

# How to use Humor in the Workplace

By Nick Arnette

Want to lighten things up at the office a bit? Here's a list of things you can try that can add a little levity to your workplace.

Remember, because of varied work environments and situations, not everything will work. Pick a couple that you like and give 'em a try.

- \* **Create a humor file.** ☐ When you come across something funny, save it. It can ☐ come in mighty handy at a later time.
- \* **Start meetings with a joke.** ☐ It's a great way to get people's attention and alleviate ☐ any tension that may be in the room.
- \* **Send team members on an office treasure hunt.** ☐ Hide a few goodies and gift cards around the office. Put some clues in office memos without telling anyone about it. You'll quickly find out who is reading your memos and who isn't. It's a fun way of saying, "Please read the office memos. They are valuable."
- \* **Make office memos fun.** ☐ Add at least one funny item to every memo. A funny ☐ quote or cartoon would be perfect.
- \* **Play the baby picture game.** ☐ Have everyone provide a baby photo and try to match ☐ photos with co-workers. Always good for a laugh.
- \* **Initiate theme days.** ☐ You might find your stress level going down and your creativity going up when you are in the theme of the day. Example: '60s day. Have you ever seen a stressed- out flower child?
- \* **Create a humor bulletin board.** ☐ Have a place to post funny pictures or articles. It can be a place to go to when you need a little giggle. Keep it fresh. Don't get caught with old jokes! You can vote on the best joke of the week.
- \* **Close the deal with humor.** ☐ If you're negotiating something, humor is a great way to ☐ break the ice. You get a feel for a person when you see how they respond to a little humor. It gives you a good idea how to handle the situation. If ☐ used properly, humor can be a very ☐ effective negotiating tool How do you think the phrase "you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar" became an adage?

\* **Make up an office scapegoat.** Make up a fictitious name of someone to blame things on when something goes wrong. You can get your message across quickly without accusing anyone directly. Example: “Looks like ‘Nick Dude’ forgot to let everyone know about the meeting on Friday.”

\* **Create a fun waiting area.** If you have an office with a waiting room, leave some fun things for them to read, such as cartoon books, puzzle books, etc. It will put people in a better mood and make your job easier when it’s time for them to see you.

\* **Whistle while you work.** Make the best of mundane tasks. Try to find a way to make them fun. When I was in the mortgage business we’d have end of the month loan processing pizza parties. We played lively music, told lots of jokes, and ate lots of pizza. We had the mindset that we knew this wasn’t fun, but let’s make the best of it and get through it together.

\* **Put a picture of yourself as a kid on your desk.** It’ll remind you of a time in your life when you didn’t take yourself so seriously.

I hope this list gets the wheels turning and you come up with some of your own ideas to bring more humor to your work and home life.

The preceding article is an excerpt from *Me, We and Glee: How to have a great attitude, work as a team and keep your sense of humor*, by Nick Arnette. Known as *The Feel Good Funny Guy*, Arnette is a popular keynote speaker at business meetings throughout the United States and Canada. You can contact Nick Arnette at [www.NickArnette.com](http://www.NickArnette.com), email: [nick@nickarnette.com](mailto:nick@nickarnette.com)

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