

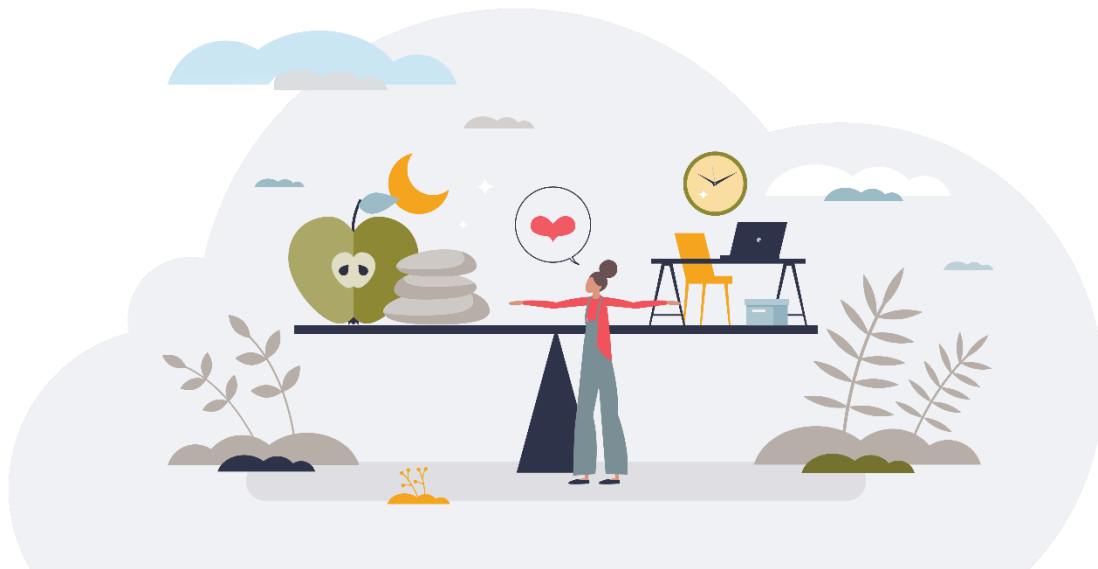
Intrinsic Well-being™ at Work

How Intrinsic Values Shape Employee Experience, Engagement, and Performance

By Bob Hill, Founder of Ntrinsx

Most workplace performance problems are not strategy failures. They are alignment failures. People interpret expectations, priorities, and leadership decisions through their intrinsic values. When those values are not understood, teams often experience unnecessary friction, slower decisions, and preventable conflict.

This article shows how Intrinsic Well-being™ at Work provides leaders with a practical framework for understanding what drives people and designing environments where individuals can perform consistently while remaining engaged and resilient.



Executive Summary

Organizations invest significant resources in programs intended to improve employee well-being. Most initiatives focus on stress management, work life balance, wellness benefits, or engagement activities. While these programs provide value, they rarely address the deeper factors that determine how people actually experience their work.

Within the same organization, employees may share similar roles, responsibilities, workloads, and leadership. Yet their experiences can vary dramatically. Some individuals feel energized, confident, and engaged. Others feel frustrated, disconnected, or exhausted. Traditional well-being strategies struggle to explain why.

The underlying reason often lies in intrinsic values. Every individual interprets their work environment through a set of internal values that shape how they approach responsibility,



relationships, structure, and change. These values influence how employees interpret leadership behavior, respond to expectations, and define a healthy work experience.

Ntrinsx refers to the alignment between a person's work environment and their intrinsic values as **Intrinsic Well-being™ at Work**. When work conditions align with what people value most, they tend to experience steadiness, engagement, and motivation. When alignment is missing, even well designed roles can become difficult to sustain.

Understanding intrinsic well-being gives leaders a practical way to build environments where people perform consistently while maintaining a healthy and productive relationship with their work.

Why Traditional Well-being Programs Fall Short

Many organizations attempt to address well-being through programs that focus primarily on physical health, stress management, or time away from work. These programs address symptoms of workplace strain but often overlook the deeper drivers that shape employee experience.

Workplace well-being is influenced by a number of factors including meaningful work, professional growth, healthy relationships, autonomy, and recognition. These conditions help employees feel valued and capable. However, even when these conditions appear present, employees may experience them in very different ways.

Two individuals working under the same manager in the same environment may interpret the same conditions completely differently. One may see flexibility and opportunity. Another may see uncertainty or disorganization. One may value independence while another may prefer collaboration and shared direction.

The difference is not necessarily the environment itself. The difference is the lens through which people interpret that environment.

Intrinsic values provide the explanation.

Intrinsic Values as the Foundation of Workplace Experience

Each person approaches work with a set of intrinsic values that guide how they evaluate their environment. These values influence how individuals interpret expectations, relationships, systems, and decision making.





In the Ntrinsx framework, intrinsic values are expressed through four value patterns: Gold, Green, Orange, and Blue. Gold values emphasize stability, responsibility, and dependable systems. Green values emphasize knowledge, analysis, and logical problem solving. Orange values emphasize flexibility, action, and visible progress. Blue values emphasize relationships, connection, and shared purpose.

