

Hate going to the annual company outing? Must you attend?

Question: “Our company has an outing every year. I felt very uncomfortable at the last couple that I attended, and I would rather work than be there. The same employees that huddle at the office are the same ones that huddle at the outing. I speak to everyone at the office, but I do not have a certain group that I'm around all the time. I try to be a team player and attend functions that are given by the company, but I really hate going. Any suggestions?” — *Angela Murphy*

See Comments below

Anonymous July 23, 2018 at 11:53 pm

I was hired to lead a department after the manager's favorite left to work for a direct competitor. The favorite did a terrible job during his tenure, leaving a mess that would take years to correct. The favorite was subsequently fired for cause from the direct competitor and my company rehired him over my vehement protests, shielding him from criticism and direction from me.

I became the opposite of the inept friend and converted to the very capable stranger after I stopped going to all company events, even the off-site ones on company time. I could see the palpable disappointment over my firm refusals since I am well liked by coworkers. Too bad, management compromised my department and my level of respect for them is zero. Have I risked my position with this hardened stance? It was compromised as soon as they rehired that clown.

Erin February 10, 2018 at 1:42 pm

Unless they're paying me, I will not attend any American corporate propaganda events. Nothing more than us hustlers and hucksters.

J March 22, 2017 at 7:44 pm

There may be a “price to pay” for not attending a department lunch, if that is considered an outing. I did not attend 2 department meals (though there was valid reason for the 2nd meal), and then coincidentally the manager's attitude towards me worsened.

Ryan March 19, 2017 at 9:03 pm

If the company event is for just 1 day of the year, I think cooperating and being part of the team is important. Yes you have other things to do, but there are 52 weekends in a year. Your company, the one that provides food in your table somehow, did not force you to work for them, you are also part of that decision. I hope people

here also consider that.

Moreover, if the company is going to pay for all of it, then I believe only an emergency situation warrants not attending a teambuilding or summer outing event. Much like a xmas party. They don't happen all the time for effin sake.

Misty Fregoso December 17, 2016 at 1:50 pm

I recently had a falling out with my boss. I don't socialize with my co-workers because of their immaturity. It's like the movie mean girls.

My husband refuses to go how do I tell my boss

Mary Katherine December 13, 2016 at 1:21 pm

The acting supervisor of my department invites all her friends to attend the office Christmas party; then sits at her own table and drinks with her friends sometimes to the point of being sloppy drunk and does not interact with the employees of this department. I told her today in private that I did not plan on attending this year and she waited until we were in a department meeting to tell me that "I better start participating in office functions". I am a manager and actually have a higher position than she does. I was totally embarrassed being talked to like that and still have no intention of going. This company does not advance people, if you want a higher position you have to apply for it. What am I risking by not attending? My staff understand that I am a private person and don't care whether I attend or not. Plus this year I was told I also have to provide a "nice gift" for the white elephant exchange. Ugh!

Mark W October 27, 2016 at 4:29 pm

I have worked for several big firms over the years, and started my first corporate job in October. I knew by December that I would be made permanent, and felt comfortable enough to go to the holiday party during the lunch hour without issue. After 2 1/2 years, I moved on, starting a new job in February. By the time of the holiday party, I knew who I liked to socialize with and knew who was who, so I felt comfortable enough to "politely decline", only going twice when they had the party on a Friday afternoon. But during those 6 years that I was with the firm and they had them on a Saturday, I would decline, and my boss asked me why. I simply responded that he knew what my social life entailed, and that I would be much happier with my regular Saturday routine rather than trying to avoid the office gossip and petty jealousies that I had witnessed expanding over the years. When I left, I did not regret those decisions, and over the years, have heard how things turned out there for many of those gossipy, petty people: not very well. So I know I made the right decision. My current situation is much different. It is a smaller, happier crew, and I hope that we do have a party, although I certainly wouldn't stay all night!

Rachel September 30, 2016 at 4:45 am

Well it seems like this has not changed. I was the top performer at my office since day 1 and I was fired because I didn't want to go to a company event! Basically my manager implied that I must go to a dinner event, unofficial and paid by me and then when I didn't she stopped talking to me. One month later she fired me due to my lack of soft skills and not going along the company culture. So yeah...this happens

Mmmmmmmmm August 17, 2017 at 8:02 am

marc August 28, 2016 at 6:18 am

I am far from introvert, but I do not like these things either. For me it is mostly a matter of priority. Like others have said, if you have children, if you have family, they go first. In the weekend I just do other non related stuff. I have to do chores, I am an athletic coach (totally unrelated to my work, I am a computer programmer), I am a father. I am not an employee in the time I am not paid, and I won't be obliged to like people just because they work for the same company. Sorry managers, but you are in my life just not important enough. Stop bothering people with this outing ****, let them do their work and judge them to that.

Kyle Kevin August 22, 2016 at 11:48 am

I don't mean to sound like a jerk but I don't have time for nonsense. At the current company that I am working, I have never ever attended the Christmas party and I never ever will, the main reason for that is simply because I have absolutely NOTHING in common with my colleagues and I do not even like more than half of them. The other reason is i just simply like to separate my work life and my personal life, people always FORCE ME to go, but I still tell them "no thanks, not interested".

Ashley June 29, 2016 at 4:10 am

We have a yearly function called the kickoff at my company which is an annual event. It's the usual deal, re visiting accomplishments of the company of the year past and some team building activities. What it really comes down to for me is I just don't want to be there, it's held on the other side of the country over a weekend. It's not a compensation thing but if fall within a three or four days of my birthday, this year it's a day after. I have three very young children and loathe to be away from home. I'm a pretty big introvert and I don't drink and the whole weekend is just torturous for me. My boss makes all sorts of veiled threats and the like and it just makes me dig my heels in even more. All year you get not one pat on the back for all the hard work that you do but once a year the mandatory thing pops up. Annoys me no end.

Ryan April 28, 2016 at 6:32 am

To have a company party or not...

I work at a small firm with roughly 25 people. Each year we have one company outing. It is "expected that everyone goes" is an unwritten mandatory rule. I passionately detest it. Reading all of the posts that came before me was very interesting. Even though it supports my personal position, I found the argument against outings to be much more thorough and compelling than those for outings. Those posts that were for outings did not really include valid points, rather had broad ideas about getting to know your co-workers outside the work environment and the company showing their appreciation. Also some guy was complaining about greedy Americans who couldn't have been further off-base. These concepts are all but worthless to most people that have families and commitments outside of the already long and hard work week.

