

Office fun can lead to increased productivity



Having fun at work creates connections, enhances productivity and stimulates creativity. Yes, you want to maintain professionalism with clients, customers and vendors. By injecting some levity into your workday, however, you just might shake off a sluggish or rigid mindset and bring a fresh perspective to your responsibilities.

While you may not have the power to implement these strategies, as an admin, you're skilled at influencing and persuading, so consider presenting a few of these ideas to the person who can greenlight them and let the games begin.

1. **In one office, whoever finds an error in a deliverable** before it's sent out gets to display a colorful stuffed fish, a trophy signifying the "catch of the day." It always brings a smile to the recipient's face—as does the gift card that comes with it.
2. **Most of us are familiar with dogs used as therapy** in hospitals or convalescent homes. Now there's a trend to "rent" dogs to visit workplaces for a half-hour fix of puppy love.
3. **Did your team reach an important goal?** Have the CEO man the grill for an officewide luncheon. As an added bonus, give the team the rest of the afternoon off.
4. **Have each member of your team bring in a photo of themselves as a young child.** Tack up the photos with numbers assigned to each one. Have everyone fill out a sheet guessing who's who. Winner gets a gift card and bragging rights.
5. **Create a Wow Wall:** Include awards, honors, kudos from clients, and notable company and employee achievements.
6. **Cake decorating contests, chili cook-offs or other competitions** around food create an opportunity for employees to show off their talents and for everyone to gather together and eat—a win-win.
7. **Set a theme and invite everyone** to decorate their cubicles based on it. To ensure participation, make the prize meaningful—a paid day off, generous gift card, etc.

Encouraging creative thinking, enjoying some downtime and enhancing employee connections is smart business.