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The Future of Mindfulness in the Workplace

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The Future of Mindfulness in the Workplace

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ABSTRACT

Having employees who are more mindful in the workplace, holds the potential to transform every aspect of a company. By being more aware of themselves and the worlds they operate in, workers could find opportunities to improve their own experience and the way they interact with each other, customers, stakeholders, and more broadly how they plan and prepare for the future. Although there is much interest in these programs among companies today, efforts to realize the benefits are still embryonic and face many challenges. Of companies who have launched programs, many have been around for three years or less and have only been developed in a limited number of attributes. Despite this, nearly all companies that have implemented mindfulness programs claim to have realized some benefits from them. However, the nature of most benefits remain at a qualitative level rather than from strong statistical studies.

The goals of this research were to showcase why organizations should proactively implement mindfulness programs, identify the roadblocks and different approaches organizations can use to implement mindfulness programs, and specify the best practices for achieving results from mindfulness programs.

The mindfulness efforts that have been most impactful are introductory talks, app usage, and guided meditations. Companies that have had mindfulness programs for longer periods of time have implemented more attributes and achieved more employee participation. In order to further realize the potential of mindfulness, companies should establish high profile commitment and an accountable champion, develop a broader community of involvement, and work diligently to make sure stigmas do not get in the way.

INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness is the state of being present, curious, and clearly focused on the current moment, nonjudgmentally and is typically achieved through meditation practices (Germer, Siegel, & Fulton, 2005). Companies are using mindfulness in the workplace to improve the activities and interactions between employees and the outside world of customers and stakeholders.

Mindfulness, as a practice, has roots in various spiritual traditions including Buddhism and Hinduism. Individuals have been practicing mindfulness for thousands of years, both by themselves, as well as part of a larger community. Since its beginnings, it has helped reduce mental distractions, increase productivity, and create a larger perspective on life (Germer et al., 2013).

Jon Kabat-Zinn has been acknowledged as one of the biggest influences on bringing mindfulness to the West. He is the former director of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center (Selva, 2019). He learned about mindfulness from several Buddhist teachers which he integrated with Western science to develop his Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. MBSR is an eight-week program aimed at using intensive mindfulness training to reduce stress. Additionally, the Insight Meditation Society (IMS), created by Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzberg, and Joseph Goldstein also played a crucial role in bringing mindfulness to the West (Selva, 2019). They introduced mindfulness meditation to the United States in 1975. Mindfulness meditation is defined as “A technique of meditation in which distracting thoughts and feelings are not ignored but are rather acknowledged and observed nonjudgmentally as they arise to create a detachment from them and gain insight and awareness” (Mosby, 2006, p. 852).

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Both the IMS and Kabat-Zinn helped bring mindfulness into mainstream medicine and demonstrated that practicing mindfulness can lead to positive effects on both physical and psychological symptoms along with favorable differences in health, attitudes, and behaviors.

The literature review below will explore three different buckets. The three buckets are the benefits of mindfulness on the individual, the benefits of mindfulness in the workplace, and why mindfulness is becoming more important to businesses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bucket 1: Benefits of Mindfulness on the Individual

The first of many benefits that mindfulness can bring an individual is reduced stress. John Kabat-Zinn's MBSR program, which has been around for four decades and more than ten thousand practitioners has proven that mindfulness is considered a key component of fighting stress (Gazella, 2005). By using surveys and different medical tests, the program's results have shown a decrease of just under 40% in psychological distress. This includes sharp declines in depression, anxiety, and hostility. In 2014, Philippe R. Goldin and James J. Gross conducted a study that examined MBSR-related changes in the brain triggered by emotional reactivity and regulation of negative self-beliefs in individuals with social anxiety disorder (SAD). After completing the eight-week MBSR program, the MRI results revealed improvement in anxiety and depression symptoms as well as self-esteem. The results also showed greater activity in brain regions connected to increased ability to focus, reduced negative emotions, and decreased amygdala activity. Cambridge University researchers found very similar results using a Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale, before and after a 10-week mindfulness meditation program (Janssen, Heerkens, Kuijer, Van Der Heijden, & Engels, 2018). They found that

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mindfulness training can substantially reduce stress and is instrumental in reducing the symptoms of anxiety and subclinical depression. Remmers, Topolinski, and Koole (2016) completed a study that found that mindfulness can also improve emotion regulation, which led to participants having a better mood and better ability to handle stress. Follow-up studies conducted by the University of Massachusetts Medical Center showed that these improvements were sustained four years later for a majority of participants.

Mindfulness offers many other benefits to individuals who practice it. A 2013 study by Jha, Morrison, Dainer-Best, Parker, Rostrup, and Stanley showcased the benefits of mindfulness meditation among military members. They conducted an eight-week mindfulness training program, with a meditating military group of eight individuals, a nonmeditating military group of 24 individuals, and a control group of nonmeditating civilians of 60 individuals. Both military groups were part of a highly stressful preparation period before being deployed. The results showed that the nonmeditating military group had a lower working memory capacity over time and that the working memory capacity among nonmeditating civilians remained stable over time. However, the working memory capacity increased within the meditating military group (Jha et al., 2015). This increase was a result of the meditation groups' greater attentional stability. Additionally, those who participated in the meditation self-reported a highly positive effect.

Moore and Malinowski conducted a study in 2009 that investigated how mindfulness meditation influenced participants' ability to suppress distracting information and focus attention. This study compared a control group that had no meditation experience with a group of experienced mindfulness meditators. The results demonstrated that the meditation group performed significantly better on all measures of attention and had greater self-reported focus.

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There are also different groups of people that have received benefits from practicing mindfulness. For example, veterans and police officers who have PTSD have turned to mindfulness for treatment. In 2012, a group of 149 veterans participated in a study. The results of the study demonstrated that mindfulness skills were negatively associated with clinician-rated measures of PTSD (Boyd, Lanius, & Mckinnon, 2018.). The veterans who reported a larger improvement on mindfulness skills over the course of treatment had decreased levels of clinician-rated PTSD posttreatment. Firefighters, who also work in high stress environments, have also experienced great benefits after practicing mindfulness. In 2018, one of Worcester Massachusetts' fire departments began a four-week mindfulness program. On top of many of the psychological and mental benefits listed above, these first responders also saw physical improvements attributed to the mindfulness techniques they learned. One of their training techniques involved using a 45-minute tank of oxygen. After their mindfulness training, the firefighters were able to make these tanks last much longer than 45 minutes (Shaner, 2018). Specifically, by applying mindfulness techniques, such as inhaling/exhaling slowly, firefighters were able to minimize panic, and therefore diminish inefficient consumption of air. Rather than getting stuck in a never-ending panic mode, the firefighters were able to accurately acknowledge their situations, stay calm, and remind themselves that they were going to get through it. In this example, mindfulness could help these first responders save even more lives.

Mindfulness can also be an effective treatment for addiction. Dr. Judson Brewer has multiple studies on how mindfulness can help treat people who are addicted to social media, drug use, overeating, overspending, and drinking too much alcohol. In 2012, he completed a study with 33 participants who used and craved cigarettes (Elwafi, 2013). This study found that mindfulness training may be an effective way to end smoking and that informal mindfulness practice predicts

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a decoupling of the association between craving and smoking. Brewer's work has become the gold standard for abetting the cessation of smoking since. Mindfulness programs yield higher success rates than other similar programs such as nicotine patches or any kind of chemical intervention.

Bucket 2: Bringing Mindfulness into the Workplace

The broad effects of mindfulness practices discussed above, demonstrate the variety of ways mindfulness impacts individuals. These impacts also lead to positive changes in the workplace. When businesses and their employees are able to incorporate mindfulness practices into their workday, it changes their performance, relationships, and employee well-being.

