

# Ideas for Using the Employee Well-being Library

When you're ready to improve your well-being, having published resources on hand can be motivating as well as helpful!

Your library doesn't have to be limited to books! You'll find OEA Choice Trust has compiled credible articles, TED Talks, and other videos regarding employee well-being. These can easily be used in many ways. Here are some suggestions!



## Using books

All the books listed have been chosen for credible authors and have an average Amazon rating of 4.0 or higher. Each book's percentage of 4 and 5 star ratings is between 72-100%.

### 1) **Form a book club.**

While reading can give you information, discussing that information and sharing ideas with colleagues can help you process what you've read and give you new perspectives on the text.

The OEA Choice Trust's *Guide to Forming a Book Club* has ideas for how to create and structure a book club. You're encouraged to pick chapters and topics that "speak" to you, so you might choose to jump around or start midway through a book. There's also the *Reader's Reflections* template that can be used in order to collect thoughts, jot questions, and log ideas sparked by the text.

Whether you're curious about mindfulness, not sure how to navigate the modern world of processed food, in the mood for strategies for better communication, need help with healing after trauma, or up for a 30 Day Happiness challenge, the Employee Well-being Library has a book for you.

**Tip:** You can have a TED Talk club or article club as well. Auditory learners will appreciate the TED Talks and articles allow for quicker reading (less time commitment). You can still use the *Guide to Forming a Book Club* document for ideas about creating and structuring a club. The *Reader's Reflections* and *Reader's Review* templates can also be used with videos or articles.

## 2) Create your own Employee Well-being Library.

With a simple container, clipboard, and books from this list, you can create your own Employee Well-being library. This can either be housed in one central location or rotate from building to building. It might also be useful to create several “collections”, each with books related to the different types of well-being, so several worksites can have books available at the same time.

By using (or customizing) the *Book Inventory* template and attaching it to a clipboard that goes with the container, you’ll be able to track who has which book. This can also provide you with data about what employees are interested in – which titles or types of well-being have intrigued them?

An Employee Well-being library allows employees to read at their own pace and dig into a subject they find particularly interesting. You might be interested in having them write a short recommendation or fill out the 5 question-*Reader’s Review* template to share their thoughts with other readers.

Be sure to publicize the existence of your Employee Well-being Library! Storing it in the main office, staff room, or other central location may help employees remember you have books readily available.

**Tip:** Check in with those who have checked out books. Have they been able to apply ideas from the text to improving their well-being? What are they enjoying about the book? Would they be willing to do a quick shout out at a staff or team meeting or send an e-mail to 3 colleagues recommending it?

## 3) Use books as incentives/prizes!

Any of these books can be used as incentives for employees. Whether you want to raffle something off for activity participation or incentivize a step challenge, you can use these books to promote healthy choices.

**Tip:** Encourage employees that have read any of your books to give you feedback and to recommend the book to colleagues if they feel it provided valuable information!





## Using TED Talks

TED Talks are great ways to spark conversation about intellectual topics! The TED Talks chosen by OEA Choice Trust are particularly applicable to well-being. Here are several ideas for using TED Talks.

Remember, TED Talks can easily be used in place of a book for “book club”.

### **1) Use a TED Talk to launch well-being discussions at district, building, staff, or team meetings.**

Most TED Talks are 20 minutes or less and all feature reputable, credentialed speakers. Bring these professionals to your meetings to highlight different elements of well-being. For example, *One More Reason to Get a Good Night's Sleep* can be a start-of-school video that emphasizes self-care and physical well-being for all employees.

**Tip:** Encourage Wellness Committee members to find ways to use TED Talks at a staff or team level. For example, can the school counselor be available for Q and A after listening to *How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across the Lifespan*? Can nutrition services be invited to watch *Forget the Pecking Order at Work* with other classified and certified staff, since they are an essential part of the building team?

### **2) Host a “Movie Afternoon” for administrators.**

While reaching individuals is important, changing workplace culture requires help from administrators. Policy change, in particular, requires administration.

Does your district or organization have a routine Admin Meeting? If so, ask to be put on the agenda to discuss employee well-being! Using a TED Talk, or parts of one if time is very limited, present the science of well-being, then add a suggestion for your organization. How can the administration help boost employee well-being?

**Tip:** Go in with suggestions! Putting the responsibility on others to problem solve can be met with resistance. By having several suggestions, you can give the administrative team something to mull over.

**Example:** Watch “The Hidden Power of Smiling” (~7 min.)

Discuss how this can be encouraged in individual departments or buildings.

- Would administrators be willing to challenge their employees to a smiling challenge?
- Would they be willing to do some kind of admin vs. admin smiling challenge (in their respective buildings/departments) for a week?
- How can they use staff meetings or department meetings as a platform for sharing this information?

**Example:** Watch “Got a Meeting? Take a Walk” (~4 min.)

Discuss if this is a feasible thing for admins to encourage.

(Obviously not all meetings can be walking meetings, but when is most appropriate for them?)



