

How To Get Through Your Work Xmas Party Without Making A Royal Ass Of Yourself



Ahhhh, Christmas work parties. A time of trying to have fun while also being acutely aware that you should not be too drunk or too anything else that will make you immediately need to change careers.

Now, sure, it seems simple to just not get drunk and/or naked. That should be enough, right? But what about those workplaces where everyone else is getting loose? And what if the dress-up theme is very open to getting a little risqué and you have a supremely casual office?

“Year after year I observe people making the same mistakes at times with devastating consequences for their reputation. The truth is that staying out of trouble isn’t hard, it just takes a bit of self-control,” says Melbourne HR expert **Karen Gately**, founder of [Corporate Dojo](#).

No matter what is happening around you, she has eight hard and fast rules to get through a work party with your professional reputation intact.



welcome to exclusively The Office memes

1. There's no such thing as fashionably late

"Don't panic if you're running a little late, but appreciate also that turning up well into the event is rude and likely to be frowned upon," Karen says. "Arriving during the speeches to a meal that has gone cold waiting for you will probably be noticed. Treat your hosts with respect and have the courtesy to let them know if you will be late".

2. Stay long enough to be appropes

Personally I love our work Xmas party, but not everyone is so lucky. Even if you hate your colleagues though, you'll need to stay an appropriate amount of time.

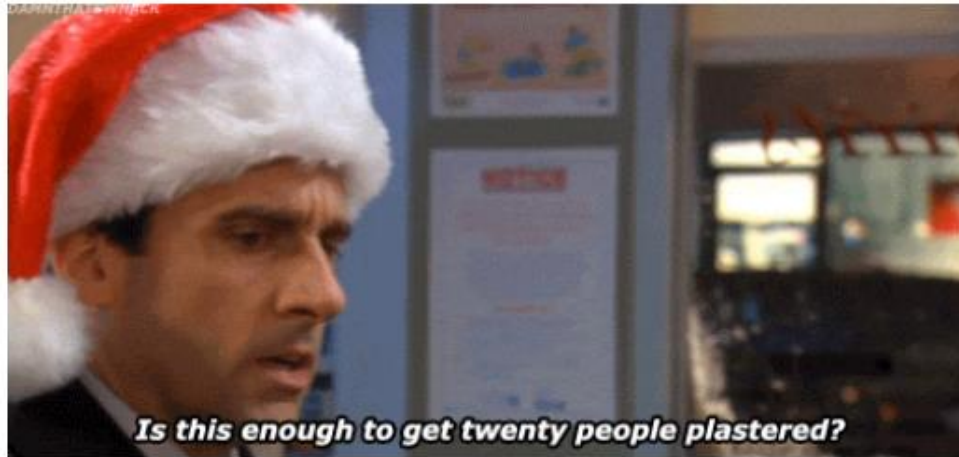
"It's unlikely to go down well if you leave too early," suggests Karen. "Spend enough time to demonstrate appreciation for the effort that has been made".

"Don't underestimate the extent to which your ability to be a team player is judged by your efforts to mingle and spend time with your colleagues."

3. Never ever get drunk

You can have a few, but Karen believes you should never get drunk at work events – even if your coworkers are.

“Feel free to have a few drinks with your colleagues if that’s your preference, just make sure you remain in control of your behaviour. No matter how well you think you handle alcohol, the simple truth is when intoxicated you are entirely more likely to behave in ways you will later regret.”



4. In fact, play everything safe

“There is a time and place for everything,” Karen explains. “Being sexually overt is unlikely to impress many. Unwelcome advances, public declarations of lust and ‘getting it on’ on the dance floor are unlikely to earn you respect”.

In fact, you’re better off avoiding all topics that could end up being a bit ‘charged’. There’s a time and a place for talk about politics and religion – the work party is not it.

5. Be subtle about stuffing your face

I cannot tell you the number of parties, work and social, at which I’ve made friends simply because I spend too much time at the food table. So obviously I feel this one deeply. Use a little self-control and discretion though, you [don’t want to be this person](#).

Karen reckons gluttony is unlikely to win you any favours. She also says to just behave around the food in general.

“Eating with your hands (unless it’s that kind of meal), leaping on the last piece of cake or burping after a swig of beer are all likely to have people questioning your maturity.”

6. Look happy to be there

No matter what you actually think of their choice to host the work party deep in the sewers, put a smile on. Well ok, that's extreme, you can probably protest if there's actually poop. But otherwise stay happy and polite.

"If you are unhappy with the choice of event, venue or catering, keep your thoughts to yourself," says Karen. "Broadcasting disapproval and failing to be grateful is unlikely to be well received from the people organizing the event and the people they work for".



7. Keep your outfit chill

If there's a theme and you know your workplace gets into it (like the PTV office) then for sure get into it. However, even then, you still want to be a little cautious of anything offensive. Or like, turning up naked.

"Avoid being provocative – the work Christmas party isn't the ideal time to make a statement with your clothes," recommends Karen. "The outfit you choose reflects not only your fashion sense but also your judgment skills. Assess what is culturally appropriate for your organisation and dress accordingly. It's never appropriate to take your clothes off."

8. Avoid drama at all costs

I know your deskmate Bob keeps slurping in your ear and Jane keeps tattling to the boss about you. The work party is not the place to address any of it.

"If you have a problem with a colleague hold your tongue and deal with it at a more appropriate time," Kaen says. "It's beyond poor form to take up issues while people are trying to relax and celebrate".

"As tempting as it may be, the Christmas party is not a good time to deliver constructive feedback to your boss either. Doing it drunk can have disastrous ramifications for your career come Monday morning."



Hopefully, this is all fairly obvious to most of you, but you never know who needs to see the rules written down. Happy work Christmas, fellow workers!