



PuppyLoveTM
The Ultimate Puppy Experience

ABOUT US

Our goal at Puppy Love™ is to touch lives and improve health through the power of the human-animal bond. As a premier Puppy Therapy provider, we're presenting this white paper in hopes that more people will understand the therapeutic benefits of puppy cuddling and the healing power of pets in the workplace. Our mission is to bring mood enhancing, morale boosting connections to each and every Puppy Love™ event, reduce stress and increase productivity through interactive time with rescue puppies in a comfortable, fun setting. Best of all, Puppy Love™ donates 20% of all proceeds to our rescue partners to help support their operations helping animals in need. Everybody wins!



INTRODUCTION

The reality is many of us spend over a third of our lives at our jobs. As such, there has been a massive movement across various vocational contexts to create a work culture that is enjoyable, rewarding, capable of inspiring innovation and, ultimately, ingenuity. On a global scale, office cubicles are being replaced with Ping-Pong tables, workspaces are becoming communal, and staff satisfaction is being recognized as a key factor in the overall success of a business.

These days, businesses are likely inundated with ideas about the best ways to alleviate stress and encourage a healthier workplace. We understand that the options can be overwhelming, and there is a lot to consider in determining which investments will provide you with the greatest returns in affecting the overall sense of well-being in your office. We also understand that some of the strategies that are presented to you often sound unattainable, and while we applaud industrial powerhouses who can afford to build bowling alleys and basketball courts within their corporate facilities, very few of us are able to realistically model such amenities in our industries, leading to the question: What can we do to make our employees happier while on the job?

What if we were to tell you it could be as simple as bringing puppies into the workplace, and that with our help, doing so can be an easy, low-cost means of reducing stress and promoting joy in the office? In this paper, we'll outline the distinct benefits of animals in the workplace, providing insight into how this intervention can be incorporated at your place of work, even if you aren't in a position to allow your employees to freely bring their own pets with them while they're on the job. We think you'll find that it's an idea that is far more accessible than you may have ever imagined, and we firmly believe that it is one that will lead to a tangible boost in workplace morale.



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WHY PUPPIES IN THE WORKPLACE?

Anyone who has ever lived with a pet knows that they change the dynamic of the household. From the busy days of puppyhood to the loving greetings we come to expect after years of tail-wagging welcome-homes from our beloved canine companions, pet owners around the world could share millions of personal testimonies about the life-altering love of an animal.

As our appreciation for the human-animal bond is continually realized both in anecdotal endorsements and in empirical investigation, researchers have begun to focus in on studies that illuminate the ways in which pets aid us in more specific contexts. These findings have been applied across all walks of life: in sickness and in wellness, in the young and in the old, in pet-lovers and in those who are more neutral to the presence of animals.

The workplace is one such context in which the power of pets has seen increased experiential interest over the last decade. Overwhelming evidence suggests that by simply incorporating animals into the daily vocational grind, companies might enjoy benefits such as higher rates of employee satisfaction, decreased vocational stress, and the promotion of health and well-being for employees.

So, what is a pet-friendly workplace after all, and what have all these studies uncovered? Let's take a look.



WHAT MAKES A WORKPLACE PET-FRIENDLY?

According to a Nationwide/Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) survey of 2,002 U.S. full-time employees in businesses that have 100+ employees, conducted online December 15-21, 2017, a pet-friendly workplace is defined as:

One that allows pets in the workplace (regularly or occasionally) and/or offers a pet-friendly employee benefit, such as pet health insurance.

This definition is inclusive of a wide range of pet policies, and it must thus be noted that the generalizability of findings related to pet-friendly workplaces may alter depending on the precise protocols and programming of any given business. Still, the benefits associated with having a pet-friendly workplace are impressive, influencing the enterprise both from the individual employee level and at a larger scale, impacting organizational culture and subsequent staff member morale.



Impact on Employees

Many studies have been conducted to determine the impact that pets have on employees who interact with them in the office setting. The outcome variables that are represented in this body of research are diverse and include measures as specific as perceived stress level and going up to broader evaluations of overall physical and mental health.

- Increased Employee Productivity & Engagement
- Enhanced Physical Health
- Promotes Connection to Company's Mission
- Improved Staff Retention
- Reduced Stress
- Fosters Self- Expression
- Higher Rates of Presenteeism
- Increased Perceptions of Work Being Rewarding and Exciting



As demonstrated in the graphic above, there are numerous benefits associated with bringing pets into the workplace. Not only are puppies combating stress and anxiety, but pets have also been found to promote positive, feel-good variables including excitement, self-expression, productivity and engagement. According to an employee who recounted her experience shortly after the conclusion of a company-sponsored puppy therapy visit:

"I literally rearranged my travel schedule so that wouldn't miss the day when the puppies come to the office. We always joke that these are the days that our quarterly reports should be due, because nobody is going to call out and risk missing the time with the puppies."

