

THE HEALTHY WORKPLACE **NUDGE**



HOW HEALTHY **PEOPLE,**
CULTURE, AND **BUILDINGS**
LEAD TO HIGH PERFORMANCE

REX MILLER
PHILLIP WILLIAMS
DR. MICHAEL O'NEILL

WILEY



Praise for *The Healthy Workplace Nudge*

“*The Healthy Workplace Nudge* is not your standard wellness-for-business book. In fact, Rex Miller directly challenges most of the ways companies deliver wellness programs to their employees. His team of researchers addresses why we need wellness programs in the first place: a lack of care.

“More than that, this book provides new pathways and practical approaches. Most importantly, it calls for a new kind of leadership. A leadership of care.”

—**Bob Chapman**, CEO, Barry-Wehmiller; coauthor, *Everybody Matters: The Extraordinary Power of Caring for Your People Like Family*

“Workplaces are killing people, costing economies and business fortunes in the process, and no one seems to care—or believes that anything can change. *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* shows what it would take to enhance employee well-being and provides compelling examples of the change that is possible.”

—**Jeffrey Pfeffer**, author, *Dying for a Paycheck*; professor, Stanford Graduate School of Business

“The ‘wellness’ industry is complex, siloed, and confusing. Miller has engaged a group of top health professionals, researchers, wellness program specialists, building designers, and forward-thinking business leaders to chronicle the current state of the wellness industry and carefully lay out some frightening challenges ahead. This book will help leaders to step back and focus on what is most important and impactful when it comes to the health, engagement, and performance of their employees. Spoiler alert: Culture eats wellness for breakfast.”

—**Leigh Stringer**, workplace strategy expert; author, *The Healthy Workplace: How to Improve the Well-Being of Your Employees—and Boost Your Company’s Bottom Line*

“Creating environments that allow people to be their best selves every day is not just a nice to have; it’s a business imperative. While everyone agrees philosophically that healthy, happy employees are tantamount to innovative and successful business, rapid change in the wellness industry demands a clearer definition of the hows and whys of employee health. This book masterfully cuts through the noise to shed light on to what works and what doesn’t. Rex has truly helped carve the way to the future of the workplace.”

—**Ryan Picarella**, president, Wellness Council of America, WELCOA

“Combining the world’s largest asset class (Real Estate) with the world’s fastest-growing industry (Health and Wellness) represents the most significant economic and societal opportunity of our time. It’s not someone else’s responsibility or even opportunity. This is about all of us breaking our industry silos of real estate, HR, healthcare and financial performance. Rex Miller’s team and their research describe not only the full potential but the threat to business and our economy, if we don’t take advantage of this historic tipping point.”

—**Paul Scialla**, founder/CEO, Delos; founder, International WELL Building Institute

“In the twenty-first century, organizations that are not designed to develop all aspects of employee life will be at a disadvantage. Rex and his team are spot-on in their insights about the importance of a workplace that fosters physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual engagement in their employees.”

—**Greg Kunkel**, SVP and cofounder, Next Jump

“In 2013, the Gensler-designed new CBRE headquarters became the first workplace to receive a WELL Building certification. From that, we witnessed the birth of a movement and a new conversation. Rex Miller’s work to capture those events and his team’s research on workplace health and well-being provide a vital tool for leaders and practitioners for understanding this movement and the future vitality of organizations.”

—**Andy Cohen**, CEO, Gensler

“Without a thriving, healthy workforce, businesses cannot remain competitive. With the growing health-care crisis, we need a better solution than the usual “check the box” workplace wellness approach. By combining experienced voices from a wide variety of industries, MindShift brings a positively disruptive approach to wellness in the workplace so that companies can thrive in the twenty-first-century business environment.”

—**Mim Senft**, president and CEO, Motivity Partnerships, Inc.;
cofounder, GW4W

“The emphasis on wellness in the workplace is more important than ever. Why? Because people are our biggest asset. Whether it is installing cork layers into our floors for better posture, offering sit-stand desks to help blood circulation, or providing concierge services to run errands and give time back to our employees, the successful implementation of features that enhance and support our people is not an afterthought, but the key ingredient to our success. Rex has done a tremendous job in illuminating the importance of wellness, which transcends the office and reaches well into our personal lives. It is the key to keeping companies and ultimately our country competitive in the international marketplace.”

