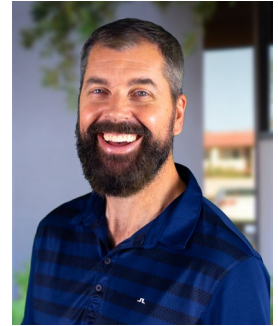


A WEEK IN *Learning*

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME

Larry Van Wave, Learning & Development Sr. E-Learning Developer

As I was warming up for a morning group fitness class, I noticed the instructor frantically trying to get her background music set up. After a few minutes of frustration, she relayed the news, “My iPod is dead.” Most of us took this news as no big deal. As we started the workout, I quickly realized a slump in energy and stamina throughout the room. I realized just how valuable background music is for motivation, and what a good distraction it is from the pain of a workout.



This situation sparked my interest in the power of music. My research brought me to an article published in Psychology Today about a world-class endurance athlete, Christopher Bergland. Bergland explained that during his training and races, when weather conditions were horrible or he was physically suffering, that he could use music to block out the barriers and push past his normal limits. The athlete created a personal playlist of songs he knew would put him in specific mood, which he uses at times to boost his performance.

“The power of music expands into every area of our lives, including our work.”

- Larry Van Wave

Maybe you’re thinking, *music is great for endurance athletes, but how does this relate to my job here at Goodwill?* The power of music expands into every area of our lives, including our work. In fact, Mindlab International Ltd performed a study on jobs that had repetitive tasks, like production line or data entry, and found that playing pop and dance music while working made employees perform their jobs 81% faster. They also discovered that music helped minimize mistakes compared to when it wasn’t played at all.

Music may increase our physical speed and accuracy, but it also helps to support our mental well-being. Stress is a major element that we are all too familiar with, especially as we dive into this holiday season. The pressures of our workload can be overwhelming and can delay a lot of productivity. However, studies have shown that music can help overturn our stress at work. Researchers at Stanford University have found that listening to music at 60 beats per minute can cause our brains to synchronize with the beats. This then causes our brainwaves to slow down and relax; reducing stress.

Music's powers aren't limited to just our work - it also affects our buying habits. Marketing professor

Ronald E. Milliman discovered that customer behavior can be influenced by music at very specific levels. Customers were found to walk faster when exposed to fast-tempo music, which meant they spent less time browsing and made more impulse purchases. This study also found an increase in sales for low-tempo music. Shoppers who heard low-tempo music moved slowly and still bought more. Customers also perceived shorter inline wait times when they heard background music. The right music genre played, combined with professionally produced messaging, will keep customers entertained and in the right buying mood.

So, the next time you're feeling like you need an energy boost, remember the power of music and how it can be used to influence you or inspire you to do more. Now for a fitting closure: ***Na Na Na Na, Na Na Na Na, Hey Hey-ey Goodbye!*** This song will now be stuck in your head for the rest of the day - enjoy!