

# THE MODERN RULES FOR USING HUMOR AS A LEADERSHIP TOOL



What qualities do you look for in a leader? You'd probably expect them to be powerful, charismatic, and decisive. However, you might overlook the value of being funny.

**Research shows that humor has many benefits in the workplace**, including drawing team members closer together, reducing stress, and increasing productivity.

The truth is most employees need a little cheering up. While the average four-year-old laughs about 300 times a day, they're down to three chuckles by the time they turn 40.

On the other hand, there are limits. You know you've gone too far if you make someone cry or you choose Michael Scott for your role model.

**Effective leaders know how to use humor to their advantage.** Join their ranks by studying these tips for remaining professional while you tap into your funny side.

## The Benefits of Leading with Humor:

1. **Enhance job performance.** Laughter can be profitable because it triggers brain chemicals that help you to concentrate and think creatively. *A study by the University of Warwick found that introducing comedy into the workday increased productivity by 12%.*
2. **Boost your reputation.** Other research has found that leaders who use humor are viewed as being more competent and credible, and they receive higher ratings from their subordinates. Lightening up could help you stand out.
3. **Reduce stress.** Heavy workloads are one of the major reasons job stress has increased steadily in recent decades. Having opportunities to relax makes it easier to accomplish more.
4. **Strengthen relationships.** Humor is often a social activity. You learn things about your coworkers that may not be listed on their resume, and you create happy memories that deepen your bonds.

5. **Protect your health.** There are also many benefits for your physical and mental wellbeing. For example, humor can help relieve pain, boost your immune system, and lessen depression and anxiety.

## Tips for Using Humor at Work:

1. **Stay safe.** Many standup comedians try to be controversial, but you need to watch out for your job security. **Steer clear of sensitive topics like politics, religion, and any kind of stereotypes.**
2. **Pace yourself.** Surprise your colleagues with a witty remark now and then. If you joke around from sunup to quitting time, it will be difficult for them to take you seriously when they need to.
3. **Consider your audience.** Different industries and companies have their own cultures. Pay attention to how others react in order to gauge whether you're amusing them or offending them.
4. **Liven up meetings.** Zoom fatigue is a real thing. Make your presentations more memorable by setting them to music or throwing in a few pop culture references.
5. **Share content.** You can send your team entertaining video clips and news stories, even on busy days. It only takes a few minutes to search for content about penguins and cheese rolling.
6. **Tell stories. Humor can be especially meaningful when you tie it into an appropriate narrative.** Strengthen your connection by revealing something about your personal life. Find a case study that backs up your point.
7. **Play games.** Make office tasks more like your favorite video game by awarding points and rewards for submitting your timesheets when they're due. Keep a jigsaw puzzle in the break room for anyone to work on when they're passing through for a cup of coffee.
8. **Stage events.** Encourage friendly competition with your own office Olympics. Host a movie night with popcorn and retro candy.

As a leader, you can make your team laugh without getting into trouble with the HR department. You'll be making your employees happier and your business more successful.