—**Lewis C. Horne**, president, Southern California
and Hawaii Division, CBRE

“A radical shift in the employee experience is necessary to redefine the standard of wellness and change lives for the better. *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* provides insight into new levels of engagement, within the workplace, to positively benefit both people and companies.

“It’s time for a radical shift in the level of engagement and the standard of wellness that companies provide within the workplace. Rex and his team are challenging the status quo and providing the insight for positive disruption in *The Healthy Workplace Nudge*.”

—**Calvin Crowder**, vice president, Global Real Estate, GoDaddy

“Rex has done a wonderful job blending employee welfare results with the heart. He provides the data to confirm that companies that focus on the ‘people model’ have an impact on their related health investments. The heart is the center of all goodness, emotionally and financially!”

—**Tom Carmazzi**, CEO, Tuthill

“In our hearts, we know that we should genuinely care for all people, everywhere. At home, on the street, and at work, we should care for others and be cared for. However, our minds have been fooled to believe that profit is king, at the expense of care. In *The Healthy Workplace Nudge*, Rex Miller connects what we know in our hearts to be true with concrete methodologies that will transform our minds regarding wellness in the workplace.”

—**Wade Lewis**, VP, Business Services, ISS

“It is not only possible for organizations to be communities of human flourishing, but this is also the natural state when people exert themselves in a common, meaningful purpose. If this sounds overly idealistic, it is indicative of the pressing need to win the battle for well-being. But it requires leaders who understand and embrace that, like all living things, humans desire to flourish. For such leaders, *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* will be a clarion call to lead the humanizing of our workplaces.”

—**Steven E. Carter**, PhD, author, *Good Leader*,
president/CEO, Carter, Inc.

“I’ve always believed that the number one responsibility for a business leader is to create an environment in which people can excel—but that requires creating an environment that aligns the body, soul, spirit, and mind. Most corporate efforts have focused on improving the physical environment of work, but Rex’s book “nudges” us to address the spiritual and mental elements of well-being by creating a culture of care that recognizes that energy, not time, is our most valuable asset.”

—**Barbara Jackson**, director, Burns School of Real Estate and
Construction Management, University of Denver

“Rex takes a chainsaw to the oft-marketed idea that wellness is achieved by implementing health testing, free gym memberships, and, oh yes, fewer snacks in the lunchroom. In its place, he presents the far more powerful concept of health and happiness, and then proceeds to weave inspirational stories of success.”

—**Craig Janssen**, managing director, Idibri

“Memorable characters, humane CEOs, caring physicians, and a cast of other fascinating characters have inspired Rex Miller to tell one of the best argued, entertaining, and factually solid stories about the connective tissue between the wellness movement and the built environment. *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* will inspire you. It inspired me!”

—**Susan S. Szenasy**, director of design innovation, Metropolis

— THE —
HEALTHY
WORKPLACE
NUDGE

— THE —

HEALTHY WORKPLACE NUDGE

HOW HEALTHY PEOPLE,
CULTURE, AND BUILDINGS
LEAD TO HIGH PERFORMANCE

REX MILLER
PHILLIP WILLIAMS, AND
DR. MICHAEL O'NEILL

WILEY

Cover image: (stairs) © bbbrrn/Getty Images; (room) Wiley

Cover design: Wiley

Illustrations by Michael Lagocki

Copyright © 2018 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved.

Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.

Published simultaneously in Canada.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc., 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600, or on the Web at www.copyright.com. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty: While the publisher and author have used their best efforts in preparing this book, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this book and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales representatives or written sales materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for your situation. You should consult with a professional where appropriate. Neither the publisher nor author shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages.

For general information on our other products and services or for technical support, please contact our Customer Care Department within the United States at (800) 762-2974, outside the United States at (317) 572-3993 or fax (317) 572-4002.

Wiley publishes in a variety of print and electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that is not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <http://booksupport.wiley.com>. For more information about Wiley products, visit www.wiley.com.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

Names: Miller, M. Rex, 1955- author. | Williams, Phillip, 1957- author. | O'Neill, Michael, 1959- author.

Title: The healthy workplace nudge : how healthy people, culture and buildings lead to high performance / Rex Miller, Phillip Williams, Michael O'Neill.