Rather than repeat the myriad of great points against the company outing, I wanted to add my own reason for being frustrated with this forced annoyance.

Consider a very basic concept: Yes, I agree with the pro-outing people that personalities come in all shapes and sizes. But what is the one thing you have in common with ALL your co-workers? You are there to make money above all else right? That's why you accepted the position in the first place. Unless you are a multimillionaire

who just likes to sit in a cubicle all day and do work for fun (which I have never heard of), making money is your prime directive. Clearly, your boss, the company, 99.9% of humanity knows exactly why you are at work. Therefore, wouldn't it make the most sense to offer any additional incentive beyond your normal paycheck and/or bonus in the form of cash, giftcards, investment options, an Xbox, a party, etc (Hey, make it like Wheel of Fortune for all I care). I like everyone I work with and enjoy taking to them for the 50+ hours I am there each week...ABOUT WORK. Occasionally we will chat about things outside of work. That's OK too. What I don't enjoy is sitting awkwardly at a table in the corner of some rented hotel hall. holding a warm beer and gabbing with Tina from accounting about what TV shows she is currently binge watching on Netflix, all while an hours drive away from the place I really want to be, my house.

My point is, it would be interesting to see what reward a pro-outing person would select if they were given options beyond an outing/party. A crisp \$100 bill to treat yourself to anything you wanted at the mall? Or forced conversations all night closed out with a drunken drive home?

jeff m December 18, 2015 at 12:05 pm

....NOTHING!!! in his paragraph stated he doesn't want to go because hes not being paid to go...Yes most Americans are greedy and selfish..but this person doesn't seem like they are based off of what they wrote...re-read what they said...

Appreciative worker October 16, 2015 at 9:41 pm

Like typical American attitudes you're all greedy as ****. "Have to be compensated for the time." How about being part of building something to which you are included? If all you care about is being paid to go to a social event then it is your own problem you are being judged by others for not attending.

I AM an introvert, but appreciate what it is the higher level staff are trying to do. If you don't fit in with the present corporate culture, perhaps that is a place you don't quite belong, regardless of your capabilities to perform your duties.

So greedy and selfish like typical Americans.

KMonster November 23, 2018 at 11:13 am

You are ignorant to reality. It is not greedy to be compensated for your time. Most Americans work far more hours. If a company "feels" they have an issue with team continuity, than that is the company's problem an on the company's time. It is the manager's duty to ensure that employees are functioning correctly. That is why they are paid more. If you read most of the posts here you would see that a lot of team building is snooty nonsense, gossip and politics. None of which are value-adds for productivity.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:24 am

So why will the company so readily spend thousands of dollars per head on a tax-deductible party but won't give the employees a hundred bucks or so bonus instead?

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 3:53 am

The bosses stage these events to watch employees' in a less-corporate setting. In this economy they are looking for any slip-up to use as a reason to not give a raise.

What makes these events worse is when they plan it on a Saturday at a place you have to pay to get into, and the owner won't even pick up the tab. I realize \$20 (in my case) won't kill me, but when the owner is making tenfold what the workers make it is a slap in the face.

The boss wants us to spend our own time to attend the event (most of us would rather not), he could pay for our attendance. For some of us, \$20 makes the difference between a full gas tank or a full bag of groceries. Now I have to spend that money on a day I should be catching up at home so the managers can watch my behavior?

I wouldn't mind it so much if on a Friday afternoon we all cut out at 1pm and went to the event. It is bad enough being "unspoken mandatory" if you ever plan to stay with the company. But after working 50+ hours a week I WANT MY SATURDAY!

The Dude November 15, 2012 at 2:11 am

I am a military officer and the civilian side pales in comparison to the ludicrous amount of forced camaraderie I have had to endure. OMG!

We have at least 10 gatherings a year outside work hours that gobble up the better part of a Saturday or Sunday. Not to mention little mandatory fun events outside of those 10 gatherings.

To make matters worse, some poor sap who just reported onboard gets to organize these shindigs for months until the next guy shows up.

I don't like mandatory fun. I am not a complete anti-socialite, I just happen to like small group events organized spontaneously. 2-3 people tops is enough.

No brother; in the military, appearances are paramount. If you seem like the guy who just wants to do his job and generally be left alone, prepare to get treated like a high school pariah.

I cannot wait to get into the civilian world and blow off non-mandatory company events. Unless of course, I actually feel like going.

Frankly, I feel bad for those who must organize these things. Look, it's so simple. Just make an unofficial bar or restaurant outing. If people want to go, they go. If they don't, they don't. They pay their tab, you keep it simple; done Sir done! Stop with the passive aggressive pressure, the guilt trips, the whole dumb thing.

If it makes any of you feel better; the military makes your corporate mandatory fun seem like child's play.

garlic73 November 15, 2011 at 4:24 pm

Unlike some, I am not fortunate enough to work for a company that gives a **** about its subordinates. It doesn't help that the boss is an insufferable @\$%0L3. I'm not trying to sing a sad song here. Just telling my side of the story. From my personal experience, these things are not mandatory, and definitely not obligatory. It all boils down to your personal circumstances and preferences.

I work in IT for a financial firm and choose not to attend. After getting dumped on daily by users from all levels of the company, no one in my dept even thinks about the holiday party. We just have a small, quiet dept lunch, then shrug off the users' insults and continue working. Including 2011, this will be the 4th consecutive year that no one from the IT dept has attended the party - we'll all still be working, cleaning up messes caused by non-IT

people. The kicker? Literally no one notices that the IT dept isn't at the party. I can understand "management", but you'd think at least one of the regular users would like to know who they're actually complaining to... No one has ever bothered chasing us for a response to the invite, and I doubt that will change. People have assumed that one of us from the IT dept attended last year's party, but no one bothers to confirm if we were actually there. We're all beginning to wonder if the IT dept was included/ invited by mistake...

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:41 am

I appreciate you describing the reality so many of us likely live in, and so few of us actually care to admit it is in fact this bad, but it is.

kg1982 September 21, 2011 at 10:36 pm

I just had to attend the company picnic and I felt really out of place because I am new to the company and an introvert. I just spent my time looking bored, walking around the fringes, and waiting until I could make a graceful exit. I just really don't have that much in common with many people. I like having my own personality, but that makes these sorts of things painful. It would be nice if rather than setting up such a rah! rah! corporate culture based on management books and informally demanding that everyone attend these events to advance in a company that promotions are based on doing one's job. I pride myself on going the extra mile in my positions and being a good person to work with. I'd like that to be acknowledged come promotion time, not how many company events that I've attended.