Performance

Mindfulness drives performance and enables agility. It can create a company culture based on mindfulness principals such as compassion and focus. Compassion fosters much better client interaction, better internal dialogue, and better teaching (Greiser and Martini, 2018). Focus helps to decrease complexity and eliminate non-priority tasks. Additionally, mindfulness can help aid with the immense changes occurring daily in the business world. We are currently witnessing an increase in digitalization, automation, AI, and an overload of information. These changes are causing employees to need to adjust to new ways of learning and to acquire new skills (Greiser and Martini, 2018). This can create anxiety and resistance. However, mindfulness fosters open mindedness and clarity. As a result, it can help leaders and teams to adapt quickly and increase the speed at which they can learn new things.

Even sports teams have turned to mindfulness to help their performance. The Los Angeles Lakers have turned to mindfulness to try to perform better (Francuz, 2018). In 2018, they teamed

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up with Andy Pudicome, a meditation and mindfulness teacher, to try to increase their performance from the free throw line and remain focused on the court. At this stage, results are still inconclusive. Since 2011, the Seattle Seahawks, another sports team, have been offering team meditation sessions (Roenigk, 2013). The sessions emphasize quieting their minds, focusing their attention inwards, and visualizing success. Mike Gervais, a performance sports psychologist, leads their sessions and creates status profiles for each player consisting of what is going on in their personal life, how much sleep they are getting, how they deal with stressors, and their goals. The players have said that these sessions help them to have an innovative mindset and be more relaxed on the field. In other words, the mindfulness training allowed them to focus more on their performance and be more locked in during practices and games. Pete Carroll, the Seahawks' head coach, says that through these mindfulness practices he is trying to make his players happier, which will lead to better results on the field (Roenigk, 2013). He believes that this program was a big factor in bringing his team to the Superbowl in 2014 as well as winning an NFL title in 2013.

There is currently a plethora of evidence that suggests mindfulness can play a key role in workplace performance categories including task and safety performance. One industry that has shown positive outcomes as a result of implementing mindfulness is the service industry.

Mindfulness has been linked to increased job performance among waiters (Dane & Brummel, 2014) and supervisors (Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014). Research done in 2014 by Shonin and Gordon found that middle managers that engaged in mindfulness training showcased vast improvements in supervisor-rated job performance when compared to their initial performance and the performance of a control group. Health care workers have also experienced similar results. In a study conducted by Beach, Roter, Korthis, Epstein, Sharp, Ratanawongsa, Cohn,

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Eggly, Sankar, Moore, and Saha in 2013, researchers found that mindfulness led to improved patient satisfaction and communication quality which increased performance with patients.

Emerging research is also linking mindfulness with higher safety performance. Zhang, Ding, Li, and Wu conducted a study in 2013 on control room operators of a nuclear power plant. Their study found that there is a connection between mindfulness and self-reported safety for workers who were completing complex tasks. Safety problems are caused by mistakes, this means when workers are mindful, they are making fewer mistakes. This is especially important when it comes to the safety of a company's workers. When workers are safer, mistakes are being reduced, and employees are not injured as frequently. A second study that was conducted by Zhang and Wu (2014) replicated these results, especially with workers who had more experience with their jobs.

In 2014, Dane and Brummel conducted research in the service industry that showed how mindfulness can affect job performance. They measured the mindfulness, engagement, and performance levels of 98 servers from seven chain restaurants located in Southwestern America. The mindfulness and engagement levels were collected using surveys the employees filled out and their job performance was measured through their managers ratings. Server experience was used as a control variable. Their study found that workplace mindfulness and job performance have a positive relationship, even when accounting for effects of employee ability, commitment, and concentration.

Evidence that mindfulness also reduces performance variability and motivates groups has been examined (Dalal, Bhave, Fiset, 2014). The researchers found that mindfulness has been linked to reducing catastrophic performances. Performance variance is often influenced by emotions, self-control, sleep patterns, and attention, all of which are connected to mindfulness. However, since

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mindfulness' effects on the workplace are still relatively new, more research must be completed in order to confirm these hypotheses.

Mindfulness has been connected to goal pursuit and motivation. Mindfulness nurtures a sense of acceptance and attention to the present moment which is not usually associated with goal orientation and future outlook. However, Brown and Ryan ran a test in 2003 that found that more mindful workers have higher autonomous motivation. This is defined as the desire to take on activities that are perceived as valued or important. Autonomously motivated actions are usually more enjoyable and show greater success than actions motivated by money or praise. The relationship between mindfulness and motivation is an area that deserves more attention. Hopefully, future research will show a relationship between attaining goals and mindfulness.

A continuous challenge many businesses run into is having employees who are able to solve issues both quickly and creatively. In frantic work environments, employees fall into autopilot and miss out on opportunities to come up with new ways to conquer challenges. In Danny Penman's 2015 book Mindfulness for Creativity, he argues that mindfulness practices improve three key skills that influence solving problems in creative ways. The three skills that mindfulness improves are attention, openness, and the ability to overcome setbacks and doubt. Emma Schootstra, Dirk Deichmann, and Evgenia Dolgova (2017) also discovered that mindfulness practice can influence creativity. They split 129 students into 3 groups and gave them the task of coming up with as many ideas as possible for how businesses can use drones. Before brainstorming began, one group performed 10 minutes of mindfulness meditation and another group performed a 10-minute exercise focused on letting their minds wander. The third group began brainstorming as soon as they split off. Each group generated similar numbers of

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ideas. However, the mindfulness meditation group generated a much wider range of ideas. Even after accounting for other variables that could influence idea pliability, such as the level that participants looked forward to brainstorming, those who meditated still had a range of ideas that was 22% larger. The meditation groups also felt less negative. These groups had roughly 20% lower irritation, restlessness, and nervousness (Schootstra et al, 2017)

To confirm their findings, Schootstra et al., ran another study that involved 24 senior innovative managers from a research company. This time the participants performed a 12-minute meditation and then broke into groups to brainstorm ways to promote cultural inclusivity in a business. Most of the executives expressed that mindfulness led to a clearer mind and increased their ability to focus, which led to new ways to solve problems.

Ellen Keithline Byrne and Tojo Thatchenkery (2018) also ran a study to prove that mindfulness increases creativity in individuals and groups of people in the workplace. In their experiment they split a group of 10 individuals into a control group and a mindfulness meditation group. To start, each group came up with as many unusual uses for a brick as they could. Then, one group of individuals performed 10 minutes of mindfulness meditation and both groups were asked to continue brainstorming. The study showed that the group who practiced mindfulness were able to come up with more new ideas than the non-meditating group. In the following five weeks, the same individuals were given more tasks. The mindfulness group ended up using a much different brainstorming approach and built off of the ideas of others by roughly 120% more (Byrne and Thatchenkery, 2018). These researchers concluded that groups that practice mindfulness experience a freer flow of ideas which are more likely to be expanded on to create unique solutions.

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Relationships

Science has shown that mindfulness improves cognitive abilities which leads to better harmony and more collaboration among teams (Mathieu, Heffner, Goodwin, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Mindfulness can help foster better communication, emotional intelligence, leadership, and teamwork.

Mindfulness can increase the quality of communications among workgroups. In a study involving health care professionals (Beckman, Wendland, Mooney, Krasner, Quill, Suchman, Epstein, 2012), mindfulness was linked to more active listening, increased openness, and less judgement of coworkers. These traits led to clients giving higher relationship ratings to their practitioners as well as more positive subordinate work attitudes. Mindfulness has also been linked to greater levels of empathy and compassion. After practicing mindfulness, employees have been shown to focus less on negative conflicts and emotions as well as getting even (Long & Christian, 2015). As a result, employees were able to respond better to adverse events in the workplace.