Description: Hoboken : Wiley, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Identifiers: LCCN 2018006249 (print) | LCCN 2018008038 (ebook) | ISBN 9781119480235 (pdf) | ISBN 9781119480167 (epub) | ISBN 9781119480129 (hardback) | ISBN 9781119480235 (ePDF)

Subjects: LCSH: Work environment. | Employee health promotion. | Corporate culture. | BISAC: BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / General. | BUSINESS & ECONOMICS / Human Resources & Personnel Management. | BODY, MIND & SPIRIT / Inspiration & Personal Growth.

Classification: LCC HD7261 (ebook) | LCC HD7261 .M544 2018 (print) | DDC 658.3/82-dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018006249>

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Inspired by and in memory of my mom, Lisa's mom, and my brother Britt.

In gratitude to my lifelong mentors Charles Simpson and Clifford Christians.

—Rex Miller

*For all of us who have worked in, and work to create, places for people,
young and old, rich and poor . . . ipsum attollere (raise your game).*

—Phil Williams

*To my wife and best friend Danelle O'Neill, whose interest in the health
and well-being of others, inspired my contribution to this book.*

—Mike O'Neill

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>About the Authors</i>	<i>xix</i>
<i>Introduction: The Elephant Whisperer</i>	<i>1</i>
PART I SLOW-MOVING STORM: A HISTORY OF WARNINGS AND APATHY	15
Chapter 1 A Slow-Moving Storm: The Existential Threat to Business and the Economy	17
Chapter 2 The Rainbow in the Storm: Medical Science Meets Building Science	30
Chapter 3 Storm Damage: The Cost of Forgetting	42
Chapter 4 Stress: Portrait of a Killer	53
PART II IS THERE SHELTER FROM THE STORM? A SEARCH FOR WELLNESS	65
Chapter 5 In Search of Wholeness	67
Chapter 6 Why Happiness Before Health	78
Chapter 7 Where's the Data? Inconvenient Truths	92
Chapter 8 The Mystery of Hospitality: Experiencing the Human Touch	109

PART III	MAGICAL NUDGES: THE ROAD TO HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	125
Chapter 9	Nudge Thinking: How Small Things Lead to Big Results	127
Chapter 10	The Healthy Building Nudge: The Invisible Power of the Workplace	141
Chapter 11	The Financial Nudge: The Return on Humans (ROH)	157
Chapter 12	Becoming Your Best Self: Rest, Engagement, Boundaries, and Deep Work	169
PART IV	HAVEN IN A HEARTLESS WORLD: THE NEED FOR SAFE PLACES	183
Chapter 13	How They Did It: Creating Ecosystems of Care	185
Chapter 14	Courageous Leaders and a Culture of Care	201
Chapter 15	The MeTEOR Story: Extreme Ownership	216
Chapter 16	Starting a Movement: How Second-Chair Leadership Can Change a Company	227
Chapter 17	Haven in a Heartless World: The Promise of a Good Workplace	245
	<i>Appendix A The Well MindShift Core Team</i>	256
	<i>Appendix B Well MindShift Participants</i>	263
	<i>Appendix C Personal Story Template</i>	267
	<i>Notes</i>	269
	<i>Index</i>	279

FOREWORD

It has become clear that work is the number one cause of stress; that stress is a big driver of chronic disease, and that the rise of chronic disease and associated costs are a direct threat to the survival of businesses. This book hammers this point. Businesses have no more room to fight with insurance companies or shift costs to employees. We must begin to reduce stress, and health-related costs, by creating cultures of care. This book will show you how.

The Healthy Workplace Nudge is not your standard wellness-for-business book. In fact, Rex Miller directly challenges most of the ways companies deliver wellness programs to their employees. His team of researchers addresses why we need wellness programs in the first place: a lack of care.

The Healthy Workplace Nudge also explains the limitations of ROI thinking when it comes to employee health. The book describes a model of people in harmony with profit. It begins with the lives entrusted to us. With them, we create lasting value. Together. We don't chase ROI when it comes to wellness. I tell our frontline leaders, "Let's do the right thing; it's our job to make it work for the business." The marriage of profits and people makes us a better and more competitive company.

When we visited with Rex, we saw that his research confirmed our view of business: creating a workplace where people feel safe, giving them genuine appreciation, and providing well-trained supervisors all come together to produce happy people and a thriving organization.

This book confirms that we as leaders can and must rehumanize why and how we deliver wellness. As you read it, make it personal. Think about the people who work around you, especially the ones in your span of care. Where do they come from? What are their hopes? Do they go home at the end of the day energized and inspired by their time at work?

