

humor that works

PRESENTS

101 Ways to Create Humor at Work

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With all of the **benefits to having humor in the workplace**, every office could stand to have a little more fun. But how do you incorporate humor into the corporate world? It's easier than you might think.

From individual activities such as reading office jokes, to team-building games using improv, to community-wide fun at work through a Talent Show, here are 101 ways to get you started to a happier, healthier, more productive office.

When picking which type of humor to use in the workplace, keep a couple of things in mind:

1. Is the humor right for your message? Is it a good choice for your medium? Your audience? Your purpose?
2. Would you be OK if your use of humor ended up on the frontpage of the New York Times?

If the answer to both questions above is "yes," then humor away my friend.

Communications (Training / Presentations / Email)

Improve engagement and retention with a little variety and uniqueness in your communication. Whether it be a training, a presentation or a standard email, humor can help.



1. **Metaphor-ize:** Explain your next training using an unlikely metaphor, such as why **project management is like getting married**.
2. **Turn Lemons into Lemonade:** Set up a **lemonade stand**; give out lemonade and teach patrons about your service or project.
3. **Get Poetic:** Write **a poem** describing the benefits of what your organization works on.
4. **Be a Conductor:** Warm up the crowd at your next presentation by **conducting a symphony of syllables** to pronounce your subject.
5. **Act Now:** **Act out a skit** in your next presentation to demonstrate a point.
6. **Fill in the Blanks:** Start your next email with a work related **Mad Lib**.
7. **Simon Says Play:** Play **Simon Says** at your next training session.
8. **Embed Meaning:** Be like **Alfred Hitchcock** and find a way to work in a picture of yourself or your kids into every presentation; be creative about it.
9. **Be Magical:** Learn a **simple magic trick** and use it in your next meeting or presentation.
10. **Equate:** Come up with your own **Albert Einstein equation**.
11. **Be a Storyteller:** Start your presentation **with a story** that sets the stage for your topic.
12. **Get Sketchy:** Create a **video sketch** as a way to deploy a message.
13. **Tell a Joke:** Include an intentionally **silly joke** in your next speech. Tie it back to the topic somehow.

Relationships (Team-Building, Networking, 1on1)

When people share emotions, whether positive or negative, they become closer. Use humor as a positive way of building that relationship for your team, as part of your networking, or in one-one interactions.



14. **Improvise:** Play **improv games** as a team.
15. **Mix It Up:** Create work appropriate nicknames for people on your team using **anagrams**.
16. **Be a Pirate:** Figure out everyone's **Pirate name** on your team.
17. **Get Animated:** Create **Simpson's avatars** for all of your team members.
18. **Become Royalty:** Find out **which Disney Princess** you are; watch one of the movies.
19. **Author-ize:** Work with co-workers to **write a book** about your workplace.
20. **Find a Pin-Up:** Make a **themed calendar** full of pictures of people from your department.
21. **Map and Match:** Gather trivia about the people in your team; send out a **mapping and matching quiz** and see who can correctly guess all of the matches.
22. **Be Happy for 60 Minutes:** Organize a **happy hour with your co-workers**.
23. **Picture This:** **Photoshop** pictures of your team onto a picture of super heroes or celebrities.
24. **Get Hip to Facebook:** Create a **Facebook** group for people at your work. Use it to connect socially.
25. **Be Diverse:** Play **Diversity Bingo** at your next team gathering.
26. **Decorate:** Make thematic "**door decs**" for the people on your team.
27. **Have a Team Name:** **Name your row of cubicles** something indicative of the people or work done there; encourage others to do the same.
28. **Praise Others:** Send a co-worker **anonymous praise**.
29. **Recognize:** Send out a quarterly recognition email **recognizing accomplishments** of fellow employees and sharing some humor.
30. **Play Your Heart Out:** Bring in the game **Rock Band** and have a "concert."
31. **Post a Bulletin:** **Put a bulletin board** in a common area; take turns with your co-workers posting different topics on the board.
32. **Get Cartoony:** Start a cartoon board, post some **funny cartoons**.
33. **Showcase Your Kids:** Create a "**look at what my kid made**" mural for employees to share their kids' creations.
34. **Prove You've Got Talent:** Hold a **planned talent show**.
35. **Make It Up:** Hold an **improvised talent show**.
36. **Dine Together:** Go to **lunch with someone** new each day for a week.
37. **Eat, Greet, Meet:** Start a **lunch bunch**.
38. **Get Lucky:** Organize a **pot luck lunch** with people in your office.
39. **Be Gross:** Hold a "**grossest foods**" **dessert party**.
40. **Read and Discuss:** Start a business (or fiction) **book club** at work.
41. **Exchange:** Organize a **book or DVD exchange** between co-workers.
42. **Be a Freshmaker:** Find a mentor; give him/her **Mentos for mentoring**.
43. **Write That Down:** Start a blog or **newsletter** on a topic you have passion for.
44. **Play Halloween:** Set out a bowl of **candy** at your cube; allow people to have a piece only after they tell you a story or make you laugh.
45. **Piece It Together:** Put out a **jigsaw puzzle** in the breakroom for people to work on during a break.
46. **Attract the Opposite:** Buy **refrigerator poetry magnets** for the lunchroom.
47. **Say Thank You:** Send a **thank you note** for something someone did at least once a week.



Meetings (1on1, Group, Site-Wide)

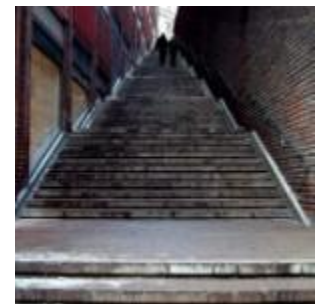
Survive the drain of meetings by incorporating some humor into the mix. Humor has been shown to increase creativity and productivity, so you'll not only have a better meeting, you'll have better results.