It may seem as though these benefits should only be expected for employees who love pets enough to be pet owners themselves. False! In the previously mentioned study that surveyed over 2,000 respondents, the benefits associated with having pets in the office were reported even among non-pet-owning staff!

Some of the most pertinent findings of that investigation include the following:

91% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company feel engaged with their work

89% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company feel the company supports their mental well-being

65% of employees who work in non-pet-friendly workplaces

72% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company would decline a job offer with another company at similar pay

85% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company reported they rarely miss a day of work for well-being or recuperation

91% a pet-friendly company feel the company supports their physical health and wellness

Similarly remarkable is the fact that the impact of a pet in the workplace doesn't stop at the individual. An animal's presence at the office does more than simply satisfy the staff. Animals have also been found to influence the workspace on the macro level, potentially impacting the ways in which your team connects, collaborates, and relates to your organization as a whole.



SETTING THE STAGE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION

One of the most common outcomes of pet engagement is increased social interaction. No matter the environment, there is just something about our furry friends that seems to inspire us to come together despite our differences and, instead, enjoy our shared humanity.

An animal's ability to foster social connections has also been demonstrated in the workplace. The presence of animals brings employees together, encouraging a kind of interaction and self-expression for which staff in many industries often don't have an outlet.

A 2017 study echoes these findings. Researchers tested the impact of a friendly dog across three different experimental objectives, each including a group activity in which members were tasked with a different assignment. For each of these designs, one group was accompanied by a canine companion, while the other group did not have a dog present. As compared to the group without an animal, the group with the dog demonstrated an increase in factors that enhance a group's ability to work together and complete their task.

Experimental Focus	Group with a Dog
D Group Problem-Solving Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Cohesion • Cooperation • Physical Intimacy
E J Group Decision-Making Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesion • Physical Intimacy • Feelings of Trustworthiness Between Members of the Group
Behavioral Indicators of Positive Emotions in a Group Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation • Comfortability • Friendliness • Activity • Enthusiasm • Attentiveness

As evidenced, simply by adding a dog to the room, people felt closer to one another, were more attentive and enthusiastic about the task at hand, and even reported higher levels of trust for their teammates.

Findings like the ones outlined in this paper can impact more than just your employees. Customers who interact in pet-friendly businesses have reported being positively influenced by the presence of pets as well. With a pet around, customers are entertained, engaged with their environments, and are more relaxed.

We all certainly have a desire to get along better with our peers and customers. But what about our bosses and direct reports? Pets can help here, too. More than three times as many employees at pet-friendly workplaces report a positive working relationship with their bosses and co-workers, a figure that is significantly higher when compared to relationships in non-pet-friendly environments.

- 52% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company report a positive working relationship with their supervisors, as compared to the 14 percent who work in non-pet-friendly workplaces.
- 53% of employees who work for a pet-friendly company report a positive working relationship with their co-workers, as compared to the 19 percent who work in non-pet-friendly workplaces.

Now that we've seen how the power of pets might influence individuals, groups, and working relationships in the office, let's consider how these findings come together to ultimately impact your organizational culture at large.



ENCOURAGING A HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Although employee wellness programs were once thought to be a nice but unnecessary addition to the workplace, data has emerged to prove quite the contrary. Investigating the impact on this corporate asset, evidence suggests that the ROI in creating staff-driven wellness programming can be as high as six to one. We've come a long way in our collective conceptualization of these wellness programs, realizing that they foster our shared goals of attracting the highest caliber team members while also further encouraging them to remain engaged and committed across the career span.

A pet-friendly workplace contributes to the maintenance of a healthy company culture within the walls of your establishment, ultimately impacting day-to-day operations in a tangible way.

Even before an employee officially comes on board, the degree to which your company invests in wellness initiatives such as pet-friendly policies can already have an impact. Organizations that have the reputation of being pet-friendly enjoy an enhanced ability to attract and recruit potential candidates.

From the get-go, organizational awareness of the importance of the human-animal bond influences how your company is perceived, prompting staff members and consumers alike to conceptualize your business as one that offers a high level of emotional support. Once pet-friendly policies become ingrained as an integral part of your overall wellness program, animals in the workplace often take on a role as an organizational symbol, securing a lasting influence over the ways in which organizational life at your place of work is regarded.

One of the best ways to measure the vitality of your organizational culture is to ask your employees if they would be willing to suggest their employer to others. The impact of a pet-friendly workplace has been found to have a staggering impact on this measure as well.

Some things in life just seem too good to be true, and the idea that the occasional snuggle with an animal in the office could impact your entire company culture is one of them. However, with empirical data supporting this claim, we hope employers will be just as excited as we are about the possibilities that arise when the power of the human-animal bond is unleashed in the workplace.