Is work fulfilling? Or do they return home drained and stressed by their time with us? *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* takes a serious look at why so many wellness efforts fail to improve the lives of employees.

More than that, this book provides new pathways and practical approaches. Most importantly, it calls for a new kind of leadership. A leadership of care.

—Bob Chapman,
CEO, Barry-Wehmiller;
coauthor, *Everybody Matters:
The Extraordinary Power of Caring
for Your People Like Family*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For some, writing is a solitary affair. This book was a barn raising. I found myself in constant communication with about 30 of our inner circle. I needed their expertise and help to validate stories and details, poke holes in my reasoning, and to give an oft-needed kick-start. I traveled several times just to sit with some of my guides. Meeting face-to-face was so much better than connecting by phone or Skype. In many cases, I only wanted them to tell their story one more time, like my kids wanted to hear their favorite stories just before bedtime. I already knew the details; I knew the punchlines. I wanted a way to give those words the life and resonance I felt sitting with them. For some reason, the atmosphere, breathing room, and friendship provided that boost I needed.

It took a while to find a voice for this book. It was a chorus of about 100 contributors. Every chapter is an ensemble on its own. Together they turned into a harmonized four-act symphony. It is our most serious work to date, but it also touches the emotions more than any previous projects. Health and well-being quickly turned from research into something very personal for all of us. We began as a collection of the curious and became a cohort of the committed.

Richard Narramore, Wiley's senior editor, led the previous three projects and helped guide us to our unifying theme. He has continuously challenged my thinking, asking, "What book do you want to write? You have three here." This project was no different. My editor, Ed Chinn, and I created an "Editing Floor" section. The strategy was simple: let's frame it up and start writing. Then we can step back and see what book this really is. That strategy asked more from Ed than in past books. His fine-tuned editing eye often found hidden treasure, but also kept an eye out for that common thread. We left another full book on the editing floor. For various reasons – space, style, coherence, consistency – several

interviews and companies had to be removed. Seeing them excised was very difficult.

The idea for this project was first birthed at the CBRE headquarters. Lew Horne hosted the session; it was the first time I met Paul Scialla. It was clear there that we were touching a new, vital, and compelling story. We had to dig deeper. Shortly after that meeting, Haworth, Delos, DPR, and The Carter Group enthusiastically came together and said they would fund the effort to explore a new frontier. I am profoundly grateful for their faith and support to launch this mission.

I want to thank Phil Williams and Dr. Mike O'Neill for their willingness to coauthor this book. They both served as guides, interpreters, and scouts. I relied on their expertise and their encouragement. I also enjoyed the many trips that allowed us to piece this story together.

I'd like to especially thank Haworth and Mabel Casey. Without their support 10 years ago we would have never had the opportunity to test the idea that leaders could come together, without permission, and solve common complex challenges. It seems to be working. On a practical note, Michelle Kleyla with Haworth provided the ear of reason and common sense. I have come to call her my handler.

I had several guides and protectors along this journey. Paul Scialla treated me like a nephew and understudy. He opened doors and pulled me back from rabbit trails. I met Leigh Stringer through her book, *The Healthy Workplace*. It was my first compass into the wilds of wellness. She was also generous with support and introduced me to Mem Senft, who joined early. She was skeptical and had good reason. We had no bona fide wellness experts on our team until we found Mem; she brought others along. She became our guide, conscience, and incredible door opener. Kate Lister and Scott Muldavin were our truth-with-numbers squad. I met and talked with both several times to make sure I was doing the math.

Patrick Donnelly and Drew Suszko were my two closest summit collaborators. They gave time and BHDP's resources to help me better choreograph many of the exercises. Our events became incredible learning and creative labs.

I leaned on other past MindShift graduates, like Bob Fox and Craig Janssen, who challenged my direction for different summits, but also filtered what we produced through their lens as business owners. Randy Thompson, with Cushman Wakefield, generously read and critiqued our first draft.

Part of what makes our experiences so essential is the ability to spend time onsite with some of the most advanced thinkers on the topic. They host and participate. Haworth held our inaugural summit in Chicago. Janelle Weber and PQM brought us into an incredible dining experience and conversation around the issue of hospitality.

