



5 TIPS TO A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY SEASON

"The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today." -- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

With December upon us, we have officially entered another holiday season filled with expectations of nothing but picture-perfect moments of joy and togetherness. But outside of twinkle lights, often the reality is busy lineups, stacks of paperwork, tight deadlines and well, stress. To ease these seasonal challenges, in this month's InfoPays, we are sharing 5 tips on how to minimize or eliminate holiday stress:

1. Schedule proper coverage.

This is one of the most important times of the year for business, especially in sectors like retail, manufacturing, logistics. It is not easy to predict demand, but with some planning and preparation (often as early as summer or fall!) you can reliably gauge the level of staff you may need. Looking at past trends is usually a good place to start. Hiring seasonal staff or extending the work hours are common ways to ensure proper coverage. Whatever approach you choose, make sure your employees are engaged and can stay motivated through the year-end (for example, closing off a major project at the end of the year can provide a sense of purpose from rallying together towards a common goal).

2. Take personal time off.

That being said, be wary of the cumulative effects of overwork leading to long-term burnout. Employees may put in the extra mile to help their company thrive during the holiday season, but that should not lead to burnout. It should be the priority in every business for employees to take the much needed time to refuel and recharge. As research points out repeatedly, the payout is a more productive workforce long term.

3. Improve your time management.

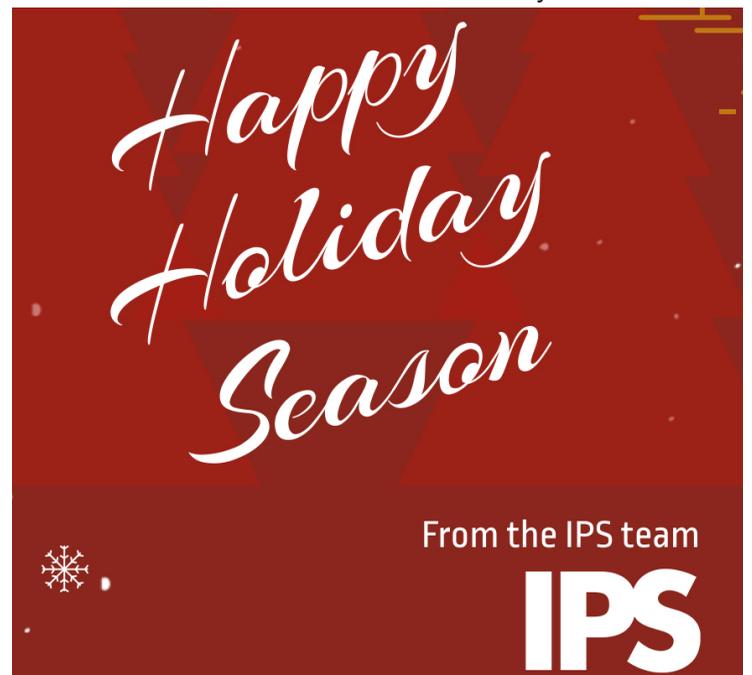
If you suffer from procrastination or poor personal time management, this is the time to really reflect on those bad habits. With so much at stake already, you cannot afford to waste the most precious resource on your hands. Start a to-do list of prioritized tasks, and feel amazing every time you cross an item off. Up there with keeping a list of priorities is keeping a distractions list -- perhaps as critical a to-do list.

4. Organize charitable efforts.

Encourage your team and employees to think about this season as the season of giving. Charitable efforts can not only brighten up the holidays for someone less fortunate, they can also provide a solid team-building opportunity. Fundraising at work doesn't have to be complicated -- guess the baby, ugly sweater party, scavenger hunts, wear-your-jeans-to-work are easy, long-time favourites for fuss-free office charity ideas.

5. Spread the holiday cheer!

The holiday cheer and feel-good energy that surrounds us is undoubtedly the best aspect about this time of year. While often stressful and filled with demands, this is a time for reflection, slowing down and showing appreciation for all the good in life and work. In the name of cheerful spirit, infuse some fun holiday elements at work, whether it is as small as putting up and decorating a tree, or as substantial as organizing a formal dinner party. Whatever you choose to do, you are helping your employees and your team to connect and celebrate another successful year.



HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

ELEVATOR PITCH DO'S



BE FRIENDLY

Engage people in a two-way conversation and show genuine interest in them.



SHARE

Find an example that best describes what you do and your profession.



KEEP IT SHORT

Catch your audience's attention in the first few seconds.



BE CONVERSATIONAL

Use simple and uncomplicated language.



PROVIDE VALUE

Offer tips that will help people remember you and reference you later.



ELEVATOR PITCH DONT'S



DON'T SEEK ATTENTION

Even if you are sharing a story, encourage your listeners to interact.



NO SALES MODE

Think about forming a relationship before you think about making a sale.



NO PROMO LANGUAGE

"Now only" or "one-time offer" are an easy turn off for many prospective clients.



NO CLICHES

Cliches are too common in sales and can make you appear inauthentic.



DON'T GENERALIZE

Your product or service is not for everyone and will not solve every issue.

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