

Post Holiday Fizzle - Putting the Sizzle Back in Your Workplace

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During the winter our culture celebrates, acknowledges and participates in dozens of holidays, and religious, political or cultural events. In addition, we experience the whole range of life events such as births, birthdays, illness, death, marriage and a host of other personal rituals, celebrations, remembrances or grieving. Needless to say, our plates are full.

By the time January 2nd arrives, many feel a strong urge to create order in their life (or take a very long nap). Whether happy, sad, depressing, exciting or anxious the stress symptoms brought on at this time of year can linger. Those “symptoms” include behaviors such as: lost sense of direction, aimless wondering, redundant activities, sluggish performance, daydreaming, resolution distraction, absenteeism, tardiness, zoning out and so on.

Emotions lead to the behaviors that create post holiday fizzle and can have a devastating affect on you, your employees and the company. As a result you may notice a negative impact on performance, productivity and profits. In addition, when new patterns of behavior begin, they can set the tone for a long time to come and even initiate a new and unwelcome cultural environment.

So, what can you do to put the sizzle back into your workforce?

Use these 7 Simple Sizzle Steps

1. **Welcome in the New Year and acknowledge** the effects of this jam-packed season on individual energy levels. It is amazing how effective simply “naming the elephant in the room” can be in clearing unwanted behaviors. It serves as a simple wake-up call and brings the team together to support each other in harnessing up new, more focused and invigorating energy.
2. Provide an opportunity (or two) for people to **share thoughts and feelings** about the season (perhaps an extended pizza lunch break). We have a lot on our minds this time of year. Some of it fun and wonderful. Some of it not. Until we can vent a little or share our happiness it can be hard to fully focus. Be explicit, offer a post-holidays “networking” event where folks have time to chat with each other about the most recent happenings in their life. Put them together and let it happen. Simple.
3. **Re-establish work related routines** immediately. Do you have regular staff meetings? Have you let those critical one-on-one supervisory meetings slide off the schedule? What other routine happenings need to be revitalized? Also, don’t wait to remove holiday decorations and now is a great time to update the bulletin board, get out a fresh newsletter. You get the idea.
4. Provide a **recap of accomplishments and successes** of the past 6 to 12 months. Even if you had an end of the year review, take some time to remind everyone of the great work that has been done. This work happened when we were not distracted by the holiday season. It is a subtle reminder of the benefits of getting back to “normal”.
5. **Outline the company goals** for the next 3 to 6 months. So, now we look ahead. We assess where we are going and what our focus will be. This can be a great set-

up for those one-on-one supervisory meetings where you can talk about how each individual's roles and responsibilities support of the company's goals. Keep it simple, clear and succinct to start with.

6. **Model** positive and optimistic behaviors. Perhaps this season has produced a bit of overwhelm in you as well as your staff. As their fearless leader, you know you set the mood for your business environment. There is a saying, "Fake it til' you make it" so even if you are feeling a little sluggish yourself, pretend you are full of energy and ready to make things happen. Smile, greet, acknowledge, be energetic, generate ideas, invite conversations, and let your greatest strengths, talents and gifts shine like a neon light. Believe me this behavior is infectious. Before you know it, everyone is doing it and really feeling it (including you).
7. **Get excited** about new ideas and individual and team performance. Even the smallest idea or positive action when genuinely acknowledged will provide compounded fuel to energize more. Let nothing pass you by. It all matters!

Environment triggers in the workplace that are managed early will prevent year round the dreaded and devastating *negative-work-environment-syndrome*. Don't let it happen to you. Use these 7 Simple Sizzle Steps starting today.