Emotional intelligence “refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them” (Salovey, 1990, 186). In 2015, Peerayuth Charoensukmongkol collected survey data from 317 individuals in an attempt to find a relationship between mindfulness meditation and emotional intelligence. His data showed that mindfulness improves one’s ability to understand their own emotions, notice the emotions of others, and control their own emotions. This means that mindful employees will be more likely to realize what emotions are beneficial for different work scenarios. This will allow those workers to approach tasks and challenges in a better mindset. This increased emotional intelligence will also allow those who are mindful to gain more trust within their relationships.

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Trust is built when individuals are able to pay attention to, understand, and effectively communicate with others (Charoensukmongkol, 2015).

Although the relationship between mindfulness and leadership has not been extensively studied, there has been some research that shows mindful leaders are beneficial to their workplaces. One study done by Liang, Lian, Brown, Ferris, Hanig, Keeping (2014) on 50 supervisors and 206 subordinates, discovered that mindful leaders are less likely to be hostile towards their employees. Practicing mindfulness decreased the number of times employees felt disrespected and made the supervisors more aware of how they were talking to and treating their employees. This allowed them to better control how they responded in different business scenarios. Since earlier mindfulness studies have proven to increase innovation and listening abilities, it is very possible that there are other ways it can help leaders perform. For example, it could increase their capability to strategically think and be better able to understand their employees' needs.

However, more research in these areas is necessary before any findings can be confidently made.

There is an abundance of research that has been done to establish a positive relationship between team performance and social methods (Mathieu et al., 2000). However, not many studies have been conducted to analyze how mindfulness can affect team processes. In 2006, Singh, Singh, Sabaawi, Myers, and Wahler ran an experiment on therapeutic treatment teams. They implemented mindfulness techniques into the team meetings and saw great improvements. As a result, the teams experienced more active listening and more patience while working together. The member of the group also felt more appreciated by their team. These outcomes remained for a year after the experiment was conducted. Another study by Cleirigh and Greaney (2014) found that mindfulness can also lead to better cohesion and collective performance within teams. It is

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also possible that mindfulness practices may be associated with better conflict management and higher team moral. Mindfulness has been linked to less destructive communication and reduced emotional reactions in romantic relationships (Barnes et al., 2007).

Well-being

Mindfulness also improves corporate well-being by helping people master peak levels of stress and by recharging more quickly (Remmers et al., 2016). According to the researchers, companies who have implemented mindfulness have seen decreasing levels of sickness and increasing employee retention.

Employee well-being deals with an employee's experience and how well he/she functions at work. It includes physical, behavioral, and psychological aspects. More and more research is being conducted that draws a positive connection between employee well-being and performance (Grant, Christianson, & Price, 2007). This is because when employees are having enjoyable experiences at work, they are healthier, which leads to less turnover and absenteeism. These benefits are attractive to mindfulness researchers who are interested in its integration in the workplace.

Research done by Eberth and Sedlmeier in 2012, found that mindfulness and self-reported well-being are linked based on a meta-analysis on 39 studies. Mindfulness practices have been connected to decreasing burnout, stress, work-family conflict, and adverse attitudes along with better sleep quality. There have been studies conducted on doctors (Krasner, Epstein, Beckman, Suchman, Chapman, Mooney, Quill, 2009), soldiers (Jha et al., 2015), and teachers (Roeser, Schonert-Reichl, Jha, Cullen, Wallace, Wilensky, Oberle, Thomson, Taylor, Harrison, 2013) that have found a link between job satisfaction and mindfulness. Mindful workers have higher levels

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of optimism and hope which leads to increased engagement. It has also shown to contribute to the development of self-compassion (Roeser et al., 2013). When workers are more aware of the tasks they are engaged in, they are more excited to come to work and do their job.

Mindfulness has also been linked to improving individual's overall health. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is currently being used as a way to treat a great deal of illnesses including cancer, chronic pain, hypertension, and immune disorders (Niazi, 2011). When workers are more mindful, they will be able to be at work more both physically and mentally. Dane and Brummel conducted a study in 2014 that found mindfulness is negatively related to intended turnover in the workplace. This means mindfulness can help companies attract and keep top talent.

Bucket 3: Why Mindfulness Is Becoming More Important to Businesses

Mindfulness is continuing to become more relevant to workplace environments. On top of all of the benefits discussed above, there are many short-term changes coming to the business world that mindfulness can improve. The business environment is constantly changing. In Bucket 2 we discussed how mindfulness can help organizations adapt to changes such as the implementation of AI and big data (Greiser and Martini, 2018). However, there are other ways mindfulness can improve the future of the workplace, especially on a human level. Mindfulness can help lead to better diversity and inclusion as well as counter increased distractions, healthcare costs, and depression and stress in younger generations.

In daily life, the number of ways to become distracted is always increasing. This is especially true at work where employees are frequently experiencing distractions that resulted in diminished focus. In 2010 Trbovich, Prakash, Stewart, Trip, and Savage, conducted a study in a hospital that

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was interested in workplace distractions. They found that nurses can be interrupted up to 14 times per hour. Additionally, the study found that each interruption endured was correlated with a 12% increase in errors. This literature review has already discussed how mindfulness can lead to increased focus and ability to concentrate. As these skills become more important in the workplace, companies should turn to mindfulness to gain a competitive advantage.

We live in a society where stress is ever present. Popular stressors include work, school, money, and relationships. According to the American Psychological Association, the members of Gen Z, individuals from ages 15 to 21, reported the worst mental health of any generation. On top of this, 91% of Gen Z adults said that they had felt physical or emotional symptoms, such as depression or anxiety, associated with stress (Ducharme, 2018). Additionally, severe depression, self-injury rates, and suicidal thinking among American college students has more than doubled over the last 10 years (Joseph, 2019). Between 2007 and 2018, the rate of moderate to severe depression rose from 23.2% to 41.1%. Further, in the past 5 years, the rates of moderate to severe anxiety rose from 17.9% to 34.4%. These trends are not just occurring in college students. A study done by the National Institutes of Health in March of 2019, found that almost one-third of children from the ages of 10 to 12 screened positive for suicide risk in emergency department setting (Lanzillo, Horowitz, Wharff, Sheftall, Bridge, 2019). These college students and preteens will be the next two generations to enter the work force. Businesses are going to have to adapt to find a way to reduce these feelings so employees can achieve their full potential.

Mindfulness can also lead to increased business profits in multiple ways. For example, it can help companies cut costs. Work related stress costs the UK economy roughly \$8 billion annually (Jones, 2015). This cost was calculated based off of the amount of days employees take off each

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year due to stress related reasons. In the US, Aetna insurance has found that a highly stressed employee costs a business an extra \$2,000 per year in healthcare expenses. However, since offering mindfulness programs, health care costs for Aetna have started to decrease annually. “In 2012, as mindfulness programs ramped up, health care costs fell a total of 7 percent (That equals \$6.3 million going straight to the bottom line, partly attributed to mindfulness training)” (Levin, 2017, para. 9). This is a great example of the upside these programs can bring to companies.

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace lead to greater creativity and innovation, better problem-solving skills, and broader perspectives (Insights, 2011). However, Dobbin and Kalev (2019) believe that although diversity training for employees has positive intentions, they are not usually effective. Often, attitudes and behaviors do not change, and biases can even increase. In 2017, Patricia Thompson was invited by a Fortune 500 company’s diversity committee to train their employees. She decided to turn to mindfulness-based activities prior to group discussions in order to help the employees stay open and engaged and not shut down. She emphasized deep breathing, taking a step back, and questioning perceptions. As a result, the group had a much more productive conversation about inclusion than ever before (Thompson, 2017). The group members were able to recognize their vulnerabilities and navigate through discomfort to encourage diversity in their workplace.