Barbara Spurrier and Dana Pillai hosted our immersion into health and well-being at the Mayo Clinic and the WELL Living Lab. Google has been a partner on a few of our projects. Josh Glynn and his work services (REWS) team hosted us in San Francisco and brought Bill Duane to share their new research on well-being. DPR opened their San Francisco offices, providing an ideal environment for our project-based learning. They also gave us behind-the-scenes access to their unique open culture. One of my favorite locations was Denver's Four Winds Interactive. They provide embedded interactive displays that feel a bit like those futuristic touch displays in the movie *Minority Report*. This summit provided a window into the future of building sensors, personal wellness technology, and interactive media. Rich Blakeman gave us access to their facility. It was an incredible playground to explore the technology of wellness. Our final summit was hosted by Calvin Crowder and Wade Lewis at GoDaddy. That was our book's barn raising summit, and our most creative session as we watched two years of work come together in four different book concepts.

I was able to meet directly with many more leaders and fascinating personalities than in previous projects. I owe that to our members inviting us into their relationships and networks. I met five best-selling authors, leaders of some of the most admired companies on the planet, medical experts and academics who opened worlds I never imagined existed. You will meet and read about them in the book.

Because there are so many people to thank, I've created an addendum to list the participants and contributors.

The roles of some were so vital that we could not have completed this project without them. Michael Lagocki has worked with me on the last three MindShift efforts. His role has grown from event facilitator and live scribe to codesigning events and taking on the role of the ears and emotions of the participants or reader. His advice continues to elevate our events and the quality of our work.

I owe the deepest gratitude on this project to Ed Chinn, my editor. He's much more than that. Ed traveled and participated in each of the

summits and was, in many ways, an understudy, stepping in and keeping the process on track while I was pulled away to wrestle with life. At times, I felt like Rocky Balboa with my eye swollen shut and gasping for air in the corner. Ed stepped in, like Mickey, and kept saying, “Dig deeper, you can do it, kid.” Creators know the magic in movies and books happens in the editing room. That was Ed’s study in Spring Hill, Tennessee.

I want to express my love and appreciation to my family, especially Lisa. It was a hard year for our family, and she shouldered most of that. Lisa stayed positive and always encouraging. Lisa is our guardian of health and has become a gifted caretaker. I’ve come to see that role as a combination of gentle angel and fierce drill sergeant in giving care. And she can be a lawyer when dealing with the health-care world. She attended several of the summits and insisted we practice what we learned along the way. The hardest new rule she gave me was saying goodbye to bacon.

When I look back, this project feels like one of the wilderness high adventure treks I’ve taken with my oldest son. They all start with naïve optimism. That disappears with the reality that most of this trip is a three-mile-an-hour trudge with a 50-pound pack on my shoulders. It doesn’t matter how beautiful the world is around me, I’m still carrying this pack. Every trip gives incredible high points, but most of the time it’s one foot in front of the other and finding creative ways to make that feel fun. The finish, however, is hard to describe. Deep satisfaction and a desire for a shower, a steak, something. When I sent my last chapter to Ed for editing, I ran some chores. I was in that happy relief state. The Kwik Lube attendant told me it would take a while to get my car serviced. I was bored with the outdated magazines in the waiting area, and my phone was on 2% battery life when I saw McDonald’s next door. “I haven’t had a cheeseburger and fries in years. I wonder . . .” So, after a few feeble attempts to talk myself out of it, I succumbed to temptation and walked over. I was “Homered.” You’ll learn about that in Chapter 9. I ordered a cheeseburger and small fries. They were good, no lie.

When I returned home, I shared the story with Lisa. All she could say is, “What?” Then she laughed. “Darling, you’ve been cooped up way too long.” So, I guess the moral is, wellness is a journey. The good news, I’ve taken our lessons seriously, and today I am measurably healthier than I was a year ago and the year before that. I wish the same for you. I hope you embrace wellness as a journey and keep your sense of humor in the process.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Rex Miller is a five-time Wiley author. *The Commercial Real Estate Revolution* and *Change Your Space, Change Your Culture* won international awards for innovation and excellence. He is a respected futurist, frequent keynote speaker, and an elite leadership coach. His MindShift process applies a unique crowdsourced approach to tackling complex leadership challenges. Mr. Miller was named a Texas A&M Professional Fellow for his work in leading edge leadership processes.

