

Laughter - Just What the Doctor Ordered

With laughter you'll see results ~ a more productive work environment and a happier, healthier you.

Laughter - it's one guaranteed way to feel better instantly. Try it the next time you feel down. Just laugh at yourself. You might feel a little silly but you probably won't be worrying. You may not think that humor and work can mix, but laughter is one of the best and healthiest creative stimulants around.

A dose of creativity

Think about your office and envision everyone rolling with laughter. This is not a very realistic picture. Your job requires you to be responsible and serious. Take a step back and you'll probably realize that there is a lot of humor in what goes on at your office. That's why humor is an effective way to help diffuse job stress. Studies at Cornell University show that exposure to humor actually enhances creative problem-solving ability and allows individuals to better see the consequences of their decisions.

The medical Rx

Comedy is indeed a cure-all. Your body loves laughter. The action of laughing itself actually increases a virus fighter in your body. This suggests that the more humor you have in your life, the better able you will be to fight off infection. The physical benefits of laughter are great. First, your internal organs get a workout. Then your muscles relax and your blood pressure decreases below pre-laughter levels. By laughing, you may actually be decreasing your risk of heart attack.

Taking the prescription to the office

If you can't conjure up ways to sneak humor into your workplace, here are a few suggestions:

- Use your imagination when faced with a particularly daunting task. Pretend your assignment is the plot of a wacky TV sitcom how would your favorite character find a way out?
- Keep a file of cartoons or funny quotes with personal meaning to you. Post them around the office when you need a comic boost.
- Don't take yourself so seriously. Acknowledge your faults in a humorous way and you'll soon be laughing instead of stressing.

So the next time you're feeling tense at the office, try a little humor. You'll be sure to see results-a more productive work environment and a happier, healthier you.