These value patterns shape how individuals interpret workplace conditions and determine what supports their sense of well-being. Each pattern represents a different perspective on what contributes to a healthy and productive work environment.

Understanding these differences is essential for leaders. What strengthens well-being for one employee may unintentionally create stress for another.

The Intrinsic Well-being Matrix

The Intrinsic Well-being Matrix provides a framework for understanding how workplace conditions interact with intrinsic values. Value patterns are aligned with the natural values associated with their temperament. This model reveals an important reality about leadership.

Value Pattern	What Supports Well-being	What Disrupts Well-being
 GOLD	Clear expectations, structure, reliability, accountability	Unclear roles, broken commitments, constant change
 GREEN	Logic, clarity, independence, intellectual challenge	Illogical decisions, emotional pressure, vague direction
 ORANGE	Freedom, action, variety, visible results	Restrictions, slow decisions, repetitive work
 BLUE	Trust, connection, appreciation, meaningful work	Conflict, insincerity, emotional distance

Workplace conditions do not affect everyone in the same way.

A leadership decision intended to create freedom and flexibility may energize some employees while creating uncertainty for others. A highly structured environment may provide clarity and stability for some while feeling restrictive to others.

Without an understanding of intrinsic values, leaders often interpret these reactions as personality differences or performance issues. In reality, they reflect differences in what individuals need from their environment in order to thrive.

A Leadership Challenge

Consider a team responsible for delivering a complex project. The leader encourages autonomy and gives team members significant freedom to organize their work.

Several team members thrive in this environment. They appreciate the flexibility to move quickly and take initiative. Others value the opportunity to analyze problems independently and apply their expertise.

At the same time, another employee becomes uneasy because expectations appear unclear. Another begins to feel disconnected because the team rarely collaborates.

From the leader's perspective the environment appears productive and efficient. From the team's perspective the experience varies widely.

Intrinsic values explain these differences.

Employees who value freedom and action may reflect Orange values. Individuals who value independent analysis may reflect Green values. Employees who prefer clear expectations and defined responsibilities may reflect Gold values. Those who value connection and collaboration may reflect Blue values.

Each response is valid. Each reflects a different interpretation of the same environment.

How Value Patterns Experience Well-being

Employees with strong **Gold** values tend to experience well-being when expectations are clear and responsibilities are well defined. Structured systems and dependable processes provide a sense of stability that allows them to perform confidently.

Employees with strong **Green** values often experience well-being when their environment makes logical sense. Opportunities to analyze problems, improve systems, and build expertise strengthen their engagement.

Employees with strong **Orange** values frequently experience well-being through freedom and opportunity. Variety, challenge, and the ability to move quickly toward results keep them energized and engaged.

Individuals with strong **Blue** values often measure well-being through the quality of their relationships. Feeling understood, appreciated, and connected to colleagues strengthens their sense of purpose at work.

Recognizing these patterns allows leaders to design environments that respect differences rather than unintentionally creating friction.

Practical Implications for Leaders

Leaders who understand intrinsic values gain a significant advantage in building effective teams. Rather than assuming a single leadership style will work for everyone, they can adapt their approach in ways that strengthen alignment.



Clear expectations and consistent communication help provide stability for those who value structure. Opportunities for independent analysis support those who value competence and understanding. Strong collaboration and shared purpose strengthen connection for relationship oriented employees. Flexibility and opportunity encourage initiative among those who thrive on action.

When leaders recognize these differences, they reduce unnecessary conflict and improve decision speed. Teams spend less time interpreting intent and more time executing priorities.

Strengthening Individual Well-being

Employees can also strengthen their own well-being by understanding their intrinsic values. When individuals recognize what matters most to them, they can make more informed decisions about how they work and how they communicate their needs.

Applying natural strengths, maintaining healthy boundaries, investing in professional growth, and building supportive relationships all contribute to sustained well-being.

Recognizing early signs of stress and acknowledging progress along the way also reinforce a sense of capability and purpose.

The Organizational Impact

Organizations that align work environments with intrinsic values often experience measurable benefits. Teams collaborate more effectively because differences are understood and leveraged rather than misinterpreted. Decision making improves because people communicate expectations more clearly. Engagement increases because employees feel included and respected for how they naturally approach their work.

Leaders spend less time mediating preventable conflict and more time advancing strategic priorities.

In short, when intrinsic values are understood, performance improves without adding additional process or complexity.

Conclusion

Well-being at work is not defined solely by benefits programs or work life policies. It is shaped by the degree to which a work environment supports what individuals value most.

Intrinsic Well-being™ at Work provides leaders with a practical framework for understanding these differences and designing environments where people can thrive.



When individuals understand their own values and leaders recognize those values in others, workplaces become more aligned, more productive, and more sustainable for the people who power organizational success.

Bob Hill is the Founder and CEO of Ntrinsx, a company that specializes in providing online assessments, training, and AI-based leadership tools designed to help individuals and teams understand and leverage intrinsic values to improve communication, collaboration, and workplace culture. Under his leadership, Ntrinsx focuses on innovation in social intelligence and microlearning, supporting over 100 languages and offering tools for both corporate and family settings.

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