I get that there is a subset of people who do enjoy attending these events . I don't think that anyone here is saying that companies cannot have them. What I think that people are fed up with is that work social events are basically mandatory nowadays. Rather than trying to fit everyone into a certain cog, it would be great if companies recognized that different employees have different personalities. A great salesperson and a great engineer don't have the same skill sets, so why demand a one-size fits all approach to company culture.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:45 am

Yes, you summed up my thoughts.

I am not against company events. I am against the unspoken rule that attendance, or lack thereof, determines if you will ever get anywhere in the company.

Employee promotions, raises, etc. should be tied to merits on the job, not attending phony events. I am also introverted. Some of the most productive and successful people are introverts. Famous inventors like Edison and Tesla were largely introverted.

Introversion is not a trait to be looked down upon, it is just a different way of carrying one's self. We can't all be bubbly and in each other's faces. How awkward would that be?

jeff m December 18, 2015 at 12:13 pm

ew0054...i really like your response.. there is in-fact an Un-written rule that you have to attend these events (I personally don't care and never go)-I push through by increasing my value at the company to make it difficult for them NOT to give me what I deserve..seems to work thus far.

Jeff Patterson September 12, 2011 at 11:53 am

I have worked for a number of large companies, and the idea that attendance dictates how you are perceived as a team player is demonstratively false. I'd go so far as to say that there is no legitimate career reason to attend company picnics or holiday parties. A cursory understanding of game theory shows that no good can come of it. Any sense of camaraderie or rapport is false and usually short-lived. It creates grist for any rumor mills that exist. Picnics are a relic of the 80s. Let them die off, please.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:49 am

Your theory may hold true in large companies today.

However from personal experience, and I have only worked in small companies (30 employees or less), it is unfortunately very much the case, as others have described.

Hopefully "trickle down" theory may work in this case, and we will see them die off in the small companies someday.

marc September 2, 2016 at 7:00 am

That may or may be not the case. I have seen many coworkers though, who are actively trying to 'score' on the company outing. And even that is just horrible. I give you a story. I once attended a Christmas party. One of the girls at sales fancied me. So it was almost the end of the party, I wanted to go home. I obliged and had been doing polite conversation whole night. The girl walks by our table. So I just wink at the girl. She comes and sits next to us. Before we could have a chat ourselves, ... my team lead sees the opportunity and starts marketing his project, since she might have influence at management level. And he would bring me home in his car, so I had to wait for him. And I wait, and I wait, felt sorry for that wink by then, and then I just had it, and blurred into his ears, can we *****ing go home now! Not good for my career there.. Company outing are a political snake pit.

Steven July 30, 2011 at 9:20 am

How about a raise? Or how about letting you pick your schedule? Or how about ASKING you what you want in recognition of your hard work? Maybe he/she could give you an extra sick day or something. The theme here is that bosses know what you want more than you do. And we, as employees have to accept or be labeled as non team players. If management really wanted to reward employees, they could give them the chance to spend

more time doing what they really enjoy!

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 8:56 am

A raise is the last thing anyone can ever hope to receive, and is the first thing most would hope for. And you're right, why should the boss think he knows what's best for the employees?

I'll be conservative here. If a typical office Christmas party runs \$1,000 per head, most employees would much rather appreciate it in the form of a bonus that can help pay some bills than a one-time event with nothing to show for it.

It's all about proportions. For the boss and managers making around \$100k/yr, \$1k is only 1% and won't help nor hurt them so much. But to someone busting a*s for \$20k/yr, that thousand dollars represents an extra 5% of their income, and would go a much longer way for that person's financial situation.

I used to be in that situation, making less than \$20k. And it always irked me how the company threw money at lunches, events, etc. Yes I appreciated it, but it always reminded me how I could never afford it on my own, but they would so quickly spend the money like it was water for things like that, yet they couldn't even give a \$50 bonus at the end of the year.

Steven July 30, 2011 at 9:13 am

Have you ever, for an instant, thought that some people have lives outside of their work and would not like to spend the few hours of free time that they have outside the workplace mingling with people from work? Kristi, your efforts appreciated, but you could consider the fact that not everyone wants to pretend they like Bob, the overbearing supervisor, or Susan, the conniving office manager, because they are sitting at a table sharing peach cobbler with them. And the ridiculous games.....the only saving grace to these things is the company of your family....and the free alcohol (if you're lucky). How about using the funds allocated for these events to support a worthy charity. Now that would be money well spent.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:56 am

I like this idea. Instead of spending \$10,000 on a party that nobody wants to attend, donate the \$10,000 to a local charity. It will still be a tax write-off for the company.

And yes, I agree that much work goes into these things and efforts ARE appreciated. But if nobody wants to attend and play the fake roles, what is the point?

golden June 5, 2011 at 3:15 am

Unfortunately, the company outing is a corporate cultural ritual where careers are made and broken. If you don't go and participate it immediately raises a red flag that you are antisocial and weird, especially if you are

new. You can forget about that raise or that promotion. Believe me I hate it too but it is a stupid ritual you have to go through. The last thing I want to do is hang out with the clowns at work in my own time or in a social setting. For the true a*s kissers, these occasions are golden opportunities to schmooze. I'm sick of the whole thing.. everybody agrees with the boss, laughs at all his dumb jokes, and wants to do the activities that the big boss wants to do... that's what life at corporate America is about..sucking up.

The worst is happy hour. "Don't make me drink... you wouldn't like to see me when I'm drunk"... Sure... I really want to work a 9 hour day and go straight to the bar and spend a couple of hours more with co-workers, have a few drinks, go home and be back to work the next day.

Jen.. (above).. nailed it on the head.. if you don't go to paid company outings you will be viewed as someone who is not a team player.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 5:05 am

Great points.

It's all about ***-kissing. Big or small companies - it's all the same. I choose not to be a part of it, and I am disdainful of the notion that attending a fake event has more bearing on one's career than actual job performance.

This is in part why America is going down the crapper compared to China. The Chinese know how to work and get a job done. And they don't half-*** it, either.

It wasn't always this way. If we as Americans would spend even 1/8 the time we spend playing people against each other, and instead put that into innovation, we could be a great society again.

Too many times though, I have seen the same people who made their way during their first year of sucking up and backstabbing, fall on their faces at the smallest mistake and soon out on their asses, so that part is refreshing.

