



December 2020 Update

Welcome to this month's update – with some top tips on a virtual office Christmas party.

What will the office Christmas party look like this year – some top tips

Employers are in a quandary when thinking how to award their staff in the absence of the Christmas party in 2020. With the announcement of the new tiers, continued working from home and social distancing, this year's celebrations will need a little more creative thought.

A Christmas party is a time to take time out of work to unwind, relax, celebrate the year, mingle and get to know your fellow work colleagues a little more. But even with restrictions in place, that doesn't mean you can't come up with some new ideas for ways to thank, reward and engage with your staff, albeit virtually?

Remember it has to be something all staff want to be involved in

Whilst many people have enjoyed working from home, others have missed the daily interaction with work colleagues, teams and friends. So, whatever you come up with it needs to be fun and enjoyable for everyone. It also needs to be easy for all staff, at whatever level to join in and feel valued.

Of course, you could simply send everyone a gift and host a video chat, but that may not impress all your hard-working employees who may be a little sick of sitting at their desks and having yet another Zoom call. With a little creative thought, by stretching your imagination, hopefully you can also deliver the perfect virtual Christmas event.

Below are some top tips to help you plan the event.

1. Consider a theme

Every great event has a theme, this could just be a festive one, i.e. Christmas jumpers, winter wonderland, masked ball, Christmas movies and secret Santa. Or you could ditch the traditional themes and go for something a bit different – awards night, carol karaoke, murder mystery etc. You know your staff and what they may enjoy.

2. Team or individual activities

Decide whether you want employees to collaborate and help each other or whether you want people to do things themselves. If you choose to put people in teams, they may have better quality conversations and be more sociable. This will help with team building and the development of vital communication skills, particularly if you have some employees who are intimidated at speaking on a large Zoom type chat.

3. Get people moving and doing

No one wants to sit at their desk for a sociable event. It is good to encourage people to move and perhaps do something. There is a large selection of DIY kits that you could send out in advance, everything from Christmas cake or hat decorating packs, angel making and cocktail masterclasses. By making it into a competition, it will enable employees to show off their work as they pit their skills against those of their work colleagues. Although be careful this does not alienate those who are not competitive.

4. Break the boundaries

A quiz or a drinks party are not new or exciting. Look at ways to break the mould and do something that you've never done before. There are plenty of options to choose. Everything from a virtual wine tasting to Christmas bingo and Christmas song charades, virtual scavenger hunt to guess the gift.

5. Party etiquette

Send out timely personalised invites with clear start and end timings. As it will most likely be online, it doesn't need to last hours, it will be more memorable if it's short and sweet. Make sure it is during work time and has a clear end for those who want to head off.

Whatever you do to bring the Christmas spirit to your employees, try and be a little more creative, remembering the different blend of your staffs' personalities on what you think they would like best. It might even be worth asking them for suggestions.

Employers: Make sure you do it well as a half attempt at a virtual gathering will be worse than not doing anything at all.

Contact us: We are here to assist with Employment Law and HR advice as needed.



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