



Live Well, Work Well

In addition to reducing stress, relaxing you and increasing attentiveness, laughter actually strengthens the body's ability to fight disease and can lower blood pressure.

HUMOR IN THE WORKPLACE

Humor has a place in the office, but only if you know when and where it belongs. In fact, humor and laughter can increase productivity and positive feelings about your job, help you bond with co-workers and may even make monotonous tasks more enjoyable.

Benefits of Workplace Humor

The following are the benefit of humor in the workplace:

- Provides a non-confrontational means of talking with others without intensifying emotions
- Develops unity amongst workers and a sense of teamwork; by posting jokes or comic strips on bulletin boards, via email or through intra-office mailings, you can brighten your co-workers' days
- May help put difficult situations in perspective
- Reduces stress by activating a physical response in the body—it can actually make you feel better, more relaxed and ready to take on difficult tasks
- Makes you more attentive and alert through laughter, which can serve as a pick-me-up in the middle of a long work day

Things to Avoid

The following should be avoided in workplace humor:

- Jokes that are sexual in nature
- Jokes about someone's sexuality, religion, ethnicity or personal appearance; putting others down or making sarcastic remarks
- Serious subjects like death, disabilities or sexual harassment

- Jokes that carry negative messages—if you wouldn't say it in a conversation, don't say it in a joke

Tips for Workplace Humor

To promote positive workplace humor, try the following strategies:

- Joke about situations that are affecting you and all of your co-workers, such as the excessive air conditioning or an upcoming deadline; since you can commiserate together, you will not be singling anyone out.
- Take a friendly jab at yourself from time to time.
- Know your audience—an appropriate joke within your department may not be appropriate when told to the CEO or to a customer.