Steve October 15, 2010 at 3:44 pm

I work with a lot of brown nosers, and I hate being around them at functions to watch them KA. I only go to functions if they are mandatory and on paid company time. I feel like as long as I do my job in a professional manner, I do not have to KA.

Jen September 28, 2009 at 5:00 pm

The social events held by a company are still business events, so I would recommend that you at least put in an appearance. By not going to an event, you may be viewed by your boss as someone who is not a team player or anti-social. I know that if I will myself to have a good time, I usually do. Attitude means a lot. So smile, appreciate that the Company offered such an event (some companies do not offer social events or holiday parties and they parties are missed when they are taken away), and have a good time.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:08 am

Well, there are some difficulties.

First, I am already putting in between 50-60 hours during the week, salaried – so no overtime. I have worked plenty of Saturdays AND SUNDAYS with no extra pay when things needed to be pushed out. If that's not a "team player" I don't know what is.

Second, what little time away from work I have, I want to enjoy it doing things with family, or even just relaxing and not thinking about the company's problems.

Analyze the proportions of a 168-hr week. 33% of the week is gone sleeping. Next, 8 hs work + 2 hs commuting = 10 hs working * 5 days = 50/168 hs or 30% (conservatively) working.

So of the 37% "free" time that remains, you can't really enjoy the weeknights because you have to go to bed early. So let's count on weekends, which 2/7 days = 29% of the week. Sleep 8 hours away you get about 19% remaining.

Less than 1/5 of your week is enjoyable time that is otherwise spend running errands, shopping, laundry, cleaning, cooking, showering, etc.

So how much time during a week do you REALLY have to enjoy with friends and family? And I am supposed to give up even more of it to the company so they can put on a fake show about how they pretend to care about us, when all it is a field day for brown-nosers to get ahead while the management looks for any excuse to cut out raises....

...and I'm not supposed to be put off by this?

Geoff February 10, 2015 at 5:41 pm

ew0054

I've been reading this forum and I'm a victim of the 'you must attend this Saturday meeting' nonsense.

I'm collecting all your posts, committing them to memory and will be using them in evidence

Thanks for undermining this crazy ethos!

marc September 7, 2016 at 3:44 am

So are obliged to come, you should thankful and should shut up, you should try to brainwash yourself in liking it, and if not you should pretend you are happy?

This is just awful. Exactly why I do not like these parties.

Bev November 19, 2008 at 9:01 pm

Back to the original question – please make your decision based on how your comfort level. It's your choice. As a HR Professional, we certainly don't want you to feel uncomfortable at a company function. Your attendance at company functions is or should be optional. Check your company policy or practice as it relates to functions. Speak with some of the employees who have been with the company for a long time to get an understanding of the culture. Have a happy holiday!

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:18 am

Attendance should be optional, but let's face it, spoken or unspoken, it really is mandatory when it comes down to it.

And I abhor the idea of a company "culture." For many of us, who are quite successful in our careers, our company culture consists of going to work, doing the best job possible, and getting a salary. Nothing more should be expected.

I know it is hard to believe based on my activity here, but I am a laid back, easy to work with person. I manage projects in the million dollar range. Simply put, I don't have time to get involved with people's problems outside of work when I am receiving phone calls literally minutes apart and need to have all the answers up front. It is fast-paced, I love what I do, and I am 100% focused on getting it done.

But when I am out of the office, I want to be just that. I think it is healthy to keep the work world and personal world entirely separate. When I am with the family, we don't think about work. When I am at work, no family problems creep in.

There should be a distinction between a work/life balance and a work/life BLEND. Balancing work/life is healthy practice. BLENDING work and life to the point where no border line can be discerned is UNHEALTHY and leads to stress.

marc September 7, 2016 at 3:52 am

" As a HR Professional, we certainly don't want you to feel uncomfortable at a company function."

Really?!?

I seriously doubt that. Most HR people are exactly the ones pumping up the social pressure for people to come to these events. It's their thing, judging people on how they behave at social events instead of how they achieve technically. I have this impression that if they could they would make movies of us to pseudo psycho analyze our behaviour, and make notes on their tablets.

Jennifer November 19, 2008 at 2:45 pm

The original question did state whether or not this was a holiday party or a team building event offsite. I have to side with Kristi and Mary Ann on this one. I am the one at our school that organizes our holiday party, back to

school retreat for our faculty and staff twice a year. It is held during normal work hours and it is meant to be an opportunity for our employees to know how much we appreciate them, build community and also to help us focus on our mission and for us, that is the students. Hours of time are spent organizing and planning, not to mention the outlay of cash that the employer spends, which they could easily add to their own personal bonus. Whether we are in tough economic times or living in the land of fruit and plenty, you should attend the event even if it is after hours.

Mary Ann November 18, 2008 at 11:29 am

I might be the odd person out here reading most of the responses, however I do feel that yes you should attend. A team player is a team player on and off the job. Its just a few hours and your bosses will know, especially if you are in a high profile position. All opinions from your boss are not necessarily made on the job.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:28 am

But what exactly does attending a party have to do with team building?

Shouldn't this come down to the entire year where all the employees are coordinating with each other, working outside their normal job descriptions, staying late without overtime, just to get the last shipment out the make monthly numbers?

But that doesn't count. All that matters is whether or not you attend some stupid party. The rest of the year goes out the window.

Miriam November 17, 2008 at 10:13 am

Dear All, let's keep in mind that for many companies this is all they do for their employees all year long, and they feel that their employees enjoy it so they keep doing it each year.

Even though you may not enjoy it because of your social calendar and your many reasons, there are employees who can't wait for these events because they don't have the close bond family circle you have. They may not have the personality you have that shy away from these events.

Remember a company is made up of all types of personalities and there are personalities that feel that if these events do not occur then the company do not value them as an employee.

I do believe its unfortunate when companies expect you to pay for any part of this event, but far be it for me to tell you how to react, I would suggest that you react based on your belief, your personality time, your needs and the culture of your company.

But, as a person who plans events for my company, I hear and see the need for them and I also see the looks on our employees faces when these events are taken away.

Miriam

Joseph November 17, 2008 at 8:37 am

Steve, this website is not for hiding but for suggestions and helps. Our group of “fun Committee” crew are the ones who end up drunk and stupid at these events. Trying to talk them to suggest alternative plans is like throwing pearls to swines. So, question was raised and comments are made as to whether one should really be obligated to go and responses are given of what we experienced. Perhaps you are one of those on the “fun committee” who fail to listen to suggestions and are offended when you realize that there are many who’d rather not attend these ill planned events than those who want to get slashed up and wasted. I agree with John A. A little humility would do you wonders.