- 48. Play a Song:** Learn “**Mary Had A Little Lamb**” on touch tone phones; play it while waiting for a phone conference to start.
- 49. Share What You Know:** Present a tip/trick like the old “**The More You Know**” commercials.
- 50. Learn the Language:** If you work internationally, **learn a few words and phrases of a language** of one of your co-workers; surprise them with it in your next meeting.
- 51. Pass Notes:** **Pass a note** in a meeting like you did in grade school; make it semi-work related.
- 52. Lie:** Play **two truths and a lie** during introductions at your next meeting.
- 53. Give Back:** Use your next leadership team meeting to **volunteer somewhere** in your community.
- 54. Unleash Your Inner Village Person:** Perform **YMCA** at your next community meeting.
- 55. Have a Ball:** Get a **stress ball**; toss it back and forth when talking in meetings.
- 56. Take Note:** Take **meeting minutes**; include fun/interesting/random thoughts you have while in the meeting.
- 57. Read the Not News:** Find a story on **Fark.com** to share at the beginning or end of your meeting.

The Work (Motivation, Productivity)

Kick things into higher gear with some motivational tweaks to your every day work and see your productivity shoot through the roof. Humor isn't just a great way to help other people, it's a great way to help yourself work better as well.



- 58. Be Inspired:** Start off each day by watching an **inspirational video**.
- 59. Lock-in Inspiration:** Create **easy-to-remember, hard-to-hack, inspirational passwords**.
- 60. Pump It Up:** Get energized for the day by listening to some of your **favorite songs** on your commute to work.
- 61. Rock It Out:** Create a **playlist of fast paced rock** music or equivalent; listen to it while doing less exciting work.
- 62. Listen Closely:** **Listen to classical music** when you are required to concentrate on one task.
- 63. Address Yourself:** **Write a letter to yourself** describing where you want to be in 3/6/12 months; include a joke.
- 64. Motivate:** Get a **motivational poster**.
- 65. Laugh-tivate:** Get a **de-motivational poster**.
- 66. Picture the Good Stuff:** Get a **digital picture frame** and fill it with pictures of your friends and family.
- 67. Provide Some Background:** Change your **desktop background** to something motivational.
- 68. Lead with Quotes:** Include **leadership quotes** in your email signature.
- 69. Do Some Branding:** **Create a logo** and theme music for one of your projects; use it whenever you do status updates or send out emails.
- 70. Ask Questions:** Include an off-the-wall question in your next survey, such as “**How much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?**”
- 71. Know What's Going On:** Schedule 30 minutes on your calendar every week to read about **what's happening in your industry**.
- 72. Have F.U.N.:** Name your next project something that has a **silly hidden acronym**.

Strategic Disengagement (Stress Relief, Health, Fun)

Break up the workday with physical activity, laughter, or meditation to help reduce stress, improve blood flow and even burn calories. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, decreases his productivity and hampers his health, so don't be Jack.



73. **Relax and Recharge:** Spend 15 minutes a day relaxing and recharging at **recess**.
74. **Walk around:** Start a **walking group** at work; map out a route through the office that has you walking for at least 10 minutes.
75. **Be Hilarious:** Hold a **hula hoop** contest.
76. **Sleep:** Take a **nap at work**.
77. **Breathe:** Take 10 **deep breaths** every hour.
78. **Smell the Roses:** **Take a break** to take in your surroundings.
79. **Bust a Move:** **Dance** in the elevator.
80. **Bust a Move Together:** Better yet, have a 3pm **dance party**.
81. **Take a Break:** Install software like **InstantBoss** to make sure you take regular breaks throughout the day.
82. **Take Aim:** Post up a **dart board**; have a tournament.
83. **Build Some Fun:** Make a **pen bow and arrow**.
84. **Slink Around:** Get a **slinky**; play with it quietly while talking on the phone.
85. **Think Outside the Cube:** Learn to solve a **Rubik's cube**; share it with others.
86. **Score a Touchdown:** Play **paper football** while waiting for a meeting to start.
87. **Hit the Deck:** Create a **personalized deck of cards** for your work; play "Go Fish" with them.
88. **Tell the Future:** Build a "**Paper Fortune Teller**" using work lingo.
89. **Master the Paper Arts:** Learn to make an **origami crane**; make one while you are on a conference call.
90. **Fly Around:** Make **paper airplanes** with some of your cubicle mates; see whose can fly the farthest.
91. **Look at Things Differently:** Get a **Magic Eye book** for your cubicle; share it with people when they come by.
92. **Share Some XOXO's:** Play **tic tac toe** with a co-worker.
93. **Eavesdrop:** Read **Overheard In the Office**; add your own entry.
94. **Get Type-Cast:** Play a game and **get better at typing**.
95. **Give a Makeover:** Give your boss an **online makeover**, even if your boss is a man.
96. **Eat and Be Merry:** Have a "laugh lunch" and watch clips from **The Office**.
97. **Tweet Something:** Express yourself in 140 characters or less through **microblogging**.
98. **Say the Word:** Check out **Merriam-Webster's word of the day**; see if you can naturally work it into a conversation.
99. **Live and Laugh:** Try to **laugh 100 times in a day**; it doesn't matter at what.
100. **Smile:** That's it, just **Smile**.
101. **Be Original:** Brainstorm your own unique way of bringing humor to work.

*For more on humor in the workplace,
check out <http://www.humorthatworks.com/>*