



COMMUNICATION



1. Turn on webcams when working remotely.
2. Say “Hello” in a different language each time you answer the phone.¹
3. Start your emails with a unique salutation, e.g. “Hello Fellow Humans.”
4. Hide a message in your email using the first letter of each paragraph.²
5. Emphasize key points in training by using interactive exercises.
6. Lead an entire presentation without using PowerPoint at all.
7. Lessen confusion and explain a topic as if the learner was 5 years old.³
8. Offer “fill in the blank” worksheets for people to use during training.⁴
9. If using footnotes, add a few for humor.⁵
10. Include a joke in the fineprint of a disclaimer.

RELATIONSHIPS



11. Wear name badges in large groups. Include fun personal facts on them.
12. Play 2 Truths and a Lie at your next meeting.⁶
13. Host a Speed Networking event to meet people.⁷
14. Set out a bowl of candy on your desk; share it with people who stop by.
15. Use your next team-building event to give back to the community.
16. Celebrate Holidays six months from their actual date, e.g. “Halloween in April.”
17. Include Humor Awards in your next off-site.⁸
18. When starting a new project, create nicknames for each team member.
19. Give people a high five when you pass them in the hallway.
20. Start a slow clap to celebrate a peer’s success.

PROBLEM-SOLVING



21. Find (or create) an image to represent the problem you are trying to solve.
22. Translate your problem statement into a different language and back again.
23. Watch comedy clips before brainstorming.⁹
24. Ask yourself, “What would X do” where X = a role model of yours.¹⁰
25. Flip a coin. Notice what you secretly hope is the result of the coin-flip.
26. Turn stopping a project into a celebration.
27. Create a “Bat Signal” for users to use when they need support.
28. Collect Autographs of team-members at the end of projects.
29. Track interesting stats from your project to include in your review.¹¹
30. Include fun questions in your post-project survey.

EXECUTION



31. Create a TO DON’T list of tasks you won’t do.
32. Try the Pomodoro Technique and work in increments of 25/5.¹²
33. Change your desktop background to a motivational picture.
34. Have “Standing Only” meetings.¹³
35. Unplug your laptop and only work till it shuts off.
36. Teach someone a skill you’re trying to learn.¹⁴
37. When writing an email, write with a British accent in your noggin.
38. Play “Mary Had a Little Lamb” on your touch-tone phone while waiting for a call to start.¹⁵
39. Send out meeting invites as if they were invitations to a rockin’ party.
40. After a meeting, have people “shoot” trash into the recycling bin.

STRATEGIC DISENGAGEMENT



41. Try to get outside for at least 10 minutes of sunlight each day.¹⁶
42. Turn on some music and have a 3pm dance party.
43. Hold “dramatic readings” in the office of items like corporate memos.
44. Listen to stand-up comedy as a way to decompress after work.
45. Sit on the front of your chair to improve posture.
46. Play toss with a peer. If you don’t have a real ball, use an imaginary one.
47. Get inspired by watching a video on TED.com.
48. Exercise the brain by doing tasks with your non-dominant hand.¹⁷
49. Play Tic Tac Toe or another fun game with a co-worker.
50. Smile... That’s it, just smile.¹⁸ 😊





FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Here are some examples to get started: Hola (Spanish), Salut (French), Kumusta (Filipino), Shacha (Vulcan).
- 2 Did you notice the message using the first letters of #s 4-8?
- 3 Visit reddit.com/r/explainlikeimfive for inspiration.
- 4 Worksheets have been shown to improve retention of information.*
- 5 A hilarious guy named Andrew Tarvin came up with this.
- 6 It's a simple game. Each person takes a turn stating three things about themselves. 2 of the things are true, 1 is a lie. It's up to everyone else to try to guess which one is the lie.
- 7 Speed Networking is like Speed Dating except the goal is to make business introductions, not romantic ones.
- 8 You can include things like "Best Email" or create custom categories such as "Most Likely to Say 'Leverage.'"
- 9 Watching humorous videos before problem-solving has been shown to increase creativity.*
- 10 Some good people to consider: Lincoln, Buffet, Spider-Man
- 11 Some of my favorite stats: # of emails sent, # of meetings, time spent in each phase, # of curse words provoked by project.
- 12 Check out pomodorotechnique.com for more information.
- 13 No sitting is allowed. If you want even shorter meetings, try "Dancing Only" meetings.
- 14 While the "10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear..." statistic has been debunked, I still find teaching someone else helpful.*
- 15 The "notes" are: 6 5 4 5 6 6 6 5 5 5 6 8 8 / 6 5 4 5 6 6 6 6 5 5 6 5 4
- 16 Too much sun is bad for you, but getting 10 minutes a day increases your Vitamin D and confirms you are not a vampire.*
- 17 Research suggests exercises like this may help reduce Alzheimers.*
- 18 Studies show that simply smiling can reduce stress.

*For sources, check out htww.co/50ways.



Humor That Works: **501 Ways to Use Humor** to Beat Stress, Increase Productivity, and Have Fun at Work

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