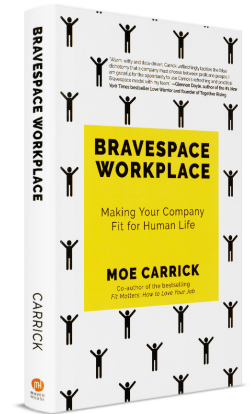


Bravespace Workplace

Making Your Company Fit for Human Life

by **Moe Carrick**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The relentless pressure on publicly-held companies to increase profits, quarter after quarter, creates untenable choices for leaders and often results in toxic work environments. Employees are demoralized, unengaged, stressed, anxious, scared, and dissatisfied. They work to get by, and they most certainly are not thriving.

Bravespace Workplace: Making Your Company Fit for Human Life is a call to action and an instruction guide for business owners, entrepreneurs, CEOs, board members, HR personnel, leaders at every level, and employees to create workplaces that are brave enough to operate in ways that bring out the best in the people who work there.

Author Moe Carrick calls companies that engage their people, elevate the practice of leadership, and model healthy cultures as a practice of meeting their goals “Bravespace workplaces.”

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How leaders can be real and authentically human at work
- Why and how most workplaces are unfit for human life
- How to create a workplace that is fit for human life
- What employers can do to ensure that employees thrive

People Make Companies Great

Defining Great

Relentless focus on quarter-over-quarter, year-over-year growth has had consequences, including the scarring of our planet and its resources, the concentration of wealth in a select few and a crippling wage gap, and employees who seek more purpose and meaning at work.

Great organizations are employers that consciously and proactively invest time, energy, and resources to make their organizations Bravespace workplaces, where people can show up as they are, both worthy and flawed, and do great things together.

AI, Machines, and Robots

Technological advances are speeding up, and some worry about whether human beings will keep up, but the brilliant Alan Turing proved mathematically decades ago that there are and always will be some things that humans can do that machines cannot. This raises three key questions: What work is unique to humans? What role does work place in the health of society? How can machines reinforce what humans do best?

Unique to humans is work that involves human connection—human contemplation, reflection, communication, and impact that is probably impossible for any machine to replicate. Machines can support what humans do best, giving people time to think, aid humans by doing the mind-numbing tasks that people hate, and allow us to connect more with other people across common platforms.

On Profit, Size, and Sharing Wealth

Year-over-year profits are unsustainable, and profit is losing status as a motivator for workers. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poor, along with which come all the problems of people not thriving: poverty, violence, poor health, inequity, and more. Bravespace workplaces, which know how to share for the common good, will lead in the work world of tomorrow. To make your company fit for human life, leaders should look for ways to pay all workers fairly.

Escaping a Toxic Workplace

Toxic Is Bad!

For decades, people have spoken up about terrible behavior of work, such as sexual harassment, but they've been ignored and harmed further. From long-overdue pay raises to tyrant leaders who aren't held accountable for bad behavior, organizations frequently protect and defend their status

quo, even when it makes them inhospitable for humans.

Workplaces face an onslaught of factors that threaten their ability to activate, enliven, and tenderly support the complex humans that we are. Here are the top five factors:

- 24/7 access and our devices
- Lack of inclusion
- Erosion of time to think
- Leaders who are bad for people
- Failure to tell the truth

What makes an organization fit for human life is the opposite of those five trends.

Workplace = Bravespace: A New Definition

In Bravespace workplaces, the absolute best in the human beings who work there is cultivated, despite our imperfect and complicated human motivations, needs, and issues. People can face the risks, emotional exposure, uncertainty, and vulnerability that come with work, knowing that their courage is supported and invited. Leaders know people aren't machines and treat them accordingly.

It's not about making employees "happy." Employment must start with the needs of the organization—where there is no employer, there is no employee. But every organization needs to ensure that the people who work there thrive. What is important is that employees know that they're contributing to something bigger than themselves. We seek to feel seen, valued, and respected, and when we don't, we become disheartened, unmotivated, and numb.

There are seven needs that work should fulfill: to meet our basic requirements, to contribute, to be seen, to connect, to learn, to feel supported, and to make our lives work.

Instructions for Human Beings

Most people come to work wanting to do a good job. Meeting the seven needs of employees ensures that they thrive and bring their best talents to work every day, which improves business results. Employees thriving is good for business. The only thing more expensive than an employee leaving is an employee who is miserable and stays. Relationships are the key to happiness at work, as in life.

Creating a Healthier Workplace

Who: The Human Essentials

It is all too common for otherwise competent leaders at

work to lack “heart skills”—self-awareness, social awareness, and emotional intelligence that would enable them to lead, inspire, partner, and create change.

There are four pillars to heart-based leadership:

- **Emotion stirring.** Emotion draws us toward a leader, gets our attention, and makes us listen.
- **Authentic vulnerability.** When leaders show their imperfections, we see them as real and human, and our trust grows.
- **Compelling belief.** A leader exists for those moments when the way is unclear, or the task seems insurmountable.
- **Harmony between the words and the music.** The words are what we say, and the music is the feeling we give others. Humans are skilled at reading subtle, nonverbal communicative cues, and they know when someone is faking.