- Would they be willing to allow walking meetings?
- Can policy be adjusted to allow, support, and encourage walking meetings?
- How can they demonstrate and personally “walk the talk” regarding walking meetings?

**Example:** Watch “How to Live Passionately – No Matter What Your Age” (~8 min.)

Discuss how living passionately will boost multiple kinds of well-being for any employee.

- What do they enjoy doing to live passionately?
- How can they encourage employees to live passionately?
- How can they demonstrate and personally “walk the talk” regarding living passionately?

**Example:** Watch “How to Save the World (or at Least Yourself) from Bad Meetings” (~7 min.)

Discuss how meeting protocol currently helps and/or hinders productivity.

- Can improvements to meeting organization be made?
- How can they use staff meetings or department meetings as a platform for sharing this information?
- How can they demonstrate and personally “walk the talk”?

**Tip:** Take healthy snacks! Not only will you demonstrate how Wellness Committee is invested in the well-being of employees, you will actively be contributing to admin well-being!

### 3) Use TED Talks for teambuilding.

Between employee turnover, personality conflicts, and different priorities, teambuilding can be an important way to build bridges, reinforce bonds, and break down assumptions between team members.

TED Talks can easily be used as a kick-off point for team discussion. Whether you want to address an already existing issue or just pave the road for a more collaborative school year, there are TED Talks that can help!

**Example:** Watch “Dare to Disagree” (~13 min.)

Discuss the shared goals team members have, despite different strategies for achieving it.

- How can different perspectives be respected?
- How can team members recognize each other’s strengths and ideas?
- How can team members work together even though they disagree?

**Example:** Watch “10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation” (~12 min.)

Discuss how conversation is normally held in the team.

- How can it be made better and more productive?
- What can be done to ensure everyone can safely and respectfully be part of the conversation?
- Which of the 10 strategies does the team want to try to actively use?

**Example:** Watch “Embrace the Near Win” (~12 min.)

Discuss how almost-successes can be celebrated within the team rather than dismissed or “glossed over”.

- How can “near wins” be celebrated by the team?
- How can the team help each other combat the stigma of “failure” when a goal isn’t reached?



**Tip:** Have a strategy (or ask teams to create one) to use after the talk! As with any problem solving, having suggestions on hand is a helpful way to reinforce collaboration and springboard discussion!

## **Using articles**

Articles are generally shorter than books, meaning they are less time consuming to read, and can easily be copied! However, just throwing articles in each employee's "inbox" (digital or physical) is probably not going to encourage reading, discussion, or an increase in personal well-being!



How can you actively use articles to engage employees in their well-being?

### **1) "Send a Text" summary activity (Scholastic)**

Ask participants to read the article and sum it up "via text" using the printable *Send a Text* page. Have a group discussion at the next staff or team meeting or, better yet, build in time for them to read, process, and discuss!

**Tip:** Give structure to the activity by planning out how you'll use the time that's been given. For example:

- Read the article – underline what "speaks" to you. (7 min.)
- Summarize "via text". (3 min.)
- Use summaries to discuss the article/what what "spoke" to you. (5 min.)
- Use suggested questions to further discussion: (5 min.)
  - How is this relevant to your well-being?
  - How can this be applied to improve your well-being?

### **2) Speed Chatting (ElfMagazine.com)**

This easy activity encourages discussion with multiple other team members! After having participants read the article, follow the instructions below:

- A) Have participants sit in two rows facing each other.
- B) Pass out a list of 3 or 4 simple questions related to the text.
- C) Inform partners that they will have 60 seconds to discuss Question 1.
- D) Keep time, announce when discussion ends, inform one of the rows to move down one chair (so they will have a new partner).
- E) Continue until all questions have been discussed.
- F) Optional: regroup to capture key points, share insights, and summarize what was gained from the reading and discussion.
- G) Optional: have a group brainstorm about how to apply information in the article to personal well-being.

### 3) Expert Jigsaw activity (Pennsylvania state education)

Save time by “chunking” an article into sections. Copy the article with predetermined “chunks” – these sections will be assigned to different groups.

- Have participants get in groups; ideally the groups would have the same number of members.
- Assign groups one “chunk” of the article; inform them that they must summarize their section for the group and become “experts” on that part of the text. (If groups get done early, encourage them to read the whole article.)
- After reading and summarizing, have groups report out (in order) what the main idea of their section was.
  - You can divide into sub groups with one “expert” from section 1, one from section 2, one from section 3 if you like. This will require additional organization and regrouping.
- As a team – clarify any misconceptions, add any missing information.
- Discuss: how can the information in the article be applied to personal well-being?

### 4) “100 Word Summary” activity (High School Reading Strategies)

Ask participants to read the article and sum it up using only 100 words! This can be a team or partner activity if desired. Participants must include the following in their summary:

- The article title, author, and topic
- One general sentence telling what the article’s main idea is
- Important details that explain the main idea
- How this applies to employee well-being

**Tip:** Suggest that participants e-mail their 100 word summary and a digital copy of the article to one colleague that wasn’t part of the activity!

