

CORPORATED MANAGEMENT / HUMAN RESOURCES

PAPER: THE STAR (STARCLASSIFIEDS)

DATE: 20 DECEMBER 2012

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THE company Christmas party is a great annual event and the ideal opportunity for colleagues to relax, have some fun and get to know one another outside the work environment.

The people you know and work with can have totally different personas after work hours.

However, without the constraints of the office and when alcohol flows freely, it is very easy for things to quickly get out of hand, with people saying and doing things they would never normally do.

Careers have been ruined by inappropriate behaviour at an office party, so here are a few tips to make sure both your reputation and career prospects are still intact after the festive season is over.

1 Eat something beforehand

If the Christmas party does not include food, make sure you eat something before you arrive.

Avoid salty or greasy food, as this will just make you want to drink more. Try to eat something that is more protein-rich with some slow-digesting carbohydrates to see you through the evening.

Drinking on an empty stomach can lead to the embarrassment of passing out, dancing on the tables or being sick by 9pm.

2 Pace yourself

Alternate between alcohol and water or soft drinks, or hold off altogether until after you have eaten (if a Christmas meal is going to be served at the party).

Know your limits and when to stop — it will save you a lot of embarrassment later on. If you have willpower, opt for not drinking altogether.

3 Keep work-related chat to a minimum

Although your company and the work you do is the common element that binds you all, try to avoid taking work issues to the party with you.

The Christmas event is your chance to

Surviving the office Christmas party

Don't let bad behaviour at your company party ruin your career.



The office party is a business function, so make it a career-building experience. — AP

switch off from it, so relax and enjoy some other topics of conversation.

4 Avoid full disclosure

If there is a co-worker whom you really want to let rip at, or even one you have been

flirting with all year, a few drinks may loosen your tongue.

So, if possible, try to keep contact light and friendly and stop there.

You do not want to become the subject of office gossip or say goodbye to your chances

of that promotion. This leads to the next point, which is ...

5 Mingle

Make a point of speaking to colleagues you do not often get to engage with. This can be fun and interesting and allows you to network and find out the outside interests of co-workers whom you do not usually socialise with.

6 Plan your exit

Organising a taxi or a lift home will pay dividends. It means you will end up at home, in your own bed.

By arranging a specific time, you might avoid those time-filling drinking games that can destroy reputations very quickly.

Remember that how you behave at the office party will help distinguish you among your colleagues and it is up to you whether this will be a positive or negative opinion.

Consider the tips above and use common sense.

Understand, above all, that the office party is a business function, so ensure that you send the right message and make it a career-building, rather than a career-destroying, experience. — Singapore Straits Times/Asia News Network.

■ ARTICLE by Ben Tullett.