



**CLAIRE
JOHNSTON**
corporate yoga

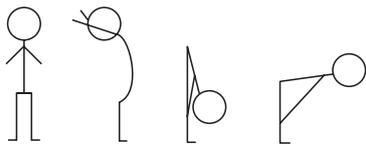


What is Yoga?

Yoga is an ancient practice scientifically proven to **cultivate health and wellbeing** (physical, emotional, mental and social).

The word yoga means to yoke or unify. It is the **connection of the mind, body and breath**; our connection to self, the present moment and to each other.

All my corporate yoga classes incorporate **work-injury prevention exercises, desk and chair exercises** that can be practiced



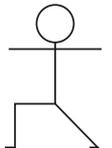
at work stations,
simple yoga poses,
breathing practices
as well as **mindfulness/ concentration methods**

Classes can also be modified according to the requirements of employers.

About me

Hi, my name is Claire. I am a certified senior yoga teacher. I spent many years working in the corporate sector, both for local and state government and in private enterprise before I became a yoga teacher. In that time I experienced first hand the benefits yoga can bring to the workplace, both for employers and employees and I am passionate about sharing the tools and skills I have developed to support businesses and their employees get the best out of their work (and life).

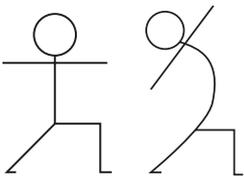
Benefits



physical benefits:
flexibility, balance, strength and injury rehabilitation

mental benefits:
confidence, reduced stress levels, increased focus and concentration, lower reactivity and better relaxation, not to mention the calming effect yoga has on both the mind and the nervous system





What this means for you

Stress-related illness and **back pain** are two of the major factors associated with workplace absenteeism.¹

Stress-related illness generates significant cost for both employers and employees. Employees who experience chronic stress can have impaired job performance and increased risk of stress-related illness (hypertension, coronary heart disease, depression, and sleep disorders).

Offering worksite wellness programs such as yoga, has become an increasingly popular vehicle for delivering the tools to help people manage stress and are a **cost-effective way** to reduce the risk of stress-related chronic illness.²

Studies on the psychological and physiological **benefits of yoga** on working people are convincing.

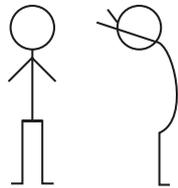
One specific study looked at the effect of a regular on-going yoga practice in the workplace. Employees experienced **reduced pain symptoms, relieved tension, improved posture, improved communication, increased energy, attention span and enhanced feelings of overall wellness and well being.**³

These are all attributes that you want in your employees and offering yoga classes as part of your overall effort to promote health and wellness among employees will also increase staff moral, company loyalty and job satisfaction.



Practicalities

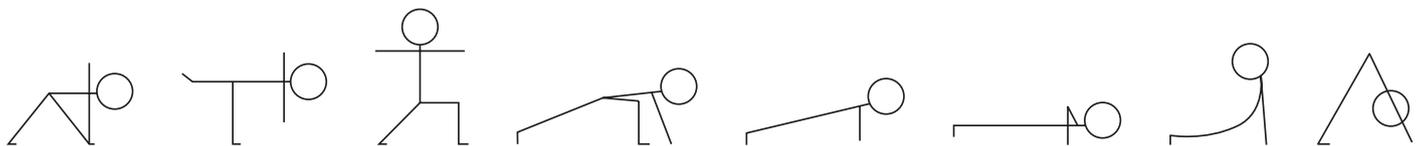
There are a few different ways you can offer yoga to your employees:



- 1: Employer pays 100% of the class fee and offers the classes to employees as part of the benefit of working for the company
- 2: Employer pays a portion of the class fee to subsidise the cost for employees to attend the class
- 3: Employer provides a space onsite to practice and employees pay 100% of the class fee

Classes can be offered at any time of the working day, as well as before work, during lunch and after work.

As an added incentive for employees to attend you can schedule classes so half the class takes place in the employees personal time and half the class takes place during work time.



References:

- ¹ Klatt MD, Buckworth J, Malarkey WB, (2008) Effects of Low-Dose Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR-Id) on Working Adults. Health Education and Behavior DOI10.1177/1090198108317627
- ² Hartfiel N, Burton C, Rycroft-Malonne J, Clarke G, Havenhand J, Khalsa SB, Edwards RT. (2012) Yoga for reducing perceived stress and back pain at work. Occupational Medicine 62(8) pp 606-612 <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqs168>
- ³ Gura ST, (2002) Yoga for stress reduction and injury prevention at work. Work 19 pp 3-7. EBSCO Publishing.



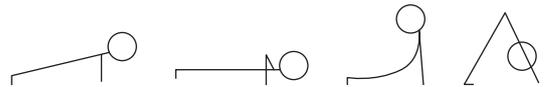
Some recent research findings on the benefits of yoga

Reduced Physical Pain

Aches and pains affect employees productivity and overall feelings of health and happiness, one of the most common workplace complaints is back pain. Physical aches and pains are one of the main reasons people take up yoga.

A 2012 British study published in the Journal of *Occupational Medicine* took a group of government office workers through an eight-week trial to determine the benefits of yoga on back pain. One group participated in a 50-minute weekly yoga class and the control group did nothing.

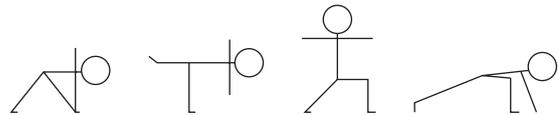
At the end of the trial the yoga group reported significantly less back pain, lower levels of stress, greater self-assurance, serenity and concentration. In comparison the sedentary control group reported more hostility, sadness, stress and back pain.



Lower Burnout Rates/ Reduced fatigue

Exercise has been proven to increase energy levels, while sitting for long periods of time and being sedentary has been proven to lower productivity. The less active you are the quicker you fatigue. On top of this the expectations on employees and long working hours create a high level of stress.

A 2015 study published in *Workplace Health and Safety*, found that nurses who performed a weekly yoga session for eight weeks experienced an enormous reduction in the warning signs for burnout. Benefits included higher levels of self-care, less emotional exhaustion and a reduced tendency towards depersonalisation of patients.



Less Hostility and Aggression

Increased workplace morale and harmony leads to higher levels of employee productivity. A controlled study in the journal *Ayu* of 160 workers at an engineering firm in India showed that practicing regular yoga significantly reduced hostility and aggression in the workplace. In this study half the employees practiced yoga for one hour daily and the other half received lectures in management theory and engaged in light exercise for one hour daily.

At the end of the 10 week study the yoga group showed significantly improved scores for positivity and significantly lowered scores for aggression and counterproductive work activities compared to the control group. Yoga is also known to lower the levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) as well as levels of perceived stress, both of which are likely to make for a calmer, more serene workplace.



- Hartfiel N, Burton C, Rycroft-Malone J, Clarke G, Havenhand J, Khalsa SB, and Edwards RT, (2012) Yoga for reducing perceived stress and back pain at work, *Occupational Medicine*, Volume 62, Issue 8, pp. 606–612.
- Alexander GK, Rollins K, Walker D, Wong L, Pennings J, (2015) Yoga for Self-Care and Burnout Prevention Among Nurses. *Workplace Health & Safety* Volume 63, Issue 10, pp. 462 – 470.
- Dwivedi U, Kumari S, Akhilesh KB, and Nagendra HR, (2015) Well-being at workplace through mindfulness: *Influence of Yoga* practice on positive affect and aggression, *ayu*, Volume 36, Issue 4, pp. 375-379.

