

6 Ways To Apply Yoga In The World Of Business



The link between yoga and big business seems tenuous, but hear me out and you will see that there are many ways that the practice and philosophy of yoga can be applied in the business world. These ideas can be used to benefit a company, serving both the individuals at all levels, as well as the organisation as a whole.

Of course it takes vision and the strength of character of those in a position to influence and make changes in the workplace, but with open-minded leadership any of this can be possible.

NUMBER 1: In order to apply yoga principles in a business organisation, there needs to be a culture of unity: the belief that none of the individual employees alone will be as good as all of them together.

With this idea in place, we recognise that an environment that unites the heart and mind and the best individuals for a common goal, will achieve remarkable results.

The connection to yoga?
The very definition of yoga comes from the Sanskrit word ‘yuj’ meaning to unite or yoke, that is,: bring together the body, mind and spirit.

Applying this in a business means expecting our employees to deliver at the highest level (the mind), providing them a conducive environment to do this (the body) and respecting and trusting them as professionals (the spirit).

These Yoga Principles In Business Spread A Positive Message To All Concerned, Encouraging Employees To Contribute Without Fear Of Judgment Or Failure.
NUMBER 2: It must be recognised that the workplace often brings together a disparate group of people. People who we may not have chosen as friends, but with whom we must share a sense of purpose and camaraderie, under the leadership of a strong CEO or business owner.

This often happens in a yoga class: people from varied walks of life come together under the guidance of a yoga teacher and we find a common sense of purpose,

much like in a positive corporate culture.

Both environments should be optimistic. There should be clarity in leadership and in the goals. In yoga it is a supportive and nurturing situation that celebrates both the individual and the collective accomplishment of the practice. This can be compared to the business creating common goals and supporting each member of the team in achieving them.

NUMBER 3: Yoga can help us to redefine or enhance our measures and expectations of achievement. Of course in a traditional business environment, there are measurable goals for success; targets to hit, sales to make, stock prices and market share, but yoga teaches us that there are other, additional elements that we can gauge our success by. In yoga there are no winners or losers, victory is not measured against the failure of others. This seems counterintuitive in business but, as game-changing leaders, we need to be the establishers of vision, the creators of a positive, corporate culture. Practicing yoga can develop our emotional intelligence, allow us to display the courage of our convictions, help us to assess risk and offer a buoyancy of spirit both to the individual, and to the company as a whole.

NUMBER 4: Yoga instills discipline. A yoga teacher often sets intentions at the start of a class. It may be the idea of using twisting postures for a detoxifying practice or working with slow rhythmic breathing for a meditative practice. Then we set about the class with a clear eye on fulfilling this intention without distraction. The same discipline is vital to the excellence achieved by a successful business. Setting intentions or goals in business is the same as in yoga, a goal is set and then driven forward without distraction.

NUMBER 5: In yoga, we challenge ourselves constantly, mentally and physically because the study of yoga is never concluded, there is and will always be more to learn, more to practice. With 16 years of personal practice, I can attest that this is as true today as on the day I began.

Likewise for business to thrive and progress, we must stand for evolution and the

constant development of individuals as well as the corporate structure.

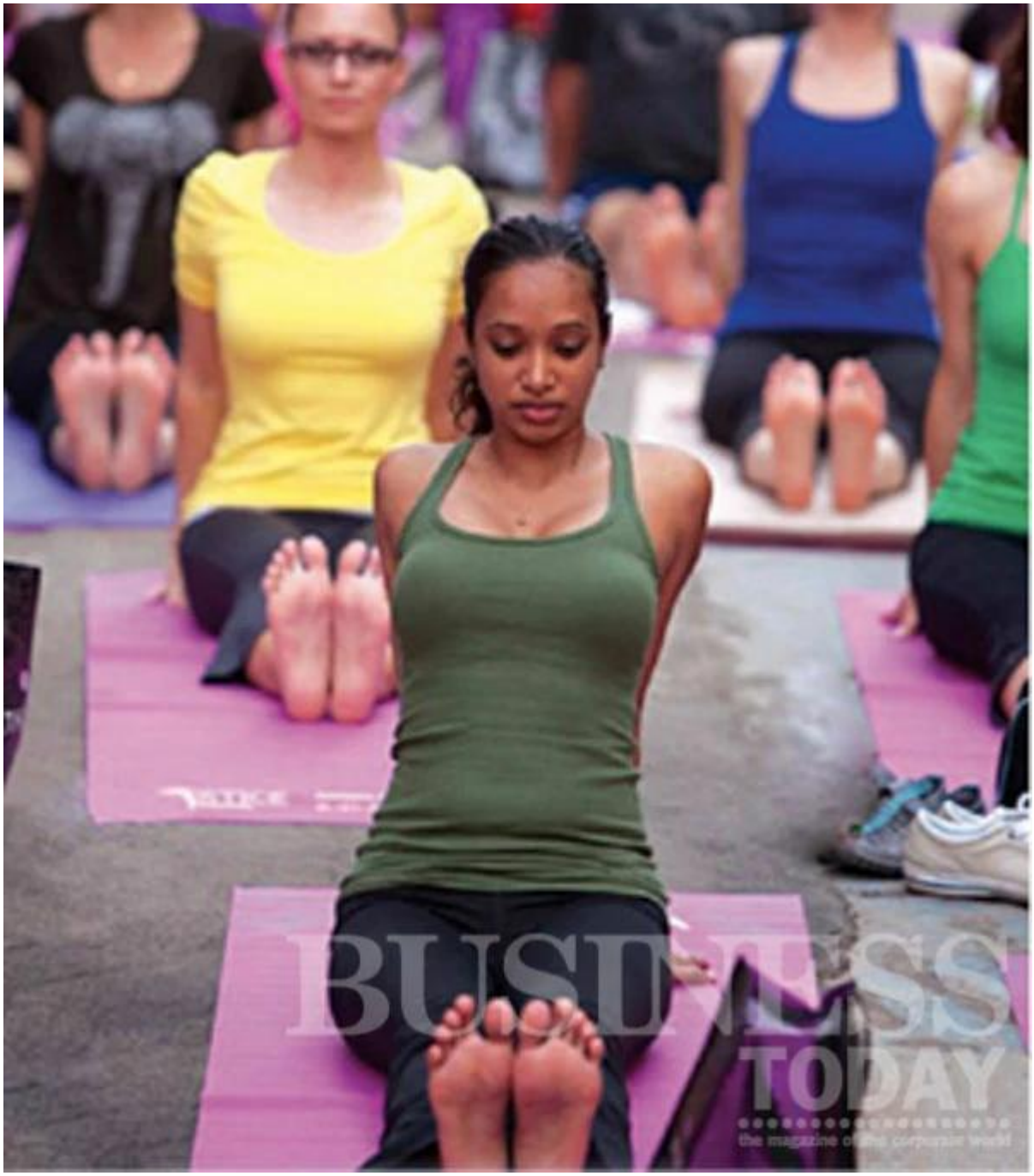
NUMBER 6: Yoga teachers often use the words ‘mindful practice’, by this we mean working without damage to ourselves and others and listening to our bodies and minds with regard to what we need at any one time.

This concept can and should be incorporated into our business mentality in the form of risk assessment, having a back-up plan and being careful of how we are treating our staff and what kind of corporate culture we have in place.

The final conclusion I can make as a yoga teacher and practitioner is that ultimately, yoga never fails to leave me feeling whole, happy and healthy.

Column by Serena Burgess from the Om Space




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