

Singapore Management University

## Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University

---

Perspectives@SMU

Centre for Management Practice

---

2-2017

### Recharge on the go for the busy bee

Singapore Management University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/pers>



Part of the [Developmental Psychology Commons](#), [Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Commons](#), and the [Organizational Communication Commons](#)

---

#### Citation

Singapore Management University. Recharge on the go for the busy bee. (2017).

Available at: <https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/pers/121>

This Journal Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Centre for Management Practice at Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Perspectives@SMU by an authorized administrator of Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University. For more information, please email [cherylds@smu.edu.sg](mailto:cherylds@smu.edu.sg).

# RECHARGE ON THE GO FOR THE BUSY BEE

Published:  
27 Feb 2017



*Human interactions can be energising and bring vitality to employees*

When a job calls for high levels of interaction, such as a police officer, salesperson and customer service executive, it would require much 'emotional labour', a term coined by sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild from the University of California, Berkeley.

With emotional labour, salespeople for example can gain the trust of, build rapport and close sales with customers. This may take the form of smiles, a warm tone of voice, light touches on the hand, and a positive and happy disposition. When a customer returns a smile to a salesperson, it would make the latter happy.

"The sales person has to amplify positive emotions, suppress negative feelings and manage his/her expressions. At the job level, the requirements for emotional labour include frequent workplace interactions and the ability to manage emotions while at work," said **Devasheesh Bhave**, Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Human Resources, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University (SMU).

"Performing workplace interactions help people fulfil their need to relate to, connect and affiliate with others," he said at the SMU Behavioural Sciences Institute seminar entitled "*It Can't Be All Bad: Can Workplace Interactions Improve Well-Being at Work and the Work-Home Interface?*" in January 2017.

“Interactive work can essentially be energising, even in uncomfortable and confrontational situations that most people would shun, such as law enforcement. Emotional labour is not bad at the job level. To some extent, some people like unpleasant job interactions due to their interests. For example, police officers like what they do as they can assert their identity and be aggressive, compared to others who would be uncomfortable in these situations.”

He added that emotional labour energises and brings vitality to people at work, which would give them more energy to care for their family members and would not need leisure to “recharge”.

## WAYS TO RECHARGE

People could sustain vitality and reduce fatigue during office hours creatively besides taking time off work.

“While research has shown that weekends and vacations can help energise one, the effects of vitality would fade. Doing leisurely things during the evenings would help too. However these are not optimal for people to recover their energy and vitality,” said Bhawe.

“One perspective that is emerging in research finds that people can do certain things to recover their energy and reduce fatigue while at work, such as interactive work.”

He added that taking breaks and switching from doing one task to another, such as performing data entry work after an hour-long meeting, could help energize workers.

Studies also suggest that people can energize themselves by communicating to others the significance of their work and recounting three positive things that have happened at work in a day.

“Another way is to sequence the day differently. If you are going to have an intense meeting that day, schedule it in the morning. Include better experiences such as celebrating a colleague’s birthday or accomplishment as the day progresses so that you are energized by the time you go home,” said Bhawe.

“Similarly, a social worker can arrange to meet a difficult client early in the morning and another who is on the road to recovery later in the day.”

When one calls it a day at work and heads home, reading to a child, doing the dishes after dinner or watching a television program with a loved one can help him/her relax and energize.

“Interactions can spark off biological processes and give people energy. They can help people fulfil their need for connectedness with people. They provide breaks from the routine, giving people a change in attention focus and doing something different,” said Bhawe. This would help people continue to be effective and excited at work and home.