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Energizing social interactions at work: An exploration of relationships that generate employee and organizational thriving

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People are an organization's most valuable asset. In our increasingly service-based economies, social relationships and swift coordination among employees are the means by which a lot of work gets done. Thus, whether organizations -and their employees- flourish or languish largely depends on the quality of the social connections they nurture. The quality of the workplace connections can be defined as life giving (high quality) or life depleting (low quality). Positive social interactions facilitate organizational learning, cooperation, effectiveness, and employee loyalty, among many other desirable outcomes (Ragins & Dutton, 2007). While positive relationships give life and energy to individuals and their organization, toxic relationships sap the energy out of them and lead to individual and corporate floundering (Dutton, 2003). A recent survey highlighted that for three out of four U.S. employees their relationship with co-workers was what most engaged them at work (SHRM, 2015). The Gallup Organization (2015) found that a majority (51%) of full-time workers in America are not engaged in their jobs while another 17.5 percent are potentially hostile to their organizations. Positive psychology provides us with interventions that can help bring about high-quality connections, positive emotions, trust, energy and wellbeing. I will define positive relationships at work, with a particular focus on high-quality connections, examine the benefits of high-quality relationships and connections, and provide a framework for building high-quality connections. I will show that high-quality connections are a pathway to building individual and organizational flourishing.

Biography

Robert M Rosales has completed his Master of Applied Positive psychology (MAPP) from the University of Pennsylvania, where he currently serves as an Assistant Instructor. He is an Instructor on positive psychology and positive organizations at Universidad TECMILENIO in Mexico. He is the founder and principal advisor of Lead Academy, a workplace leadership development advisory firm specializing in sustainable organizational excellence through the application of positive psychology.

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