

Humor in the Workplace

Did you know that...

1. The average preschooler laughs or smiles and average of 400 times a day? Or that the number drops to only 15 times a day by the time people reach the age of 35?
2. People smile only 35% as much as they think they do?
3. Laughter releases endorphins into the body with the same exhilarating effect as doing strenuous exercise?
4. Every time you have a good hearty laugh, you burn up 3.5 calories?
5. Laughing increases your oxygen intake, thereby replenishing and invigorating cells? It also increases the pain threshold, boosts immunity and relieves stress.

Six Reasons that fun can improve work quality and mental health:

1. Fun breaks up boredom and fatigue
2. Fun fulfills human social needs
3. Fun increases creativity and willingness to help
4. Fun fulfills the need for mastery and control
5. Fun improves communication
6. Fun breaks up conflict and tension

Except for April Fool's Day and the usual jokes exchanged with colleagues, business people tend to take things pretty seriously. In fact, companies are increasingly recognizing that business success can (and should) be a laughing matter.

Can laughing and having fun on the job make a difference in the way we do our jobs? Absolutely! A survey by Hodge-Cronin & Associates found that of 737 CEOs surveyed, 98% preferred job candidates with a sense of humor to those without. Another survey indicated that 84% of the executives thought that employees with a sense of humor do a better job than people with little or no sense of humor.

Dr. David Abramis at Cal State Long Beach has studied fun at work for years. He's discovered that people who have fun on the job are more creative, more productive, better decision makers and get along better with co-workers. They also have fewer absentee, late, and sick days than people who aren't having fun. One corporate study showed that after a trial period during which humor was incorporated into the workplace in a variety of ways—including everything from a special humor bulletin board to silly hat days—the company experienced a 21% decrease in staff turnover and a 38% decrease in Friday absenteeism.



Laugh...it feels good!

Norman Cousins, who experienced a serious and painful illness, brought to the forefront how laughter can be healing and reduce symptoms. He discovered that that 10 minutes of laughter could lead to one hour that was pain free. Laughter releases endorphins that are more powerful than morphine. These endorphins can lead to a sense of well being and optimism.

The benefits of laughter at work are much the same as laughter anywhere else. Basically, laughing makes you feel good and reduces stress. In addition to stress relief, a little comic relief in the workplace can help build camaraderie. Creating and sharing inside jokes helps co-workers feel closer to one another, enhancing teamwork through a sense of common history.

Resources:
www.workplaceissues.com
www.drhumor.com

