

12 Workplace Humor Keys: Preventing an "Ho-Ho!" from Becoming an "Oh-No!"

1. Tone

Benevolent or punitive; caring or sarcastic

2. Direction

Towards self, or towards others

3. Message

Negative or divisive; pro-team or anti-company

4. Preparation

Spontaneous, (what pops into one's head) or deliberative (considering others)

5. Timing

When things are raw or fresh, or "after the dust has settled"

6. Venue

At an Executive Board Meeting, in the cafeteria; to the boss, or with peers?

7. Delivery

Loud or soft; physical or verbal

8. Content

Laughing at the human condition ("Dilbertesque") or targeting ethnic, racial or sexual groups

9. Power

The greater the humorist's power, the greater the risk that it can be harmful or unwelcomed, and the greater the "victim's" fear of giving honest feedback

10. Seriousness

The more serious the content or offense, the greater the need to prevent or stop the behavior.

11. Frequency

The more frequent a behavior in the face of uncertain or unwelcomed feedback, the more probable it is that the behavior is offensive and unprofessional.

12. Trust

The track record of previous positive or negative mutual experiences can cause one person to appreciate and enjoy the very behavior that another may find

offensive and intimidating

***Leveraging Diversity to Advance
Individual and Organizational Excellence***

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