This research is supported by Lueke and Gibson’s 2015 study that found that listening to a 10-minute recording that encouraged the individuals to focus on their bodily sensations and thoughts judgement free led to less implicit bias based on age and race. Analysis of their results using the Quad Model showed that this decrease was a result of weaker automatically activated associations. They also found that listening to the recording had decreased linguistic intergroup

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bias, which is the tendency to expect people from the in-group to behave better than those from the out-group. At the recent Advancing Workplace Excellence (AWE) conference, a panel discussion included Human Resource (HR) professionals who each underscored the value-added of mindfulness programs for increasing diversity and inclusion in their organizations. The panel touched on how mindfulness allows employees to create safe spaces to stop automatic thoughts, deal with discomfort, and put themselves in the shoes of others. At this conference, they also emphasized how important it is to gain executive support in order to bring mindfulness into your place of work. Mindfulness programs in the workplace can benefit individual employees and the business as a whole. They can lead to increased profits as well as increased employee performance and well-being.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

After conducting a review of the literature currently published, a couple of key takeaways and gaps were recognized. The main takeaways were that mindfulness is something everyone can practice and see great benefits from and that these benefits can be realized in the workplace. Based off of the research already conducted, mindfulness could truly revolutionize the way companies interact and operate. However, mindfulness best practices and benefits in the workplace are largely undocumented. Although studies involving this topic have been conducted, the field still needs more evidence to prove how beneficial these programs can be as well as what is actually leading to the success of these programs in organizations. The literature review always made it evident that going forward, mindfulness programs are going to be an important tool needed to gain employees' full potential. The world continues to change, and experience unexpected occurrences. On top of this, employees are now experiencing more

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mental health issues than ever. In order to adjust to these events, businesses are going to have to change the way they do things.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions this research aimed to answer were:

1. Why should organizations proactively implement mindfulness programs?
2. What are the different approaches organizations can use to implement mindfulness programs and what are the roadblocks?
3. What are the best practices for achieving results from mindfulness programs?

To fill the gaps in the literature and answer these questions, a methodology was developed to conduct direct interviews with current participants in mindfulness programs to specifically ascertain practices, success rates, and benefits. What follows is the specific methodology developed to do that.

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected through a three-step process. The first step was attending two mindfulness conferences. The first conference attended was the Advancing Workplace Excellence's (AWE) event titled "Cultivating Mindfulness in the Workplace". This was an all-day event that consisted of panels, break outs sessions, and group mindfulness activities. These mindfulness conventions made it possible to learn more about what companies were doing to implement mindfulness in the workplace. They also allowed the researcher to identify potential survey and interview participants. The second event attended was the Association for Talent Development's (ATD) event titled "Being Present in 2020". This event was a half day event that included a presentation

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from a researcher at Brown University's Mindfulness Center and a group discussion about what companies are doing to bring mindfulness into the workplace. The second step of collecting data was creating an online survey. The survey ([Appendix A](#)) consisted of 12 multiple choice and open response questions and was sent out to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) employees, Human Resource (HR) employees, and employees in consulting companies. The goals of this survey were to gain a better idea of how prevalent mindfulness programs are in the workplace and to obtain more information on the mindfulness programs that are in place. From the survey, the researcher identified individuals that participated in mindfulness programs and were willing to be interviewed. Conducting these in-depth structured interviews was the third step in the data collecting process. The interview questions ([Appendix B](#)) were aimed at understanding how mindfulness programs work in their specific organizations and the keys to their success. Preexisting interview questions that other mindfulness studies had used in the workplace were not evident when examining the research discussed in the literature review. Therefore, a new survey was created. The interview questions used were critiqued and validated by the Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) of the Global Integrity leadership Group which is a mindfulness consulting group. The interviews ranged from 47 to 73 minutes long and were manually transcribed and anonymized prior to analysis. The interviews were done via telephone and in person. Some of the interviews took place in the workplace and followed participation in mindfulness tools the companies had implemented. From the interviews, themes and patterns emerged through content analysis. The demographics of those interviews from four different companies are offered in the table below. The four companies and six individuals interviewed had a wide range of institutions, size, length of program, and percentage of participants.

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Company	Type of Institution	Size (Employees)	Length of Program	Percentage of Participants	Number of Employees Interviewed
A	Financial	19,000	1.5 years	2%	3
B	Insurance	250	3	30%	1
C	Services	38	5	40%	1
D	Consulting	5	20	100%	1

Table 1: Companies Interviewed

The reason this methodology was chosen is because it allowed for a deeper understanding of how companies are successfully implementing mindfulness programs. The survey was used to ascertain which companies had current mindfulness programs, identify attributes of such programs, and solicit participation in detailed interviews and direct observations of several programs. The interviews allowed the researcher to observe and participate in the programs. One of the interviews conducted with company A involved a site visit. Although the research is not huge in size, this qualitative approach resulted in more detailed, insightful, and personal, unsolicited responses to the research questions.

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey received 29 responses from mostly individuals working in the North Eastern United States but did include some responses from Central and Southern US. Of the 29 responses, 59% came from companies with mindfulness programs, 10% came from companies that had mindfulness programs in the past that no longer existed, and 31% came from companies that never had mindfulness programs. The mindfulness programs of the companies ranged from one year to over multiple decades, although most of these companies had only recently implemented such programs. Roughly 82% of these company programs had been around for less than seven years, 73% of which had durations of three years or less. This is a clear sign that mindfulness

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programs in the workplace are still quite embryonic. As a result, gaining employee awareness of and commitment to these programs as well as overcoming obstacles was a recurring topic of conversation.

Within the companies surveyed and interviewed, the mindfulness program participation ranged from less than 2% to roughly 60%. However, both the length of the program and employee participation rates did not seem to affect whether or not employees attained benefits from the mindfulness programs. The way that these companies measure the success of their mindfulness programs is through employee feedback and surveys. One hundred percent of the companies surveyed that had mindfulness programs experienced self-reported benefits, even those that have only had mindfulness programs in place for less than 2 years. This is supported by Dr. Elise Bialyew who discovered through her research that “Just ten minutes a day of mindfulness meditation over one month was enough to support more positive emotions, reduce stress, increase self-compassion and strengthen focus in daily life” (Bialyew, 2018, para. 7). The two largest benefits these programs reported were reduced stress (91%) and increased productivity (55%).

The length of the mindfulness programs has a direct correlation between the number of tools in the program as well as the participation rate of employees. The longer companies have had mindfulness programs in place, the greater the penetration of employees participating. On average, it took approximately 12 years to get 50% participation (Appendix C). This is a sign of the importance of sticking with mindfulness programs. When more employees participate, the number of individuals who receive the benefits will increase. Additionally, mindfulness

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programs typically start out with three to five tools and then usually add two to four additional tools over time ([Appendix D](#)).

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The interviews allowed insights into what attributes were the most successful and identified main themes. Most of the mindfulness programs in the companies surveyed and interviewed included introductory sessions, mindfulness apps, guided meditations, and bringing in guest speakers. The most beneficial programs that were identified in the conducted interviews were introduction sessions, guided meditations, and apps.

