

5 RESEARCH-BACKED REASONS WHY YOU NEED WORK FRIENDS (AND HOW TO GO ABOUT MAKING SOME)

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED IF BUILDING CLOSE CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR COWORKERS IS A GOOD IDEA?

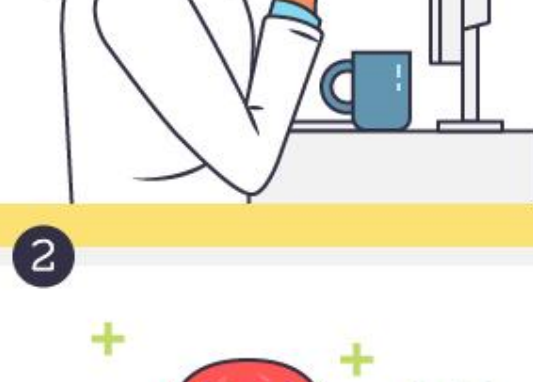
Many of us prefer to keep our work and private lives separate. But scientific evidence shows that office friendships help you get more out of work and can even maximize your potential.

SO, WHY DO YOU NEED WORK FRIENDS?

Studies show that having friends at work can increase job performance, as well as make us happier and healthier.

In fact, having friends at work...

1



BOOSTS JOB SATISFACTION BY 50%

A study conducted by Gallup found that employees with friends at work find their job more satisfying.¹

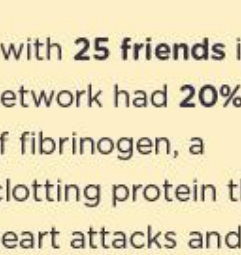
Employees who have a best friend at work are **21%** more likely to feel that they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day.¹

2



MAKES YOU HEALTHIER

Researchers from Harvard found that loneliness can cause heart attacks and strokes.²



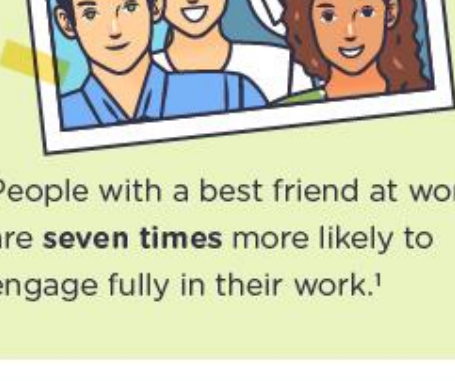
People with **25 friends** in their social network had **20%** lower levels of fibrinogen, a blood-clotting protein that can cause heart attacks and strokes, than those with only **5 friends**.²

3



MAKES YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE

Researchers at MIT found that chatting with your coworkers can increase your productivity.²



People with a best friend at work are **seven times** more likely to engage fully in their work.¹

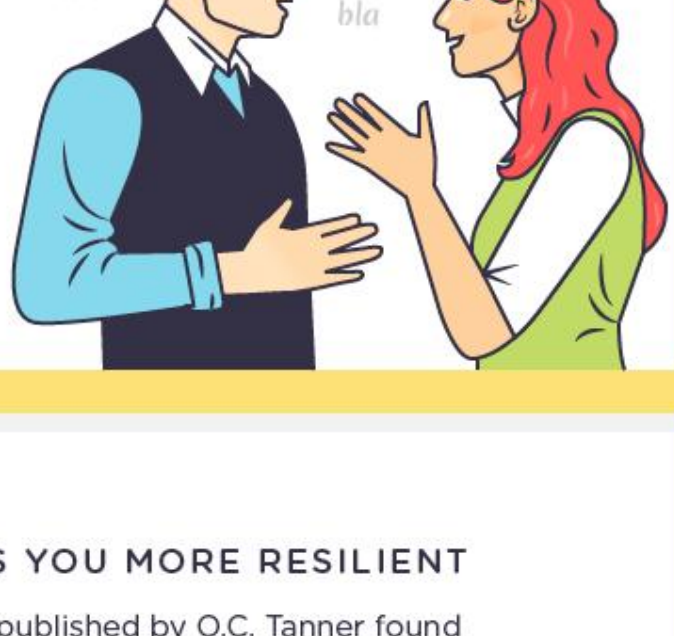
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MAKES YOU LESS STRESSED