The MindShift model invites diverse participants into a creative and collaborative process. This makes each book deeply researched, easy to read, and practical to apply.

The previous book, *Humanizing the Education Machine*, collaborated with over 100 leaders and experts to break the vicious cycle of reform efforts without change and shows communities, schools, and leaders how to lead transformation on a local basis.

More than half of MindShift's work is guiding organizations through change and improving project, team, and organizational culture. Recent clients include Google, Disney, Microsoft, GoDaddy, Intel, FAA, Delos, Haworth, Turner Construction, Balfour Beatty Construction, DPR Construction, Seattle Children's Hospital, MD Anderson Hospital, Universal Health Systems, Oregon Health Science University, University of Illinois, Texas A&M, University of Denver, and many others.

Mr. Miller is also a USPTA certified tennis professional, a member of the National Speaker's Association, and actively mentors young leaders. He believes leaders come from anywhere in an organization or community and hopes his work helps empower hidden leaders to step up and step forward to create positive change.

Phillip Williams is the president of Commercial Business Development at Delos and directs the business development of health and well-being services and solutions for the commercial real estate market sector. Delos is a real estate technology and research company focused on helping to create healthier, higher-performance places for people.

He has spent his career in the commercial design, engineering, and construction industry and prior to Delos served as a vice president with Webcor Builders, where he initiated and lead the Systems Engineering, Sustainability, and International Consulting groups. Prior to Webcor he held senior leadership and management positions with Southland Industries and Carrier/United Technologies Corporation.

Phil has a BS in engineering, and his research and industry affiliations have allowed him to stay at the forefront of leading ideas that have consistently been focused on people in the built environment.

As the industry chair for the Center for the Built Environment (CBE) through the University of California, Berkeley, and a founding executive board member for Eco-Districts (a nonprofit focused on the economy, ecology, and equity of development and redevelopment of urban centers), he has been able to help transition theoretical research for the commercial private and public markets for scalable adoption.

Through service on the Joint Steering Committee for the Well Living Laboratory (WLL) a Mayo Clinic research collaborative, his industry experience has contributed to the understanding and inclusion of health science for the benefit of people through the improved design, construction, and operations of buildings and communities.

Phil is a founding member of the Industry Technical Advisory Group for Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory FLEXLAB. He is a representative from San Francisco to the United Nations Global Compact and served as the chairman of the San Francisco Mayor's Task Force on Private Sector Green Buildings. He is a member on technical advisory boards for several Silicon Valley emerging technology companies, venture capital, and research organizations.

Dr. Michael O'Neill is currently director of the Global Workplace Research, Workplace Strategy and Market Insights teams for Haworth, Inc. At the start of his career, he worked at BOSTI, a firm that pioneered the use of analytics to show how workspace design affects employee

performance. Later, he was a professor of interior design and industrial engineering at the University of Wisconsin.

Mike has a BA in cognitive psychology, and MA and PhD in architecture and human behavior. For his doctoral work, he developed software that models peoples' decision making during way-finding tasks within buildings, based on the biological properties of neural networks. He has authored over 50 articles, two books on workplace research and design, is a coauthor of an upcoming book on well-being (2018 release).

Mike developed HumanSpace™, software that estimates the impact of workspace design on the financial value of human capital and identifies the most important features. He believes that predictive analytics “made easy” can help organizations make better decisions about how they allocate investment in their office space – based on improving the economic value of their people. He is also on the advisory board of TableAir, a European tech startup (space sensors and user experience software).

Other areas of interests include cars and planes. Mike is a Porsche Club of America national driving instructor and holds a competition racing license through Midwest Council of Sports Car Clubs, racing a vintage Porsche 911. He also holds a Private Pilot license.

INTRODUCTION: THE ELEPHANT WHISPERER

In his book, *The Righteous Mind*¹ Jonathan Haidt suggests that we are all like a rider on an elephant. The rider is our conscious mind. It is intelligent, rational, and intentional; it thinks, decides, and acts.

But, here's the problem: We lumber along, atop an enormous beast of culture, subconscious desires, assumptions, genetic predispositions, and complex webs of fears, biases, and subjective experiences and feelings. The elephant is going to go where the elephant is going to go. Our conscious mind can choose and announce all it wants, but the elephant is larger.

The Healthy Workplace Nudge tells the story of good intentions, rationality, and high levels of intelligence, all riding an impenetrable, unresponsive, and resistant leviathan. That brute has been around a very long time and is not threatened by anything the rider could imagine.