The introduction sessions are one attribute organizations have been using to try to combat the motivation challenge mentioned above. The sessions help to remove some of the stigmas behind meditation and to educate individuals on what exactly mindfulness is as well as how it can be used at work. The companies try their best to make sure that the presenters they bring in look like normal people that would blend in on the street. By bringing in guest speakers and presenters who are well versed in mindfulness and look mainstream to introduce different techniques and tips for being mindful while at work, employees are able to relate to them and realize that they too can meditate and be mindful. An employee at company B had this to say, “One of the most beneficial parts of the program is bringing in outside sources that were able to explain mindfulness in a way that is easy to follow. This helps to reduce some of the stigma around meditation and mindfulness.” They accredited these sessions as a real driver of employee interest and participation. In most cases, these outside presenters who introduce mindfulness to employees generate a good turnout. Mindfulness is a topic of discussion that employees want to learn about. For example, an HR specialist from company A commented on how, through the use

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of focus groups of employees, the need to target mental health and mindfulness at work has become more prevalent in the last couple of years. The reasons being for this is because their employees have expressed being more stressed both in the workplace and at home. Yet, getting employees to create a consistent habit of practicing mindfulness or meditation on their own, is much harder to do. For example, each calendar year, company A holds development weeks which focus on learning new skills and employee growth. One of the most popular sessions, which usually fills up with over 250 employees is an introduction to mindfulness presentation. However, roughly a year and a half since introducing these sessions, company A has not been able to convert a majority of those attendees into regular participants of their mindfulness program. Although roughly half of these employees have followed up and expressed interest in performing mindfulness at work, building consistent sustained participation has been a challenge. Due to Company A's size, there are also still a great deal of employees that are not aware of their program.

A second attribute, guided meditations, also helped to ease some of the confusion around mindfulness and meditations as it allowed participants to feel more comfortable and aware of what to do. One employee interviewed from Company A commented that "Guided meditations put me in the zone." Another commented that "The instructions given by the guided meditations help me to focus on the present moment and not be too hard on myself." These guided mediations also allowed multiple topics to be covered. Employees had the opportunities to listen to and be introduced to different types of sitting meditations as well as walking meditations and mindful eating activities. Employees commented that this variety was welcomed and helped to keep the program feeling fresh.

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A third attribute, apps on mobile devices, allow employees to be able to practice and learn about mindfulness any time, any place. Self-care apps have seen notable growth in the last four years. In 2018, more than 3,400 self-care apps were added to app stores (Bostock, Crosswell, Prather, Steptoe). One of the employees in charge of implementing an app at Company A said “Our goal with rolling this app out to our employees is to increase the visibility of our mindfulness program while also providing them with a sense of where their strengths and weaknesses are.” Many of the apps companies are using, including the ones used by company A and company C, are made by behavioral scientists, and have algorithms that allow each employee to have a personal and meaningful experience. These companies hope that the apps will decrease their employee absenteeism and increase their employee presenteeism.

The three most dominant themes that became evident through content analysis of the interviews conducted were the challenges associated with stigmas, the importance of creating a community of practice, and the importance of having a mindfulness champion. There are two main stigmas that created challenges for mindfulness programs. One is the stigma attached to meditation that makes people think it is not for them. The other is the stigma attached to leaving your desk at work to take time for yourself.

One of the major challenges faced by companies looking to implement mindfulness programs is the ability to remove the stigma that comes with meditation and mindfulness. According to a mindfulness consulting group Chief Strategy Officer that was interviewed, “Many of the businesses I have worked with think of monks with shaved heads going off into mountains to isolate themselves when they think about mindfulness and meditation. I have to explain to them

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that anyone can become mindful in the marketplace.” Mindfulness can still be perceived as a religious practice even though a great deal of data supports that it is a beneficial secular practice.

The second stigma that is a roadblock for successful mindfulness programs is the stigma attached to leaving one’s desk during the workday. One of the major reasons for this has to do with the busy schedules of corporate employees. Many feel that they do not have the ability to take 10 minutes a day to step back from their work and breathe. Additionally, they feel guilty about taking time to focus on themselves while they are in the workplace. As a result, employees sometimes choose to work while eating lunch and practice mindfulness during their lunch break. An employee at company A had this to say, “For guided meditation sessions, noon is our most popular time because individuals take their lunch breaks around then.” Although multiple other times were offered throughout the day, they were not nearly as popular because employees did not feel they had the “free time” to step away from their desk at any time. Two ways to combat these stigmas, as well as other challenges, that emerged through content analysis, were through developing communities of practice and invested champions.

The importance of having a community of practice was a major theme that became apparent in the interviews. A community of practice refers to building a dedicated group that regularly meets to meditate and perform other mindfulness activities together. According to Dr. Tara Brach, being part of meditation groups provide accountability and a supportive space to connect with others (Brach, 2015). Two of the companies interviewed had a community of practice. The researcher attended a community meditation session at company A. This session was a 15-minute guided meditation that had in person as well as virtual attendees. Afterwards, participants were asked about why they practice mindfulness at work. One employee said “I genuinely look

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forward to our weekly mindfulness sessions. I am very thankful of the community we are building. It makes me feel accepted, supported, and less like an outcast.” This idea of feeling welcomed was one both the in person and virtual participants emphasized. Even those who were not there in person felt that they were part of a bigger group that supported each other. These employees also spoke to how the community of practice allowed them to share stories and experiences as well as feel comfortable asking questions about mindfulness and receiving helpful answers.

A mindfulness champion is an individual that has experienced mindfulness training and has influence in an organization, often through a senior position. Their role is to help promote their company’s mindfulness program and help increase employee awareness around it. These champions are often the ones who organize mindfulness introduction session for their employees. On top of this, they can assist in the growth of the company and creating a community of support. Company A has a champion who is their chief HR officer. One employee from company A said “Our champion has greatly eased pushback from other employees. Her involvement has allowed us to consistently have an area to meet together.” This quote was in response to struggles their mindfulness program had faced. Individuals in Company A did not think using a conference room for 30 minutes of meditation and mindfulness activities was an effective use of time. However, their champion was able to support them and allow them accesses to practice in conference rooms multiple times per week. Company C’s champion is their owner and founder. Her employees acknowledge her role in their program has been a big reason for their high employee participation rate. “Our champion does a great job of bringing in guest speakers to educate us. She also helped to create a 30-day mindfulness challenge that has made our employees be more accountable in their practices.”

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Another important theme that became evident during the interviews was that there is a need for a way to focus more on the mental health of employees. Now is the time for companies to introduce and expand on their mindfulness programs as well as for the world to become more accepting of business and mindfulness existing hand in hand. Mental health has increasingly become a more important topic over the last couple of decades. Individuals experience a great deal of stress which can affect the way they act, think, and treat others. As was evident in my literature review, younger generations are continuing to report higher rates of stress, anxiety, and depression. This was something the EAP and HR employees also commented on in their interviews. This is a key statistic for businesses because it means they are going to have to adapt to meet the needs of their employees to gain the best performance out of them. As these younger generations are entering the workforce, companies are going to have to offer more ways to encourage positive mental health in their employees. Additionally, the corporate world continues to change at a rapid pace. Many companies have switched to open plan office spaces. When this is the case, employees become more visible and accessible. However, this can lead to constant distractions and an absence of privacy. In many cases the distractions of people constantly getting up and having conversations next to people trying to work can decrease productivity and increase the stress of employees.

The last theme that was prevalent through the interviews was that companies are now starting to use mindfulness as a way to attract and retain top talent. Mindfulness programs are beginning to be used as a sign to current and potential employees that the company is invested in their success. Since last year, company A has been using their mindfulness program as a hiring tool. They have also begun to advertise the program on their social media pages as a way to show that they want to offer their employees a great career and invest in their mental health. Their hope is

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that their use of mindfulness in the workplace will lead their prospective employees to choose them over their competitors.

More quotes from the interviews conducted that support the themes discussed above can be found in Appendix E.