AMPLIFY THE BENEFITS OF YOUR ALREADY-PET-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

Maybe your company is already on the cutting edge of promoting a pet-friendly work environment. Kudos to you! Chances are that given your existing policies around animals in the office, you've organically recruited a workforce made up of animal lovers. Why not amplify the benefits of your company's pet-friendly policies on an even larger scale? Puppy Love™ can help you capitalize on your investment, highlighting your advocacy for the human-animal bond both within the organization and to the public at large.



HAVE A PET- FRIENDLY WORKPLACE?

Consider combining two of the most common strategies of corporate wellness into one by promoting the Puppy Love™ Wellness Program for employees with puppies that can be adopted!

#1

Host information sessions to educate employees on rescues and the adoption process

#2

Encourage giving by matching employee donations in support of a rescues

#3

Consider allowing employees to take designated time off to volunteer

#4

Promote your company's commitment to giving back by sponsoring co- branded therapy animal swag (vests, bandannas, trading cards, and more!)

WORKPLACE WELL-BEING: THE PUPPY LOVE™ WAY

COMMON BARRIERS TO PET-FRIENDLY OFFICES

- Leasing or property limitations in the office space
- The need for specialized cleaning services
- Animal welfare considerations
- Behavioral issues with employee-owned pets
- Staff allergies and personal preferences

There are crucial factors to consider in developing a protocol that allows for pets at work. If pet policies are created haphazardly, businesses are at a higher risk of experiencing the concerns most frequently associated with animals being in the office. As champions of the human-animal bond, Puppy Love™ feels that these matters are worth noting.

In some workplaces, pets on the premises have been associated with undesirable outcomes, such as health and safety considerations, property damage, and employee distraction. It is also essential to take into consideration the varying degree of receptivity that your staff might have in terms of receiving animals in the office, and special consideration must be made for employees who have fears, disinterest, and/or religious or cultural preferences that inform their outlook on animals.

Furthermore, empirical investigations that have explored the impact of personal pets on employees have uncovered some mixed results worth noting. In a 2012 study, employees who were able to bring their dogs with them to work reported decreased stress, but their counterparts who either did not have a pet or who left their own pet at home experienced an increase in stress in association with being around their colleagues' pets.

With these considerations in mind, policy that allows employees to bring their personal pets to work must be carefully created to maximize the benefits of the arrangement while also protecting the people, pets, and property that might be impacted by the pet-friendly practice.

When a company determines that an open-door pet policy is not the optimal fit for their organization, the opportunity for pets in the workplace remains. By bringing the Puppy Love™ experience to your office, you open the door for adoptable rescue puppies to visit with your employees on a set schedule that works for everyone involved.

COORDINATING A VISIT



Once you've decided to incorporate Puppy Love™ visits into your company's wellness program, we will help you to determine a date and time and location within your workplace. Some companies choose a 2-hour experience coincide with a high-stress deadline or a company-wide wellness day. Other companies, such as Google, LinkedIn, Bain, Amazon, and eBay have worked with us to create a quarterly experience in the office for their employees.

Many of our clients also want to share the love with their potential customers, booking a 4-6 hour experience at their trade shows and conferences. The impact of puppies at events like these cannot be underestimated in terms of attendee attraction and positive buzz.

Finally, companies who team up with Puppy Love™ are happy to know we donate 20% of our proceeds to our rescue partners to help cover their medical costs so they can continue to save these precious animals. Everybody wins!

What employees are saying about Workplace Well-being visits from Puppy Love™ teams

“ It was the best day ever! We received overwhelming positive feedback we have had them back every year for the last 3 years and can't wait to have Sabrina and the puppies back again this year!! ”

- Michelle Post, Google

“ The Puppy Love Team was around for 2 hours and the employee traffic never seemed to die down. Immediately after, employees came up to me asking “When are they coming back?!?!?” The pictures of employees with the pups cannot even capture the true joy and excitement everyone experienced. ”

- Jake Korbin, Salesforce

“ I hired Puppy Love for an event in our office in San Francisco. We had been hosting some creative happy hours of sorts and someone had the great idea of a puppy play date! Thank goodness that Puppy Love exists. The team had the BEST time with the 10 puppies that came to our event. One of our engineers even adopted one of the cute little fur balls. It was absolutely a successful event, and I can't wait until we can host another! ”

- Lena Privile, Pulse

CONCLUSION

Puppy Love™ appreciates you taking the time to consider our innovative way to inspire and promote wellness within your organization. Having considered the empirical evidence along with testimonials regarding the incredible power of the human-animal bond in the vocational context, we sincerely hope that you'll decide to unleash the full potential of having pets enhance your workplace. Whether creating a pet-friendly policy, or bringing the Puppy Love experience to your company, we're thrilled to be a part of your organization's wellness plan.

To learn more about Puppy Love™ and to get started with developing a Puppy Love™ Wellness Program, please contact us.

