

Office Christmas Party – 10 Tips to Help Make It a Success!

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It is hard to believe we are knee-deep into the holiday season! And with the holiday season comes the annual Office Christmas party. Many organizations use this festive time of year to reward employees for all of their hard work and to reinforce efforts to maintain an engaged workforce.

Most of us have been to an office Christmas party that, well, got a bit out of control. The end result was unproductive gossip, some red-faced employees, and an overall feel of, just yuk!

Employees look forward to this annual event because it allows them an opportunity to hang with coworkers and enjoy some good food, fellowship, and sometimes gifts.

10 Tips to Help Make the Office Christmas Party A Success!

1. Budget for The Party

Parties can be costly. Be diligent to be responsible with organizational resources by allocating money for this special event. Ensure that there is ample money available for Christmas office party expenses in your annual budgeting process. Carve out money to cover the cost of things like venue, food, drinks, invitations, activities, decorations, gifts, and transportation.

2. Ensure Good Planning

The foundation for any successful event is planning. Find some employees who enjoy organizing events and delegate the responsibility to them. A planning team can muster up some excitement and get employees excited about the annual party.

How to plan an office Christmas party!

Provide a structure for the event so they know where to focus their energies. For example, ask them to come up with an event theme, activities, prizes, food selection, venue, and decorations. Don't forget to take pandemic-related precautions by providing plenty of hand sanitizer, face masks, and sanitation measures for food.

3. Provide Formal Invitations

Everyone enjoys getting that invitation in the mail or the email alert that you received an online invitation. Have your designer create something fun that will help to get employees excited about the gathering. If you don't have a designer, use available tools like **Canva!** Send the invitations out in ample time to ensure everyone gets the event on their calendar.

4. Include Family

There are several advantages to including an employee's family at the annual Christmas party.

- First, it will make spouses and significant others feel like they are included. This simple gesture not only speaks to family members but ensures employees feel valued.
- Secondly, the mere presence of family members will help to minimize those inappropriate co-worker relationships.

Keep the party family-friendly to ensure the party does not ruin a family's holiday season by a blow-up over misguided coworker flirting.

5. Choose the Perfect Venue

The old saying location, location, location – is so true. Think about the venue you want to use for your party and choose it carefully. Make sure it provides the vibe, resources, and location that will make your party a success. For instance, a venue in the hip part of town that has exposure to other Christmas festivities will surely set the tone and atmosphere for your party.

6. Incorporate Fun Activities

Keep the party moving by having planned activities. You probably won't get 100% participation but try to get the outgoing personalities involved in playing games, doing scavenger hunts, or participating in cookie decorating. I still laugh at some fun activities we have done at Christmas parties. Give employees something to remember by providing fun, interactive activities.

7. Set Limits on Alcohol

If you choose to provide alcohol, do so wisely and enforce a defined limit. There are many ways you can do this so be creative. Figure out how to provide the ice breaker results of a cocktail – without the embarrassing result of an employee who does not recognize their own alcohol consumption limits.

8. Provide Transportation

If you do provide alcohol at your party, you want to make sure that employees arrive home safely. Rent a bus or use shared ride services to help get employees where they need to go. You don't want the nightmare of an employee accident following a party you sponsored. In addition, you may be liable for any employee who drives while under the influence and hurts themselves or someone else.

9. Get Personal with Gifts

It's interesting when you look at research on rewarding employees that there is data that suggests that what one employee really appreciates the next one may not be as thrilled. The trick is to find the sweet spot for each employee and provide a gift that speaks to their own likes and interests.

For instance, some employees may appreciate a paid day off to go Christmas shopping, another might prefer a gift card to their favorite store, while someone else would love the latest video game. Get to know your employees so you can give them a gift that they really love!

10. Thank Them

At the end of the day, the annual Christmas party is about thanking employees for all that they do to make your business successful.

Take a few minutes out of the evening and simply say thank you from the bottom of your heart. Give a brief recap of the year and remind them of all the great things they did to make your business the success that it is. The annual Christmas party should be an event that employees look forward to year after year.

Take the time to plan and facilitate an event that your staff appreciates and you might be surprised at the team building and engagement that results from all of your efforts!