Ten years ago, I and some associates created an approach to solving unresponsive and resistant dilemmas, known as “wicked problems.” They're not wicked in a moral implication, but in the sense that they cannot be solved, only navigated. But first, we had to change conversations that were stuck. We called that process MindShift. And a MindShift has to first become an elephant whisperer.

To whisper to the elephant is to build certain triggers, chutes, and ramps into the elephant's thinking. For example, Richard Thaler, the 2017 Nobel Prize winner in economics, has captured the behavioral economics idea of “nudge.” A nudge is a subtle design in buildings, policies, strategy, marketing, food choices and sizes, and other nuances in society that make the good choices easier. A nudge also flips the narrative; for example, from “Quit killing yourself” to “Start living younger.” Reframing the narrative is the fresh start nudge. For our purposes, a nudge is anything that makes it easy for the elephant to pick a better path.

You will meet several intelligent riders, lumbering elephants, and nudges in the pages to follow.

This journey started several years ago when I saw the powerful and transforming result of an office working together to explore what wellness and well-being meant to them. CBRE is the largest real estate company on planet Earth. Their Los Angeles office, rebuilding after the Great Recession, worked with wellness and design professionals to translate their vision into a new kind of workplace. That resulted in the first corporate space to bring medical and building science together. It revolutionized their business and their own people. Furthermore, it attracted thousands of curious leaders and professionals to come, see, and learn.

I was one of those who made the pilgrimage. And I came away fascinated. But, to some degree, touring that space was like watching a well-staged magic trick. The workspace was impressive, but something of an illusion. The real magic came from the unseen journey the leader and his people took to create that space. The outcomes weren't predicted (or even likely). So, I asked them what I've asked others with comparably enchanted workplaces:

“How did you pull it off?”

“How did you survive the politics and pushback?”

“Why did you think you could do it?”

“What stories describe how you lost your naïveté?”

“Where did it almost fly off the tracks?”

“How did it turn around?”

“How did it change you and your people?”

In most cases, their answers did not present a scripted list of lessons learned, but rather a chronicle of the journey's insights.

The process as a journey is the key to taming the elephant. Each organization raises and rides a different one. Unlike what is described in many business books, we found patterns not formulas. Simply plucking the lessons from an expert rider and applying them to your elephant typically fails.²

Elephants are also social animals. The same thing is true for great projects and work. The environments we create to facilitate work become proxies for how well we work and live together. CBRE did not direct their employees to swallow something new. They engaged

their people and their culture and created a highly social process that resulted in the by-product, a magical environment.

They had to let go of previous assumptions about how they once accomplished work, what a “normal” office might look like, design, and wellness. They had to wake up in a new world every morning, literally making it up as they traveled. To do that required them to whisper new directions to the elephant. Trust me – that is a gut-wrenching, exhausting, stressful, and humbling process. But it produces something of immense value.

They created something new, a place that truly embodied health and well-being by introducing medical science into design. You’ve heard the old adage that the process of making a great sum of money is more valuable than the money itself. In that sense, CBRE’s process was worth far more than what the eye could see. The process of creating their new home provided the context to learn a new way to work together. I went back several times, trying to understand what was in the process to produce such transforming power.



Figure I.1 The elephant is going to behave as it wishes.

But, before I figured it out, I fell under the same spell. I concluded that they had simply found a way to do wellness better. And that naïve assumption is where our work really started. We started by believing the wellness elephant was not only large, but wise, sensitive, and caring. In time, we began to realize we fell into an illusion. So, we had to dig down through the strata of illusion to the bedrock of reality.

In the lost craft of barn raising, not only was the barn built much faster, but the deepened intimacy, trust, reciprocity, sense of purpose, satisfaction, celebration, and learning also made priceless contributions to the community. Our collective journeys to wellness carry the same potential of barn raising. The barn didn't cause the performance boost; it was a catalyst for what happened.

The Healthy Workplace Nudge explores the journey of, and relationship between, the rider and the elephant.

The Things We See and the Things We Miss

The Healthy Workplace Nudge describes our search to explain how some companies have created healthy, happy, and resilient organizations, while most have not. This book examines why there are so many emphases and promotions for wellness and well-being, with so little to show for it.

