

Meditation for factory workers

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If you are stuck in a highly repetitive, altogether routine job with no alternative employment options, then Scott Herriott of the Maharishi University of Management, in Fairfield, Iowa, suggests you take 20 minutes twice a day to experience your inner "unbounded awareness" and reduce the stress associated with boredom.

Writing in the International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management, Herriott explains that repetitive and monotonous work commonly leads to the familiar psychological consequences of mental fatigue, boredom, apathy, and alienation, which in turn lead to diminished motivation, reduced creativity and poor job satisfaction. This can ultimately produce absenteeism, carelessness and negligence.

Ignoring the problem is not good for the workers, their health and safety, product quality, profitability or ultimately society as a whole. Herriott points out that the "Western" solution takes two forms: modify the job or its context or pick employees for such [jobs](#) that are less prone to boredom. Neither is a good solution.

Instead, Herriott suggests that the antidote to the mental constraints of routine work is to be found within the mind itself. The practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique before and after work, he argues, would give employees the expanded awareness that makes the job in hand purposeful and fulfilling in the moment, complementing the [job satisfaction](#) that results from finishing a task. He claims that meditation of the kind advocated by Maharishi University of Management and based on Eastern or "Vedic" teaching practices can increase psychophysiological flexibility, heighten alertness, creativity and

intelligence, and enhances self-actualization, allowing fulfillment to be a state of being rather than an outcome of activity.

"The development of consciousness could be used on its own to mitigate the negative impact of routine work, or it may be used in conjunction with the Western approaches outlined earlier, which modify the job, the job context, or the job occupant," concludes Herriott.

More information: Herriott, S.R. (2014) 'The problem of routine work: Western and Eastern perspectives', *Int. J. Indian Culture and Business Management*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp.116-129.

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