve their workplace and employee well being by incorporating mindfulness programs. Nor is his focus entirely on meditation. For example, he discusses the health benefits that blue-collar workers received from participating in short focused stretch breaks on the job. He profiles different companies attempting to incorporate mindfulness into the workplace while interweaving research and results into his prose. If you're struggling to be more mindful at work, as I certainly have been, this would be a good book to read.

Gail Spangler says

This was one of the earliest books I read on my mindful journey. Captured my attention right away with possibilities of bringing mindfulness & business together as powerful business skills! Forever grateful to David Gelles for the exceptional read!

Andy Nanar says

Practical and insightful

A good look mindfulness at workplace and cut throat work culture of American corporate mania. Some history, some Scientific studies, some pop culture and lots of stories to drill the point.

Kenley Neufeld says

If you want an easy-to-read book on the state of mindfulness in America then this is the book. A decent overview of the research along with dozens of examples of mindfulness in business, littered with the authors personal experiences. It was kind of fun for me to read because I've shared and practiced with some of the people used as examples. I too have struggled with the role of mindfulness in the business landscape.

Alex Linschoten says

I really wanted to like this book. Gelles takes you through the growing movement to introduce mindfulness-style practices in the workplace. He profiles a variety of companies and organisations that are attempting something along these lines. In this, the book felt like an extended magazine article. It is simultaneously organised along some key themes: the science behind mindfulness and the research being done, stress, focus, compassion, social responsibility and leadership. The book thus functions as an introduction to mindfulness practice as well.

Gelles also takes a somewhat skeptical look at some of the companies that are taking advantage of the increased public interest in mindfulness, finding them wanting in some cases. I imagine this book would be perfect for someone who wants to encourage bosses or companies to introduce these things as part of their corporate policy. For everyone else, there are probably better books to read as introductions. Try Kabat-Zinn's *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness* if you're seeking to reduce stress or have serious illness and/or pain. Try Dan Harris' *10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works* if you're a diehard skeptic but are curious nonetheless.

Wan Shoo says

Exceptional insight into the development of mindfulness! The experience of each practitioner is interesting. The author also included his worry and doubt of the mindfulness fad. In this hectic rat race, this book serves as spiritual fodder for our mind.

Kaitlyn says

I really enjoyed reading about Aetna, Eileen Fisher, Patagonia, Ford, Google, and how other companies are incorporating mindfulness into the workplace. These stories are the core of the book and the most interesting pieces. The book itself felt disjointed and repeatative. It was not well edited and I would have preferred if the book was structured as several long form articles about different companies, their mindfulness programs and supported research. Instead, it often felt like there was a lot of unnecessary glue trying to tie sections together, but never really congealed into an insight or thesis. There's a bit too much focus on Silicon Valley without enough substance and it would have been more impactful to hear about how other parts of the country or even globally are incorporating mindfulness, even if it is less a part of a regional movement. Additionally, the book feels white male centered and more research could be done around women and POCs who are part of the movement to give a more complete and well rounded picture. Overall, this book has good information, but it was hard to overlook the areas that lacked and could have been much shorter/concise.

Anna Sabino says

Gelles' thorough analysis of workplaces implementing mindfulness shows us how close meditation practice and success are related. Mindfulness, compassion and living in the present are integral parts of a culture of a thriving company and "Mindful Work" shows us numerous examples to prove it.

Hemlet Kiai says

such an uplifting book on mindfulness. i am beginning to be more aware of my thoughts. sometimes i fight it but the more i fight the stronger it becomes. i must learn to accept and acknowledge my thoughts. its not easy but i will try. i highly recommend this book.
