

Introduction

ENJOY! 101 Little Ways to Add Fun to Your Work Every Day offers an antidote to today's fast-paced competitive society, where people work too hard, particularly in the United States. Compared to other industrialized countries, we work longer hours each week, take less vacation time, and have a higher level of work-related stress. Even kids in school are put on the fast track to success early on, leading to a high level of stress. And today, an ever-growing mountain of business success and professional/personal development books offers tools and techniques to help readers achieve even more.

I have become especially aware of the problem, since I specialize in improving business relationships, professional and personal development, and popular culture. Besides realizing that I was working too hard myself, I talked to dozens of people who described their barriers to enjoyment and expressed the hope of finding ways to enjoy work more.

ENJOY! describes how to identify such barriers, reduce the time spent on less enjoyable activities, enjoy whatever you are doing more, and put more enjoyable activities into your work life. Besides examples from workshops and interviews with indi-

viduals and experts, such as psychologists and recreation professionals, it features games I have developed for this book. All told, there are more than 101 different ways you can up your fun quotient to your work or workplace, while succeeding at whatever you want to do.

The book covers these main topics and includes a variety of games, exercises, and tips to help you along the way. It is divided into four Parts, which include the following chapters:

Part I. Don't Worry, Be Happy

Chapter 1. The Principles of Happiness

As happiness researchers are discovering, having a happy, positive outlook can help make anything you do more enjoyable. This chapter features the results of happiness research and shows how you can mobilize those ideas to enjoy your work more.

Chapter 2. Six Tools to Help You Be Even Happier

What if you have a negative attitude causing you stress and tension? Or what if you feel angry, frustrated, bored, or in a rut due to events or circumstances? This chapter features tools and techniques to turn that negative attitude around and help you stay in the present to enjoy whatever you are doing more.

Chapter 3. What Makes People Happy?

After years of research and hundreds of research studies, psychologists and others studying what brings satisfaction and happiness to people have come up with findings about what makes people happy. This chapter lists sixty-four simple secrets to increasing your happiness in work and everyday life.

Part II. Breaking Down the Barriers to Enjoyment

Chapter 4. Assessing Where You Are

A first step to increasing your enjoyment is discovering where you are now and checking in periodically to see how you have progressed. This chapter provides techniques for examining the level of enjoyment you are experiencing now and tracking that on a daily or weekly basis.

Chapter 5. Silencing Your Inner Critical Voice

For many people, the big barrier to fully enjoying what you are doing is the inner critical voice, which has messages like: “work harder,” “don’t waste time,” “do what everyone else is doing,” and “do what your parents enjoy.” So you may spend a lot of time doing what you don’t want to do and don’t need to do. This chapter features techniques to help you quiet and quell that inner critic.

Chapter 6. Rediscover Your Inner Child

Rediscovering your inner kid can help you both enjoy more and become more creative as you rediscover the playfulness, spontaneity, enthusiasm, and curiosity of kids that are often lost for adults urged to exercise reason, control, and conform. This chapter focuses ways to bring out these inner kid qualities to bring more vitality into your work and life.

Chapter 7. Eliminating Other Enjoyment Blocks

You may find still other blocks to enjoyment, because of your personal experiences, such as feeling a high level of stress, being out of touch with your feelings, or being apt to worry or think about other things, so you are not fully present to enjoy what

you are doing. This chapter features techniques to find and get rid of these other enjoyment blocks,

Part III. 101 Ways to Enjoy Yourself More At Work

Chapter 8. Adding More Fun to the Workplace

Even if you have to do something you don't want to do, like that pesky boring job, you can still up your enjoyment with games and other techniques to make the process more interesting and fun and get rid of any feelings of tension and anxiety. This chapter features twenty-seven ways to make whatever you have to do more fun.

Chapter 9. Make Work More Fun for Everybody

Besides adding fun to the workplace on your own—or mostly on your own—there are ways to make having fun a group activity for your department or division or for the whole office. The focus here is on thirty-one fun activities that you can introduce to others you work with in your own office—and potentially, these ideas can spread throughout a larger company, too.

Chapter 10. Organizing Events, Celebrations, and Contests

The first two chapters of Part III have given you ideas for enjoying yourself more at work making the workplace more fun for yourself and others. This chapter takes it to the next level with thirty-four ideas for organizing events, celebrations, and contests that everybody can enjoy.

Chapter 11. Take Your Fun Outside of Work

Not all fun activities with your co-workers have to take place in the workplace. Besides having fun at the office, you all can have

some truly fun times off-site. This final chapter of Part III gives you nine ideas on taking your fun outside.

Part IV. Expand Your Fun Horizons

Chapter 12. Exploring New Possibilities

Trying out new activities can add spice to your life, which can make you feel better about your work, too. This chapter describes playful ways to find new possibilities, assess them, decide which ones are best for you, and try them out mentally, as well as in reality.

Chapter 13. Make Travel Time More Interesting and Enjoyable

Whether you're commuting to work or traveling for business, you can use various techniques to make your travel time more interesting. These are techniques to use when you're not already doing work along the way, say on your laptop or in a notebook, and most of them are suited to when you're traveling on a bus or train or as a passenger in a car—not when you are driving.

Chapter 14. Start an *ENJOY!* Group to Increase Your Fun with Others

Earlier chapters have focused on ways to increase your enjoyment with techniques you use on your own or by taking the initiative in suggesting activities for your co-workers to do at work. But beyond these activities, you can join with others in a more systematic way to apply these techniques. This way you both have a support group and a group to help you continually come up with creative and fun ideas to add more enjoyment to everyone's life.

Chapter 15. Putting It All Together

This chapter sums up the major strategies for having more fun in your life. There's a "What's Your Enjoyment Quotient?" Test in the back of the book for you to take before and after reading the book to assess your Enjoyment Quotient when you start the book and afterwards to assess how much more enjoyment you have added to your work and your workplace. In addition, you'll find tips on setting up your own Enjoy It More Groups to work through these chapters and apply the techniques with others. Finally, you'll see a bibliography featuring the books I used in writing *ENJOY!*—some of which you may want to read yourself.