DISCUSSION

Mindfulness is starting to gain some real momentum in all types of literature. In fact, from 2011 to 2018, the number of “Mindfulness” journal articles published per year increased more than tenfold from 119 to over 1200 (Appendix F) (Tezel and Giritli, 2018). In Margaret Chapman’s 2012 article, she discusses how mindfulness in the workplace was really just beginning. She talks about how there was great interest in the first ever mindfulness in the workplace conference that was in Cambridge in February of 2012. Although interest in this topic is continuing to increase in the business world, there are still many companies that have either just started or still do not offer such programs.

The two largest benefits these programs reported were reduced stress and increased productivity. These workplace benefits are supported by a 2017 study by Coo and Salanova as well as the 2005 study by John Kabat Zinn which was discussed in the literature review. Coo and Salanova’s 2017 study involved 34 hospital workers that were split into a mindfulness group and a control group. Their pre and post evaluations of mindfulness found that those in the mindfulness group experienced an increase in performance among other positive results.

Leadership Coach and Career mentor, Uri Galimidi has also found bringing in an external mindfulness facilitator to be an important step in building a successful mindfulness program in

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the workplace (Galimidi, 2019). He discusses how these external facilitators can work with their employees directly to understand how mindfulness can influence their business. He also mentions that these external facilitators can present mindfulness to the employees in a way they can easily relate and respond to.

Golbie Kamarei, the Chief People Officer at Culture Amp, has discussed how bringing guided meditations into the workplace is key to bringing mindfulness programs to life within organizations (Wolfe, 2015). In 2013 she began the meditation program that BlackRock, the investment management company, still uses today. She credits the program's success to the guided meditation sessions. She says that "Three-dozen employees attended the first guided meditation. As sessions continued, word quickly spread throughout the organization" (Wolfe, 2015, para. 15).

As mentioned in the interview results section, meditation and self-care apps have experienced significant growth recently. Additionally, a 2019 study suggested that guided meditations delivered through smartphones and practiced regularly, could reduce stress, improve well-being, and lead to long term effects (Bostock et al. 2019). This study included 238 participants split into a mindfulness meditation app group and a control group. "The intervention group reported significant improvement in well-being, distress, job strain, and perceptions of workplace social support compared to the control group" (Bostock et al. 2019, p. 1). Additionally, a 2018 study done by Automatic Data Processing Inc. found that mindfulness apps are an important aspect of mindfulness programs. Their research proved that these apps lead to personalized experiences and increased employee participation.

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Since meditation is something that has roots in religion, it can be hard for westerners to relate to and attempt. “Mindfulness will require an extensive education campaign in order to clarify these misconceptions” (Antanaitis, 2015, p. 4). As evidenced in the literature review, it is clear that everyone can practice mindfulness and see improvements in many aspects of their life; making individuals in a corporate setting realize this has been a major goal of EAP, HR departments, and consulting groups. Although most people understand the benefits mindfulness can have, it has proven difficult to motivate them to participate in programs in the workplace.

A 2018 study done by Yu and Zellmer-Bruhn found that meditating in groups in the workplace can cause a positive impact. They found that meditating in groups can cause individuals to “detach” from their tasks and conflicts and feel more supported. They also found that when mindfulness is practiced in a group setting in the workplace, conflicts diminish, productivity and collaboration increase, stress decreases, and employee satisfaction improves (Yu et al. 2018).

When introducing mindfulness in a business, senior management and champions have a vital role. They must support the program, encourage their employees to take part in it, and participate in it themselves. This way, the employees see their managers leading by example (Razzetti, 2019). Mark T. Bertolini, Aetna’s CEO had a near death experience in 2004. He attributes his recovery and ability to overcome his pain to mindfulness meditation and yoga. When he returned to work, he wanted his employees to benefit from these practices as well. He was able to transform Aetna’s culture and to this day they have an effective mindfulness program. In Aetna’s example, their employees reported, on average, a 28% decrease in stress. Their employees also reported a 20% increase in sleep quality (Razzetti, 2019). Aetna expressed that their mindfulness program played an important role in helping them reach a new stock record. They credited their

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mindfulness program leading to a productivity increase of on average 62 minutes per week per employee. Although this was not the only factor that led to their stock price success, it certainly played a role.

According to a 2015 study conducted by Congleton, Christina, Hölzel, and Lazar, the mental health of employees is increasingly becoming a main focus for organizations. Employees are experiencing more stress, anxiety, and depression than ever before. One-way companies have attempted to counter these downsides is by installing small breakout rooms in their office. These rooms are usually made for just a single individual and are soundproof. They are intended to be a place that employees can escape the distractions of the workplace and take a deep breath. These are a great place for employees to meditate or practice mindfulness. The article titled “Challenges and strategies for incorporating Generation Z into the workplace”, discusses how employers can help Gen Z employees’ tendency to “always be plugged in” (Knapp, Weber, Moellenkamp, 2019). The article mentions repurposing or creating spaces to encourage mindfulness and sense of place in Gen Z workers.

There has also been research that supports that companies are beginning to use their mindfulness programs as a way to appeal to potential employees. Dr. Nate Klemp mentions “In a tight labor market, where many companies struggle to attract top talent, mindfulness programs give companies a competitive edge” (Klemp, 2019, para. 9). This is one of the major reasons large companies such as Google, Apple, and Goldman Sachs are starting to invest in mindfulness programs. For employees, seeing whether or not a firm is willing to invest in their well-being greatly influences their decision to work there (Klemp, 2019).

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At the time of this research, the COVID-19 pandemic is currently having significant impacts on society. Many nonessential workers across the United States are legally required to work from home. Many employees are not used to this and are reporting having trouble focusing and avoiding distractions. The most popular distractions that The Harris Poll, a market research and global consulting firm, found on behalf of Glassdoor were watching TV and managing children while working (Glassdoor, 2020). Additionally, this combined with the ambiguity surrounding the virus has caused a great deal of stress for employees. A survey conducted by the mental health provider company, Ginger, reported that roughly 7 in 10 employees expressed that COVID-19 is “the most stressful time of their entire professional career” (Gavidia, 2020, para. 1). This has also corresponded with a large increase in new prescriptions for antianxiety, antidepressant, and anti-insomnia medications. As a result, many employees have reach out to their organizations and requested virtual yoga and meditation sessions to break up their days and keep them attentive. Practicing mindfulness gives one the ability to respond to changes in the environment and makes individuals resilient (Craig, 2020). It is a perfect way to address the challenges that come with the everchanging nature of life. Hopefully, this pandemic will provide an opportunity for increased employee involvement in their company’s mindfulness programs. Although COVID-19 is a specific example, the nature of today’s global high-tech world is that there is an increasing potential for large, unexpected environmental factors to emerge that significantly impact the well-being of individuals and companies.

This research adds to the literature in a few ways. The first way is by identifying people feeling guilty for leaving their desk as being a roadblock to successful mindfulness programs. One reason for this may be because some companies have created mentalities that the best employees spend more hours at their desk. Many top CEO’s and successful businessmen have helped make

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this a dominant mode of thought. Mayor Michael Bloomberg emphasized this sentiment by saying “I am not smarter than anyone else but I can outwork you—and my key to success for you, or anyone else, is make sure you are the first one in there every day and the last one out to leave. Don’t ever take a lunch break or stop working” (Boushey and Ansel, 2016, p. 33). Tork, the leading global brand in workplace hygiene has created a campaign called “Take Back the Lunch Break” to showcase the importance of taking regular breaks throughout the workday. In a survey they conducted, they found that 20% of workers in the US worry their bosses will think they are not hardworking if they take lunch breaks regularly. The survey also found that 22% of US bosses say employees who regularly take lunch breaks are less hardworking. These statistics are discouraging because, in reality, taking regular breaks are very important for employees. contrary to these beliefs, researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign found that taking breaks in the workplace can lead to improved focus and productivity.