Kutty November 17, 2008 at 7:57 am

Kristi, it’s unfortunate that you sum up not wanting to be at a party as being ungrateful. No so. Our lifestyles are different and our “let your hair down and hang out” styles are different as well. I don’t drink, smoke, use curse words, foul language and avoid intentional insults that hurts people but no one will say much because it is coming from upper management. The Scripture says to be kind to one another and to love one another. It also says to keep our words pure and simple. Not to be drunkards of wine and debauchery. In line with these, it is easier to not participate in events, especially outside of the office hours to keep yourself pure and clean rather than subject your ears and heart to unnecessary language. Furthermore, you cannot change others, and you one should not try. If others want to follow your life style that is okay, but you cannot dictate others to follow yours. Having said all that, while we are grateful for the jobs we have, ultimately, we are only answerable to one Authority in the end and sometimes, it is better to be the “odd ball” in the crowd here than to be rejected in the ends of times. For those who feel that you need to compromise your belief, faith or lifestyle for the sake of getting ahead – think on this – if God truly wants you to have this job, no one can stop you from attaining it – not even your boss who might also be the owner of the company. Is anything too hard for the Lord? A little faith took little lonely David to not only conquer Goliath, but also Israel. Be true to who you are and God will take you places you thought you’d never attain.

Steve November 16, 2008 at 9:35 am

I agree 100% With Kristi. Stay home whinners. Maybe you could do something about enjoying yourself instead of complaining and blaming others for your unhappiness. Be proactive and suggest ways to enhance the experience instead of hiding on the other side of an internet connection.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:38 am

The only thing worth “whining” about is the notion that it is mandatory, even though they tell you it isn’t. There actually would be a bigger turnout if people did not feel pressured into going for the sake of one’s career future.

I liken this to a child who is forced to learn a particular instrument, and begrudgingly attends the lessons. When this child comes of age where s/he no longer is required, then often all interest in music ceases.

But if the child were encouraged (not forced) to learn an instrument of choice, and given the choice in the first place, s/he may end up learning multiple instruments and being very good.

Or not. For some people, it’s just not our thing. It’s not a negative, it’s just “is.”

CountryGirl November 14, 2008 at 6:02 pm

I think the “population declines every year” comment that someone made is a CLUE. These functions are going the way of the dinosaurs who perpetuate them. Most of us are on a dead gallop 24/7, stretched both timewise & economically. I LIKE my co-workers, but they are CO-WORKERS. I barely have time for my friends or family nowadays and I can’t afford the gas to visit THEM very often, either. Send me the video of the party or upload it to YouTube & I’ll watch it when I finally get some down time.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:41 am

How many people did you attend high school with... several hundred? How many of those people do you still know today?

I can think of three at most. The same theory applies to the workplace. How many people you have met versus how many people are actually worth remaining in contact on a personal level is a single-digit percentage, if even that.

Forcing it on us doesn’t help improve the numbers. It only serves to tick those of us off who have no interest in these events, and puts a further wedge between us and the company.

Remember, familiarity breeds contempt.

Ter November 14, 2008 at 5:31 pm

In answer to Jean...a cover charge that is asinine of your company to host a party and want you to pay a cover charge!

I have been the “hostess” for every company picnic, dinner or holiday party for almost 15 years, yes they are a lot of work and I am usually “working” through the whole event and No I don’t like all of my coworkers but I still go, enjoy myself even though I am “working” and tell the boss thank you for everything! I figure I can give up one night a year for my job, my husband’s employer is bigger than mine and they have had 1 holiday party and 1 picnic in 25 years. This year they have cut back on holiday parties and only management and corporate staff will be having one and if you don’t think this hasn’t caused some rumblings the hourly employees are getting a lunch and small gift card...not quite the same as dinner & dancing with their spouse.

If nothing else at least put in an appearance as it is noticed when you don’t attend company functions!

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:44 am

Oooh... I’m going to encounter this in a few Saturdays from now. Thank you very much for this point.

All of us employees’ efforts is making how many millions for the company, how many hundreds of thousands for the boss’s coffers, and he can’t even pick up the tab?

This is a real slap in the face, especially to those making subsistence-level wages.

Brenda November 14, 2008 at 5:23 pm

You shouldn't be obligated to go especially if there is a charge. I work as staff in higher education. As staff, we really don't care to go to the holiday luncheon but it is a nice way to get out of the office and the faculty pay for our lunches as part of our holiday gift. We have no input on where the faculty have the lunch so when they asked us to pay for it one year we all said sorry. There was just no way on our small salaries that we could afford the luncheon plate fee.

If you really hate going or can't afford to go, there should be no reason why you should.

CountryGirl November 14, 2008 at 5:17 pm

Forced camaraderie leaves me cold. If a group of co-workers want to get together to go ski or bowl (or whatever), that's great. But to feel **PRESSURED** to go somewhere on one's own time (particularly if one is an hourly worker, not "management,") can be uncomfortable or expensive or conflict with personal commitments or (in my case) interfere with **BEDTIME**. (I should have signed myself **OLD CountryGirl**.) Perhaps the solution is to let individuals choose **WHAT** form of recognition they prefer and for the employer to make it crystal clear that there is absolutely no expectation that everyone attend but that those that wish to are welcome to do so. But you know what? A lot of these highly orchestrated events provide a tax break for the employer...I **DO** think it is preposterous to specify "black tie" and formal attire unless attendance is **TOTALLY** voluntary. It's just proof that those who dream up these events are completely out of touch with the economic challenges facing the average worker.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:48 am

I could not have worded it better myself. I second this in its entirety.

CountryGirl November 14, 2008 at 5:00 pm

Hey, if the company will pay for the caterer and a good cleaning crew, I'll drink to that! 8-)

John A. November 14, 2008 at 4:16 pm

Another malcontent in the crowd, I see. If your holiday parties/picnics/etc are anything like ours, its nothing more than a chance for cliques and groups of people to have the opportunity to directly snub those they don't like because they're not "at work" and aren't held to a standard of "office civility." I know a woman that I work with who smiles in my face and makes chit chat every day of the year in the office, but will ignore me and look the other way if I say "hello" at an after-hours or weekend work function.

Your problem with other people is, by definition, your problem...not theirs.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:54 am

The one advantage I can see to attending such an event would be to know the types of people you are REALLY working with.

Keep your friends close, your enemies closer, comes into play here.