Leaders of industry and business clearly must, and many do, understand they face the constant threat of disruptive innovation. Despite knowing that, too many fail to see or respond to the warning signs. Kodak knew about digital photography. They invented it. Before Amazon created ubiquitous distribution, Sears stores and catalogs covered the land. Whole Foods was king of the organic food world; now it is just part the Amazon universe. Many saw the truth; many missed it.

Our brains are designed to come to clear and rational conclusions. But only in hindsight. If we knew *then* what we know *now*, Kodak, Sears, and Whole Foods would still be giants. And the 2008 crash wouldn't have happened, and I would still have my 401(k) intact and be able to retire. Inside each collapse is a beguiling narrative (the elephant) to ignore contradictory evidence (the rider). And it usually works: the best and the brightest minds in the financial industry closed their eyes and simply rode the lumbering beasts off the path to destruction.

Chronic disease is a massive and growing bull elephant, and the wellness industry and corporate leaders have been unable to slow it

down. The ride, however, is taking us all down the same destructive path. If we don't slow this beast down, we will reach the end of the road, a sheer cliff, by 2025. The collective effort to slow and reverse its path will require the kind of creative and courageous leadership we saw after the Great Depression, in the rebuilding of Europe after World War II, and landing men on the moon.

Because American companies employ more than 160 million people, they have the largest platform and greatest leverage for accomplishing this mission. We will introduce you to leaders who understand that. Furthermore, they recognize the positive ripple effect that happy, productive, and healthy employees carry back home and to their soccer coaching, book clubs, community groups, places of worship, and families each day.

I make this promise: If you take your office and colleagues toward health and well-being, it will transform your life, your work, your relationships, and your work space. *The Healthy Workplace Nudge* explains why taking this journey is urgent.

Promises, Promises

The promises we have heard from “reputable sources” for decades have, until now, cancelled out the warnings from critics and prophets. After all, this small choir is comprised of nut jobs, screwballs, and iconoclasts. Banished voices. However, they know and won't let anyone forget that the \$3.7 trillion wellness industrial complex made convincing promises:

- To reduce health costs by improving health
- To attract and retain employees
- To improve engagement
- To return \$3 for every \$1 invested in wellness

Those promises tuned out to be the loud ranting of riders bouncing along dusty roads on top of the elephant. They meant nothing. In fact, health costs keep rising at an average of 7% per year.³ And we have no evidence that wellness efforts improve employee attraction and retention. Workplace engagement has remained under 30% since Gallup first started conducting its Global Engagement Survey.⁴ And, if wellness generated a

300% return on investment, companies would be looking for ways to increase the investment, not ways to cut it.⁵

Our Well MindShift project, including more than 100 industry experts and business leaders, concluded that wellness efforts, as they are today, cannot deliver any of its promises.

But we did find hope for the future of the workplace and the country. You will find that hope detailed in vivid stories from all across the country. In most cases, these are not “brilliant” leaders running complex sophisticated programs. Rather, you will meet serious, down-to-earth, tenacious, and healthy leaders who are easy to talk to and continually curious, courageous, and caring. The question is, if it is that simple, why isn’t everyone doing it? That is what our MindShift team worked hardest to understand. I think the answers will drive you to devour, underline, highlight, and dog-ear the pages. Regardless if you’re in charge, in a support role, or stuck in an organization that doesn’t get it, you will pause several times and think, “If they can do it, we can too!”

The View from the Ridge

Several years ago, my older son and I joined a 10-person expedition backpacking through a 140,000-acre preserve in New Mexico’s Sangre de Cristo Mountains. We hiked 110 miles in 10 days, including eight mountain ascents.

Our expedition required eight months of preparation. We learned how to pack light, how to set up camp in the dark, meticulously clean our campsite, and protect our food from bears. And then, after three days with our guide, we were suddenly on our own. We suffered a few injuries and weathered a lightning storm on a mountain ridge. We saw bears and rattlesnakes, but we also saw pure mountain streams and breathtaking sunsets. We tripped, stumbled, bled, and cursed like sailors in front of our sons. But we also discovered the quiet and sublime joy of sitting around an evening fire, just listening to the lazy pops of the crackling fire. It took me three days to unplug from my digital dependence and frantic pace; I finally slipped into a new rhythm and found deep joy in our grand adventure.

We spent our last night atop the preserve’s most recognizable landmark, Tooth of Time. The 500-foot granite monolith tops the