The other way this research adds to the field is by providing a comprehensive overview of activities across companies and industries rather than separate individual data points. Most of the publicly available research on mindfulness programs in the workplace is anecdotal. It proves that companies are doing programs and utilizing certain aspects. However, previous research is mostly scattershot samples of organizations. This research took a big picture approach. It involved a range of institutions from different industries of different size and different durations. As a result, it makes it possible to summarize the overall state of such programs and what approaches have been most successful. It shows in aggregate what is really happening, how deep is it, what is working and what is not, and what is next. In summary, this research is a more holistic and deeper analysis of what is happening in the marketplace. The in-depth interviews conducted were a major influence on this. This research made it possible to make projections

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about possible future trends and provide specific recommendations. The recommendations for creating a successful mindfulness program are to reduce stigmas surrounding mindfulness and taking time to meditate, have a mindfulness champion that employees can look up to, and create a community of practice that supports all participants. The future trends for this topic are that more companies will implement these programs, the attributes they use will continue to broaden, and the potential of breakthrough results will continue to increase.

LIMITATIONS

Although beneficial conclusions were developed from this study, there were limitations to the research. One limitation was the small sample size. 29 companies were surveyed, and six interviews were conducted. However, because the interviews went into great detail, the research was still able to be conclusive. A second limitation is that those surveyed were not randomly sampled. Many of the companies surveyed and interviewed were found through attendance at mindfulness conventions. This means there was a higher chance that these companies had mindfulness programs. Lastly, much of the data collected is self-reported. Most of the interviews were done with individuals who were the most involved with their mindfulness programs. Due to this, it is less likely that they would have mentioned failures or talked poorly of their programs.

FURTHER RESEARCH

One further topic of research is how companies can get more out of their mindfulness programs. Stress management interventions have been categorized as primary, secondary, or tertiary (Bhagat Segovis, & Nelson, 2016). Primary interventions are used to attack the root causes of stress. Secondary interventions are used to change the reactions to stressors. Tertiary interventions are focused on aiding how individuals deal with workplace stressors. Traditionally,

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meditation and mindfulness programs have been used as tertiary interventions. However, it is possible that many companies have not realized the potential these programs might have even though they hold them in high regard. It would be interesting to see if, in the future, mindfulness programs could be used as a primary intervention. For example, it is possible these programs could be integrated with goal setting plans and help to change an organization's systems, strategies, and structures. Mindfulness has been around for a long time and was created specifically to address root causes. However, businesses are trying to tag it on as a tertiary intervention. The nature of mindfulness and meditation is that they should be used as primary interventions because they address the root cause of stress. As Khenpo Phuntsok Tashi said "Meditation helps one to abandon the root causes of suffering, creating happiness on many levels: individual, community, national, and even worldly" (Tashi, 2008, p. 4).

APPENDICES

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Appendix A - Workplace Mindfulness Survey

1. Does your company have a mindfulness program?

- Yes
- No

2. If yes, how long has the program been implemented?

3. If no, has there been any discussion in your organization of implementing a mindfulness program?

4. If you had a mindfulness program and it no longer exists, why did it stop?

- Money
- Time
- Lack of support

Other:

5. Would you like me to send you information on successful mindfulness programs?

- Yes
- No

If your company does not have a mindfulness program, please skip to question 12 and submit your survey.

6. What does your company's mindfulness program consist of?

7. What percentage of your organization's employees have participated in the program?

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8. At what levels of the company have employees participated in the program?

9. How do you measure the success of the program?

10. What have the results been?

- Reduced Stress
- Higher employee satisfaction
- Increased productivity
- Increased innovation

Other:

11. Would there be employees available and willing to be interviewed about their experiences with the program?

- Yes
- No

12. Please list your email and organization below:

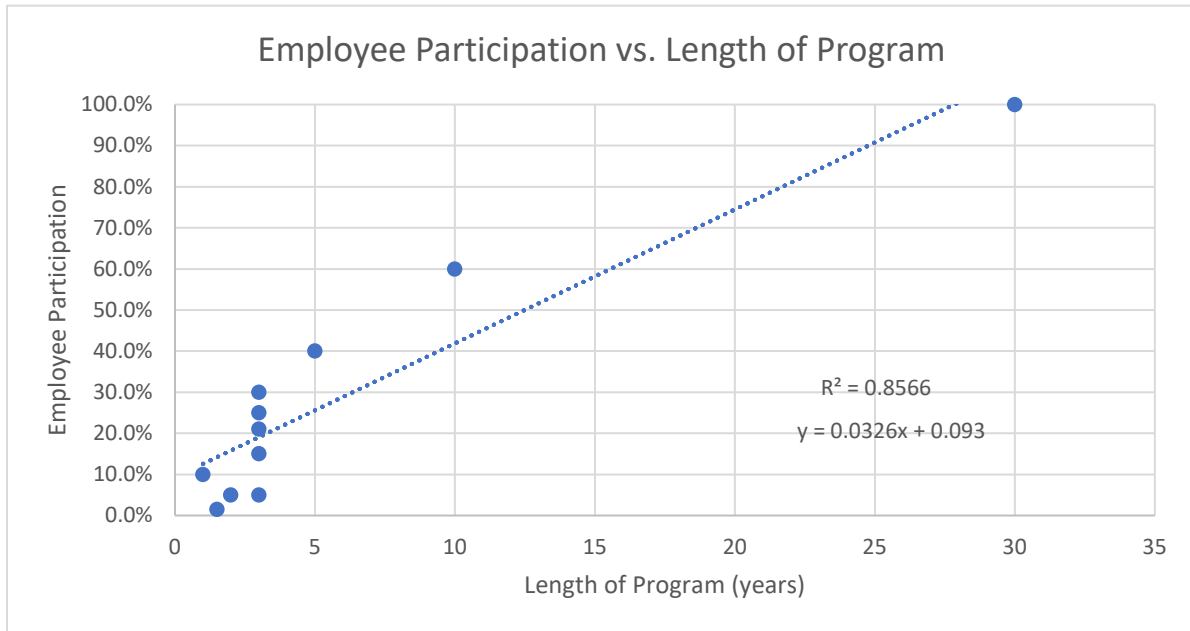
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Appendix B - Capstone Interview Questions

1. How long has your mindfulness program been implemented for and how did it start?
2. What does your company's mindfulness program consist of?
3. What percentage of your organization's employees have participated in the program?
4. At what levels of the company have employees participated in the program?
5. How do you measure the success of the program?
6. What have the results been?
7. What has worked best and what has not?
8. What lessons have you learned?
9. Does your organization have a mindfulness champion?
10. What are your future goals for your mindfulness program?