John A. November 14, 2008 at 4:09 pm

Kristi, you sound exactly like the woman who chairs the committee for our holiday party. This year, I volunteered to be on the committee. Never again! Even though I was given the title of "co-chair," she made all the decisions herself anyway, never kept anyone in the loop, made side deals with this one and that one while the other one didn't even know what was going on.... then she sits and complains that no one wants to work with her or attend the events that she organizes.

A little humility would do you wonders.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 9:51 am

Ever notice it is always the women who are at the center of all this drama? Why never the men?

Maybe because we are spending time actually making products that will bring money into the company, rather than looking for ways to spend it.

Pam November 14, 2008 at 4:07 pm

I worked for a very small company where the owners loved to ski. The company outing consisted of an all day ski trip. As I don't like to ski (yes, I know how), don't like the cold and didn't want to be gone from 4:30 am to 8:00pm I elected not to go. Since I was the only one who didn't go, I was told that since I didn't want to participate, I could stay and work that day-covering everyone else's jobs.

Needless to say I no longer work there!

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 10:02 am

Forget that. If I knew it would be like that I would have signed up and now gone, called in sick or something.

Isn't corporate "culture" wonderful? More like "if you don't fit the mold, we throw you to the lions."

Barb. November 14, 2008 at 4:05 pm

Kristi,

I also am thankful I have a job. We try to plan simple events at a local park and do a potluck so the kids can have something to do – we have quite a brood between all of us, but a wide age range – and the adults can relax.

I also know how hard it is to plan something like this. My employer has 500 employees, so we break ours down to departmental get-togethers and we have a solid relationship within our department. Our up-chain has tried several times to get all of us together, but we don't feel we really have anything in common with their staff.

Barb. November 14, 2008 at 4:01 pm

Hey CountryGirl,

Don't be surprised if someone pops up with a notion for a summer BBQ at your new place, complete with animal petting zoo for their kids. City people don't seem to understand what it takes to run a place and I don't know how many times my childhood "city" friends wanted to come out and stay for a weekend to "pet" our calves, piglets, and chicks. It is such a phenomenon for them – and I grew up in a small rural community.

My boss lives 25 miles from the office, 10 miles up a mountain, so we don't even think about his place. But there are only a few staff who lives "in town," so we end up doing a potluck at one of the parks. The kids have things to do and the adults can relax.

Lucy November 14, 2008 at 3:56 pm

I work for a small company (100+ employees). I generally do not like to attend company functions. Sometimes I attend and other times I do not. I see my co workers enough and would probably never socialize with them in any other venue. I try to have other plans for the evening of the event.

Jean November 14, 2008 at 3:56 pm

What if there is a cover charge?

Jocelyn November 14, 2008 at 3:48 pm

I am sorry, but what would most of you who do not appreciate any event at work say if the company did absolutely nothing to recognize the holidays or you at all. Would you feel appreciated then? I doubt it. Why complain, OMG your boss wants to treat you to dinner and thank you for all your hard work, how dare they....

Geoff February 10, 2015 at 5:51 pm

Hi Jocelyn ...

You may be forgetting I have family I need to leave out of this sort of venue

Then, it's not OK?

Dave July 28, 2018 at 10:36 pm

You are wrong. Most of us who don't like work events see work as nothing more than a means to an end. My paycheck is the only recognition that I require. If I want cake, I buy cake.

Jean November 14, 2008 at 3:42 pm

What if there is a cover charge for the holiday party? Do you still think you should go?

Anonymous November 14, 2008 at 3:40 pm

I too do not enjoy work holiday parties. Ours is always held offsite in the evening, at an upscale hotel, dress is black tie. Everyone spends hundreds of dollars on their outfits and hair/makeup. To make it worse you have to pay for your spouse to go. Participation declines every year. Did I mention I work in HR? However, we are not involved with the holiday party planning. I am involved with the employees, work many hours and attend event's that are during working hours. I dont feel I should have to attend this event to show that I am a social person and have been very successful in my career with my current employer.

I'd rather save the money and spend the time with my family.

Susan November 14, 2008 at 3:40 pm

I agree - the companies do it not because they HAVE to, but they WANT to do something nice for the employees.

Susan November 14, 2008 at 3:36 pm

This is a risky thing for your company to do. It is making it required to attend if you want to get paid. If someone gets hurt or drinks too much they could be liable.

Lisa November 14, 2008 at 3:30 pm

I really hate these events but am forced to plan them so be default I need to attend. I always tried to keep it simple, we would have a nice sit-down dinner and everyone had a choice to go home after dinner or stay on for drinks. Now I have a new boss who micromanages everything I do including these events, so now I have to make all of the arrangements according to what she wants and still have to attend.

I already see my coworkers more than I see my spouse and I really do not want to spend more time with them than I need to. Fortunately, there is only one holiday party and one summer picnic that I need to attend. I do think it is important to attend, management does notice these things.

CountryGirl November 14, 2008 at 3:30 pm

I enjoy attending functions that are held during business hours - luncheons, mainly - but for evening events it is a different story. We have a large place now & livestock to tend. My spouse travels much of the time. I got tired of making excuses at the office and simply said, "We just can no longer accept weeknight invitations." That has

reduced our stress considerably. When we lived in a subdivision and didn't have animals to care for, we enjoyed going out during the week but now it is really a burden. We live way out in the sticks now. Also, like many others we never imagined that gas would end up costing so much and that is a factor also. Anyway, my employer has been understanding about it & that is a great relief.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:29 am

Sometimes just being straightforward is the best way. No embellishing, no elaborating. "We can't do weeknights" is perfect.

Alicia November 14, 2008 at 3:28 pm

I feel the same as Ronda H - I love the people I work with but I already spend way more time with them each week then I get to spend with my family. However, If you are trying to grow your career and move up the ladder, you should consider these mandatory unless you really do have something else scheduled. I think the best advice is to make an appearance, even 30 minutes, and make sure you connect with the host, compliment the people who put it together and make sure you are seen by your manager. Smile, tell them you are late for your kid's school play, and leave.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:27 am

This is a good meet-in-the-middle solution, and can work for events that get planned on weekends (the worst kind). And you are also correct that for those of us climbing the ladder it is mandatory.

However this strategy may be more difficult to implement for evening events. We need to work this one out.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:35 am

I sleep 8 hours a day. I spend 9 hours a day at work. 2 hours a day driving. That leaves 5 hours, which sounds like a good amount. But the 1 hours of rushing out in the morning is not enjoyable. Another hour to shower, shave, etc. Another hour to catch up around the house and cook, etc. That leave maybe 2 hours a day AT MOST for true, uninterrupted family interaction.