Research from Gallup states that socializing can improve cardiovascular functioning and decrease stress levels.⁴



Three hours of social time reduces the chances of having a bad day to **10%**.⁴



5



MAKES YOU MORE RESILIENT

A study published by O.C. Tanner found that friendships can make it easier to take on big challenges.⁵



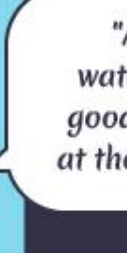
75% of employees who have a best friend at work say they feel they're able to "take anything on," compared to only **58%** of those who don't have a best friend at work.⁵

DON'T HAVE ANY? HERE'S HOW TO MAKE WORK FRIENDS

Even if you enjoy your job, having solid friendships at work can help you get more out of your time there. Maximize job satisfaction and fulfill your potential by following these tips.

1 FIND COMMON INTERESTS

It's easier to bond and make connections with people who have similar interests and tastes.⁶



Ask open questions around their interests, such as:

"Are you watching any good TV shows at the moment?"

"Where do you like to go for lunch?"

"Did you do anything fun over the weekend?"

2 INVITE SOMEONE TO LUNCH

Approaching someone can be difficult. But this method has a high chance of success as many people enjoy getting away from work at lunchtime.



Offer some suggestions of where to eat. But let your guest pick the venue.



3 FOLLOW YOUR COWORKERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Interacting on social media is a less confrontational way to get to know your coworkers.⁷



Check to see if they have other coworkers in their networks before friending or following someone. If in doubt, wait and see if they follow you first.



4 GO TO A WORK SOCIAL EVENT

Being friendly, open and supportive in an unfamiliar environment can help you build connections.⁸



Don't be 'clique-y'. If you only hang out with certain colleagues, you might alienate others.



5 JOIN CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL TEAMS

You can expand your circle of friends at work by meeting employees from other teams.⁸



Let your manager know that if any multi-team projects start up, you'd like to be considered to represent your department.



6 HELP YOUR COWORKERS

Being there for your colleagues will give you a great reputation amongst your team, making it easier to build new connections.⁸



Don't help without being asked or offering first. It might make your coworker feel like you don't trust them to get the job done themselves.

"May I help you?"

"Yes, thank you"

7 REMEMBER MILESTONES

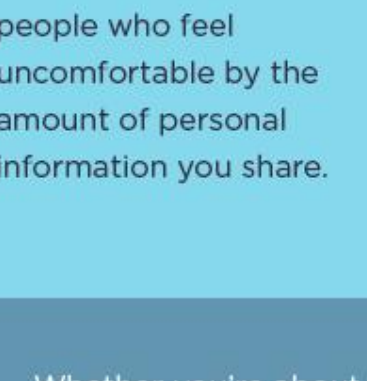
Congratulating your coworkers on their special day is a simple gesture that goes a long way.⁹



Put a recurring annual reminder on your calendar for your coworkers' birthdays and work anniversaries.



..AND, REMEMBER..



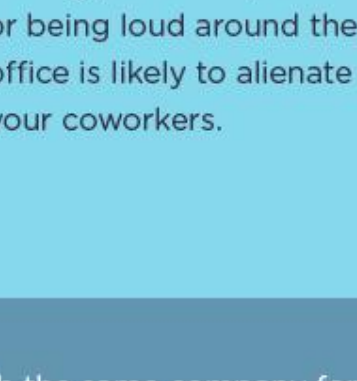
DON'T OVERSHARE

You could alienate people who feel uncomfortable by the amount of personal information you share.



DON'T BE NEGATIVE

People are unlikely to want to build a friendship with someone who is constantly complaining or criticizing others.



DON'T BE INTRUSIVE

Asking personal questions or being loud around the office is likely to alienate your coworkers.

Whether you're about to start a new job, or you've been with the same company for years, building new connections with your teammates will make you more productive, happier and healthier.

So, next time you're at work, follow these simple tips and see what a difference friendship can make to your work life.



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