Our sense of what it means to be a leader evolved from the Northern European ancestry of the earliest European immigrants to North America, and it's sometimes called “white male culture,” which values authoritarianism and decisiveness at work. Even women in leadership roles assimilate this favored culture.

But things are changing in the realm of leadership, and effective leaders will embrace leading with their hearts as well as their heads. Bravespace workplace leaders make the effort to model a tolerance for imperfection, and they see it as part of learning and innovating. Effective heart-based leaders spend time and effort cultivating relationships. They craft agreements that honor the unique nature of everyone who works for them, and they ensure that people feel seen. They speak what's true, even when it's hard, intimidating, emotional, or scary.

Teams Who Care

There are three characteristics that make a good team: equal “airtime” for all team members, social sensitivity (being in tune with and responsive to others' moods and needs), and having more women (perhaps because women are socialized to value connectedness, empathy, trustworthiness, balance, etc.).

Teams often try to succeed as a team by doing things like bringing cupcakes on birthdays or kegs of beer on Fridays or by hosting events such as fire walking or team paintball. These activities don't usually deepen the relationships of team members in the heart-based way that healthy teams

need. They often alienate introverts and they tend to lead to superficial connections at best.

Reflecting on the following questions will help your team develop their social capital and become an effective team:

- Is there trust in your work situation? Competition that pits employees against each other works against trust.
- Does your team engage in healthy conflict?
- How big is your team? Four to twelve members is best.
- How courageous are you and your teammates? We must have the courage to see and speak the truth, to create and hold forth a vision of the desired state, to persevere and hold the course, and to collaborate with and rely on others.

Here are the top five things you can do to create a Bravespace workplace that will move your group from *barely getting by to achieving amazing results together*: listen first, know your part, be vulnerable and imperfect, have a plan, and be willing to go off plan.

What: A Conscious Culture

Four factors invariably create an unhealthy work culture:

- Espousing one set of values while practicing another
- Tolerating employees who fail to practice the organization's stated values
- Having two cultures: one for customers and one for employees
- Assuming that company culture will take care of itself

Company culture is something that can be measured, learned, taught, and changed. It needs dedicated focus. Leaders of Bravespace workplaces invest their resources in the development of people practices that sustain healthy culture. Usually this means spending time and money on training, communication, management, and leadership development.

Where/When: Purposeful Design

Human-centered design is important. It considers how a system, space, or product can be designed in a manner that facilitates human well-being and prosperity. Leaders of Bravespace workplaces take design thinking concepts and apply them directly to how work unfolds in four key categories:

1. People: How Are People Organized?

Frequently, problems between people at work stem from the

way that an organization is structured from top to bottom. Every employee must be able to answer to two questions: To whom am I accountable? What does “doing a job well” look like? Employee rating and ranking systems are not shown by evidence to improve performance. There should be more frequent, more compassionate, more honest, and more rigorous person-to-person conversations about how things are going.

2. Time: When Do Your People Work?

Flexible work hours are a potent currency. While the stress of competing obligations is increasing, our willingness to make personal sacrifices for work is decreasing. As workplaces realize this, norms, expectations, and practices are changing. Leaders of Bravespace workplaces need to figure out how people’s work times affect the business.

3. Location: Where Do People Work?

Leaders of Bravespace workplaces approach physical space and ergonomics with a thoughtful mindset about what their employees want and need. They design ways for remote workers to meet and connect with other people at work occasionally.

4. Impact: How Does Your Organization Impact the Communities in Which It Lives?

We seek meaning from the work we do, but many of us haven’t found it. We don’t necessarily seek to save the world, but we want to feel seen, necessary, occupied, and compelled (the organization’s products and mission are meaningful).

Even on bad days, work is better than the alternative. Work gives us a way to contribute and a purpose, offers

relationships and reduces isolation, stimulates our brains, and connects to identity.

Act Now!

To create a workplace that truly brings out the best in everyone who works there, here are the top ten behaviors to start with:

1. Adopt a people-centered mindset.
2. Bring flexibility to your approach.
3. Involve others.
4. See the benefit beyond profit.
5. Address leaders first. Great leaders inspire loyalty, foster esteem, and bring out the best in people.
6. Remember that life is work. Don’t pretend there’s a wall between the two.
7. Start with small changes.
8. Listen to understand. Talk to people in your organization at all levels.
9. Align head and heart.
10. Walk your talk. Your employees are watching.

In the Bravespace workplaces of tomorrow, work will be the place we go to activate, enliven, and tenderly support the complicated humans that we are so that we can bring all of ourselves to work every day. It will be a place where we create great things together, learn, connect, and contribute.



Being equal parts pragmatic and provocative, Moe Carrick engages readers and audiences on the so-called “soft stuff” that really matters: people, culture, leading, team health, work fit and business as a force for good.

As Principal and Founder of Moementum, Inc., a Certified BCorp and consulting firm dedicated to the vision of creating a world that works for everyone, Moe believes business can be a force for good. Her diverse client portfolio includes Prudential Financial, REI, The Nature Conservancy, TechSoft3D, Hydroflask, and Nintendo of America, among others.

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