Driving to work is counted as work time. So the work day is really 11 hours. It's sick. And now I have to spend even MORE time with them?

Kristi November 14, 2008 at 3:24 pm

Wow... I'm sure if many of you truly feel this way, please do yourself, and others, a favor and stay home. I'm serious and not be sarcastic at all. As someone that spends countless work and personal hours listening to

suggestions, making the arrangements for the events, and planning every last detail of these events throughout the year, I would personally prefer those that have a sour attitude, stay home. It takes thousands of dollars to put on any event for my company. This year, we're really scaling back and having a more intimate family get together for the holidays. Instead of a grand dinner and dancing and expensive entertainers, we're doing an evening BBQ event where the children and freinds are invited. Yes, Santa is coming to visit with the kids too. In these tough economic times, I'm just a bit surprised of the ungrateful responses I'm hearing. It's rather sad really if you think about it. Perhaps I'm just thankful that I'm still employed. =\

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:25 am

So why will the company so readily spend thousands of dollars per head on a tax-deductible party but won't give the employees a hundred bucks or so bonus instead?

zumpie July 22, 2015 at 12:59 am

What's funny is I do corporate event planning, as well. I still (at least sometimes) hate going to them...especially for my immediate team (who fortunately all work remotely), because they're all jerks. Interestingly, just tonight I got my face ripped off for not attending an "optional" event at our annual sales meeting. Even though I hadn't signed up for it, etc.

I also received a big, fat lecture from my boss for basically failing to socialize with them. Even though they apparently all dislike me and I've been perfectly civil to them

Inn March 30, 2016 at 2:18 am

It is suppose to be fun...to all. But can you cater to everyone's need?

For example, my boss and my husband's are family related. They have a fall out on personal issue. My husband attended the company's family outing but usually just sit with few people he's comfortable.

Can you imagine being a coordinator of the event, knowing the whole problem, and trying to make sure your boss and you co-worker's husband a.k.a. your boss's nephew, do not turn the place into a boxing ring? Can you? If you can, I applaud you and may advice my company to hire you as the coordinator.

Jamerson December 19, 2016 at 3:54 pm

So if you don't attend you're somehow ungrateful? Now that's what I call a sour attitude. As someone that has extreme anxiety about these sorts of things I find that highly offensive. And frankly, you sound more than a little self righteous.

Anon November 12, 2008 at 12:23 pm

My suggestion: have something else planned for that day—another party, a concert, a sporting event for your favorite nephew. Go to the party for 30 minutes, have a glass of wine or club soda, then excuse yourself to go to your other event. That way you get the best of both worlds because, unfortunately, it is noticed when you don't go.

Geoff February 10, 2015 at 5:55 pm

Hi Anon ...

Good suggestion, except for the fact that my company expect me to attend is 4 hours travel ~ and my family are not invited!

JRG November 11, 2008 at 8:31 am

Ah but what do you do when the HR person is part of the problem

Anonymous November 10, 2008 at 3:33 pm

I too hate to attend these functions – even more so when they make you into fools acting out scenes, singing and playing games!

I go because ours are always held during work hours and if you don't go you have to use leave time. I also go because I know that the people who organized it worked really hard and I consider them friends (some anyway). Besides, I also agree that it is noticed when you NEVER attend anything, just the same as if you always help! We have a couple of staff that always schedule time off when anything like this is going on and I notice so I am sure that the bosses do too.

I think it would be nice for a change to have a party with spouses that was not during work hours but I doubt that many would show up at all then – honetly!

I swallow my gripes and go – occasionally it is kind of fun!

Anon November 10, 2008 at 11:42 am

My company is privately held and our owner's wife takes great pride in the dramatic preparations for having the Christmas party at a nice hotel with all the bells and whistles. They have assigned seating and I never get to sit with my friends and the entire party is one I endure every year – some years better – some years worse. I would much rather pass on this event altogether, but I could not get out of it without appearing like a spoil sport and a dissenter (I think we are expected to be grateful).

My point here is even though I don't like it one bit, I still show up, put on my plastic smile, clap at all the appropriate times, eat a nice meal and go home. You are always noticed when you make a point of not showing up for company events. I would rather be uncomfortable for a couple of hours than spend all that time and energy dodging an event that could possibly hurt my career or have me appear as less than a team player. This is just my opinion – “suck it up and go” :)

Jocelyn November 10, 2008 at 8:28 am

I have mixed feelings about this question. I do agree that if you are new it is best to go to the function, especially the holiday party. You don't want people to get the wrong impression of you and how dedicated you might be. It is also a good way to meet people, you could always leave early if you do not like the behavior of others after a few cocktails. I do also agree that maybe you talk with the HR department or your manager if that is more comfortable because events are usually quite expensive and if no one is having a good time than they would probably want to know that. Here it is the managers that are responsible to make sure everyone is having a good time and keeping things organized.

If the majority of the group is having a good time and you feel yourself that it is not a good time, than maybe try and go. Make it a goal of your own to meet people and become more outgoing. If you feel like an outcast amongst your coworkers and make no attempt to become included that that is how things will stay. I agree with MannyHats on this one. On both issues, trying to enjoys yourself even if being outgoing is out of your comfort zone, and realizing that you might not like it but your lack of attendance IS noticed and you might be closing doors that you didn't even know could be open. Good Luck

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:14 am

I suppose if you are new it is best not to upset the apple cart. But for some, the workplace and social life are separate worlds, and that works well for many of us.

Its the whole "feeling forced" to attend that irks so many people. If it were truly optional with no silent repercussions (passed over for a raise, etc.) then there would likely be shock to the management at how few people actually would attend these events on their own volition.

ManyHats November 9, 2008 at 3:05 pm

John and Miriam are closest to my advice. No, you don't HAVE to go to company-sponsored outings, but when you don't, it is ... noticed. Sure, it isn't supposed to affect your career track, but bosses cannot help but take the whole "works and plays well with others" dynamic into account when raises and promotions are being considered.

Remember, this isn't high school. You may think they're clique-ish; they may feel YOU are standoff-ish, or not think they have much in common with you. They may be huddled together because that is their comfort zone. Try a little small talk, a little (genuine, please) admiration. Make a point of being pleasant. If your first overtures don't succeed, move on and try again. SMILE. You might chip off some of that ice. You might even end up enjoying yourself.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:20 am

What I feel bothers many of us is the notion that you MUST attend or, like you said, it will be "noticed." And yes, not attending almost invariably means you will never get promoted and/or raise.

