

Humor in the Workplace

Mary Drexler, MSW
CONTACT USA
165 Nedobity Rd.,
Higganaum, CT 06441

It is common sense. In today's uncertain work environment, humor is not just an option, it is a requirement. Humor is one of the most effective ways to boost morale. Using humor appropriately in the workplace does not waste valuable time, but rather is a tool available to increase and maintain the positive spirit of the workforce. Laughter does not pretend to change the external reality of dealing with a stressful job, but it certainly does help people to survive a stressful work environment.

What other common activity helps us to relax tense muscles, reduces our blood pressure and heart rate, exercises the muscles of our face, diaphragm and abdomen, and boosts our immune system. The obvious answer is laughter. In order to successfully help volunteers/employees use humor, organizational management needs to provide them with the tools to do so, as well as set the example for their staff. The supervisor or manager can set the precedence through his/her own behavior. If managers enjoy their jobs and promote an enjoyable work environment, they make it safe for others to use humor as a means to cope with their daily stressors.

Humor depends on being able to see the humor where others only see aggravation. In using humor in the workplace it is crucial to remember to keep the humor on the light side. People feel safe and comfortable around one another when they know laughter is acceptable, however, it is essential to laugh with one another, not at each other. Humor which is cruel, sarcastic, or inappropriate for the workplace breeds a negative attitude versus promoting a positive work environment. Vicious humor is always to be avoided.

This workshop will examine how to use humor effectively in the workplace, the benefits and hazards of the use of humor, how humor opens doors, and how humor makes the workplace more productive. It is beneficial when humor is encouraged as part of the organizational culture. Positive, humorous people make work and life a more enjoyable experience.