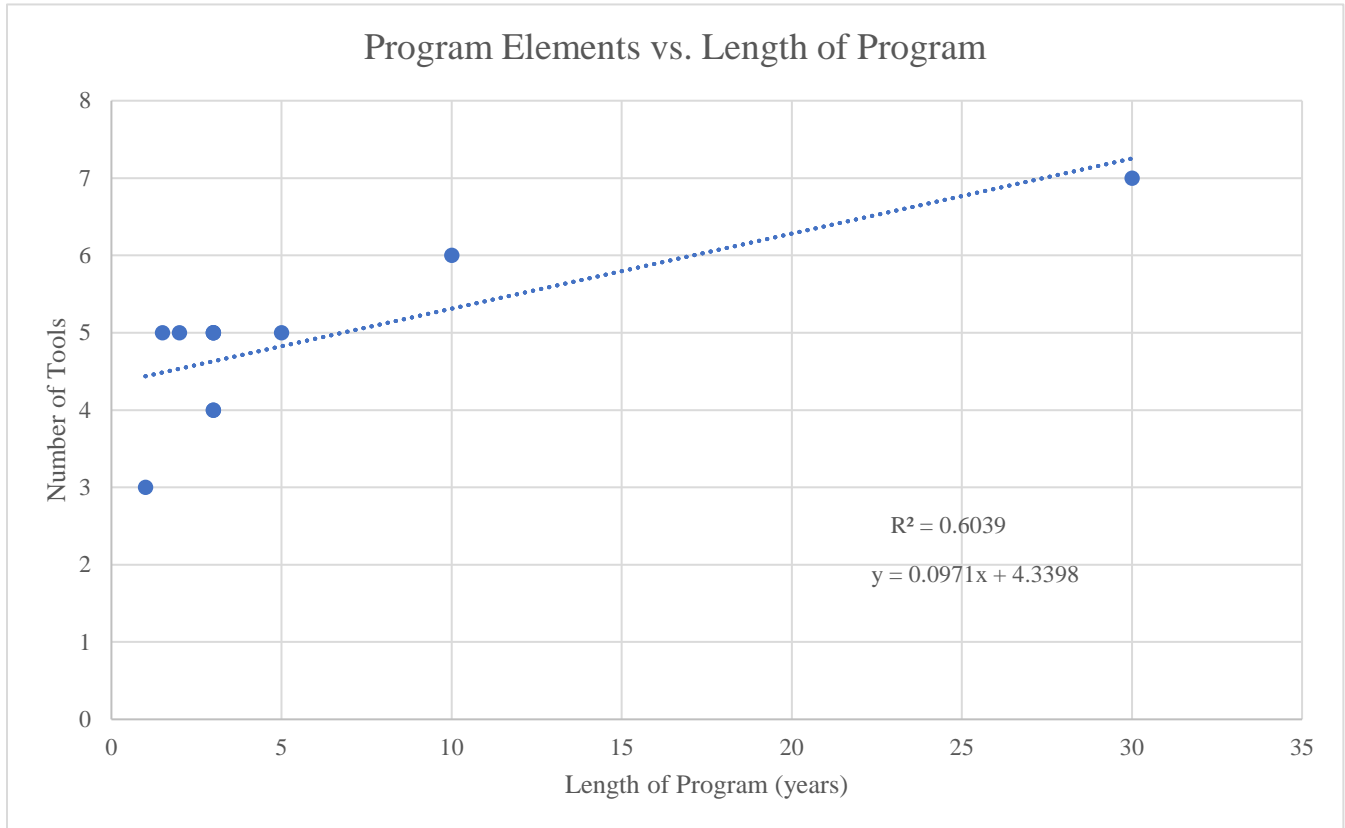
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Appendix C - Employee Participation vs Length of Program Graph



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Appendix D - Program Elements vs Length of Program Graph



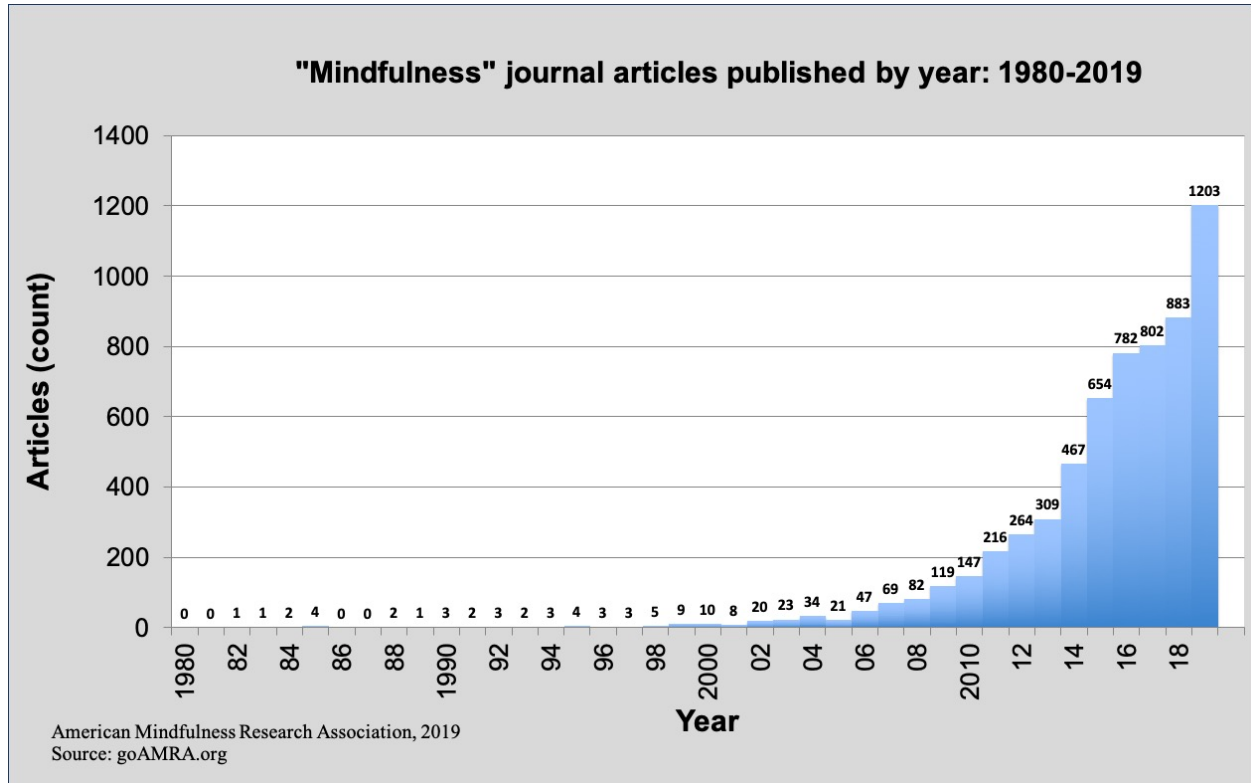
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Appendix E - Additional Interview Quotes

Company	Quotes
A	<p>- “After our meditation sessions I feel less stressed and take things less personally. Some of the longer-term benefits I have noticed are being able to separate work life and home life. Additionally, mindfulness has increased my ability to focus at work. This has proven to be very beneficial in our open work environments.”</p> <p>- “Our corporate wellness app helps make our employees aware of our mindfulness program and shows the benefits of being mindful at work.”</p> <p>- “The most influential element of our mindfulness program is our community of practice. Having a group of people that can get together, take a step back, and disconnect from work is key.”</p>
B	<p>- “The number of employees requesting mindfulness session is certainly on the rise.”</p> <p>- “The app our mindfulness program uses encourages our employees to be mindful regardless of where they are or what they are doing.”</p> <p>- “Bringing in the outside sources and being very selective about who we bring in has worked very well. It allows us to make sure those they bring in present mindfulness in a mainstream fashion and are still experienced on the subject. This gives our employees the idea that anyone can do it.”</p>
C	<p>- “Our Champion has been able to increase employee excitement for our mindfulness programs.”</p> <p>- “During this current pandemic we have seen a great increase in the employees and clients we work with requesting mindfulness sessions.”</p> <p>- “Mental health of our employees has become an increasing focus of ours. We have to find a way to counter the mental health issues our employees are experiencing.</p> <p>- “Guided meditations have been a very beneficial element of our mindfulness program. They allow our employees to feel comfortable and teaches them how to get the most out of our sessions.</p>
D	<p>- “Business are becoming more focused on the awareness and consciousness of their employees.”</p> <p>- “Changing the minds of employees to become less judgmental and to shed their stigmas is an important part of cultivating mindfulness in the workplace.”</p>

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Appendix F - "Mindfulness" Journal Articles Published by Year: 1980-2019



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