I disagree that employee's future in a company should be tied to one single event. It is as if the rest of the year's performance does not count anymore if you don't "play the role."

Geoff February 10, 2015 at 6:03 pm

Hi there ...

I 'm happy with company events as such, but why do you do you think many managers / directors feel the need to make them 'mandatory?'

Geoff

Inn March 30, 2016 at 2:03 am

It is to make sure the place will not look 'empty' and to portray it is a success so the President/Chairman will be 'happy'.

Annually, my branch will held a family outing, 2 days and 1 night, at a resort or club or hotel with each employee getting one room for the night. It's nice if you're single or with a partner, but with kids?! Now that's a different matter. I usually go to company's dinner and stay for an hour or so, but family outing is debatable, to go or not to go.

Miriam November 7, 2008 at 10:19 pm

Angela, I know how you feel, I have felt that way many, many times before. But, I had to suffer some of the events. I did by changing my perspective. I wanted to grow in the company, I wanted to become a manager. So, I placed myself on that path. I took on more responsibilities and I went to company events, stayed a little time, about 90 minutes then leave. That satisfied my obligation and I left and that was it.

So, as I said its up to you, ask yourself, what is your goal within the company.

John A. November 7, 2008 at 3:27 pm

If you are within your first year or two at your company, I would recommend attending the event. New employees who do not attend such events are often seen as antisocial, standoffish, or stuck up. After attending all non-mandatory company functions for the first year or two, don't bother with attending any others. By that time, people at your workplace will know you well and won't think twice that you're not there.

Sue M. November 7, 2008 at 1:48 pm

I agree completely. Life is too short to tolerate an uncomfortable situation.

Ronda H. November 7, 2008 at 1:25 pm

I face this challenge every year at Christmas time. I feel that if I want to participate, and put my personal time on hold to attend a non-mandatory work event, then whatever I want to do should be my choice. I do not attend these events, due to my wanting to be with my family at this time of year, not those whom I work with 8-9 hours a day.

It isn't that I don't like the people I work with, as a matter of fact I like them very much. I would just rather be with my family. It should not have any effect on your job or your standing with in a company, if it isn't mandatory.

Little Bear November 7, 2008 at 1:20 pm

And I thought I was the only one who hated going to company functions. Last year's holiday party was such an unpleasant experience that I promised myself I will never attend another company function and subject myself to that kind of misery again. For the evening get-togethers, I use "family commitments" as an excuse. For the functions that take place during the daytime, I schedule my medical and dental appointments on those days or take a sick or vacation day. Angela, life is too short to waste another minute doing things you'd rather not do or spending time with people who make you uncomfortable.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:06 am

There's more of us than you think, brother! I like your strategy, and will be sure to adopt these points. I have an upcoming company event on a Saturday that I have been planning my way out of the moment I got wind of it.

Mark November 7, 2008 at 1:19 pm

I agree with Linda. See if others feel the same way, and if there are several of you who feel frustrated that is the same old thing every year, talk to the planners to see if it can be changed. We started do to this a few years ago. Instead of a boring Christmas dinner at a restaurant, we now have games at the event. We have played The Newlywed Game, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire (with employees as the contestants, obviously), and this year we had the event at a restaurant that has one of those Murder Mystery Dinners. I was like you, dreading these events. But now I find them to be a lot of fun, since it is new and exciting every year.

Kutty November 7, 2008 at 1:16 pm

A, company outings are often not mandatory. In the 10 years I have been at my firm, I have only attended 2 during the first two years of my tenure. Like JDD, I am here to work, to earn a living. My company is not my life. I prefer to enjoy life outside of the firm, which does not include my coworkers (most of them). Often times, our Winter party conflicts with my home schedule and some times, I am just not interested in fellowshipping the way they do. ou don't have to make up excuses for not going. It is your choice. No one asks if we can get up in the morning; we just do. It is a choice. So, be independent, be confident and don't compromise your choices for the sake of others. Be true to your self.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:04 am

Very good. If it's not your thing, don't do it. More people need to stick to their guns and not be afraid. If the managers wants to place judgement, it's their problem.

After being gas lighted at this past Christmas party (we made all these millions but still needed to fire 1/4 the company 2 months later) I have decided this past year was the last Christmas party I will attend.

Linda November 7, 2008 at 1:12 pm

As someone who works in HR, I would say that your management would like to know that their parties are not very fun for everyone due to the groups that don't tend to want to include everyone in the company. Perhaps they can include some games that encourage everyone to mix and eventually feel more comfortable with one another. Sometimes the managers have to lead by example and bring people together!!

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 4:00 am

That sounds nice coming from someone on the dark side, but the reality is employees begrudgingly go because they feel afraid not to, and even more afraid of being labeled as a complainer. So we grit our teeth and bear it.

I have an alternate proposal: the Christmas non-Party. Bring in sandwiches and send everybody home at 1pm on a Friday with \$100 cash in for each employee.

Dave July 28, 2018 at 10:49 pm

Dear God. You people just don't get it. Playing games with people who you don't like, will never like, and would not associate with under any other circumstance is excruciating. There is nothing stopping all the idiots at work from renting a house together, setting up camera equipment, and launching a reality show of they so desire. Nothing at all.

JDD November 7, 2008 at 12:59 pm

I opted not to go to our Christmas Party last year because while I have to be pleasant and get along with everyone in the office I do not have to tolerate their behavior after work hours. I go to work to work and keep my nose to the grindstone while I am on the time clock. One particular office worker runs her mouth from the moment she walks in the door until she leaves. She does not make any attempt to be nice unless upper management are visible. I do my job, do it well and keep my personal business personal as it should be – I do not share this at work and have no interest in what so-and-so watched on TV last night, where she & her boyfriend went over the weekend, etc. I am not her friend – I am a co-worker. So don't go if you are not comfortable.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 3:57 am

I agree with you on this, and I will adopt these points when the Christmas party comes up this year. Sucks to realize its already only 8 months away. Eight hours with these people is enough!

Lori November 7, 2008 at 12:40 pm

Why are you doing something you hate? It is not mandatory. Don't go.

ew0054 April 28, 2013 at 3:56 am

Because if you don't go, you've basically sent the message to the managers you don't want to advance in the company. That's how they take it, unfortunately, which is flawed. Often the least social people are also the most productive.