

2014



Finalists

www.thehumorawards.com

Best Onboarding Program - Humorous Beginnings Award

Organization: MasterCard (<http://www.mastercard.com>)

Submitted by Priceless

When you start your first day at MasterCard, most of the pre-work has already been completed. You've already seen a welcome video from the CEO, your email and tools are already in place, you've had the chance to fill out the typical paperwork online, and you even get to choose your own picture for your badge. Your first day at work is about the work, not about the paperwork.

Organization: Netflix (<http://www.netflix.com>)

Submitted by House Of Cards!

The onboarding process at Netflix puts the employee first starting even before they hire. It includes them being able to select their own laptop, an assigned mentor for starting the first few days, real work projects in the first week, and a small informal meeting with the CEO.

Organization: Valve (<http://www.valvesoftware.com>)

Submitted by JustReadIt!

Valve's onboarding process doesn't look like your traditional first day at work. When new hires arrive, employees are given an employee handbook that has everything they need to know about the company (with funny copy and informative cartoons) and then told: "find something to work on."

A link to the handbook:

http://www.valvesoftware.com/company/Valve_Handbook_LowRes.pdf

Best Training Program - Learned Me Good Award

Organization: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (<http://www.bcbsm.com/>)

Submitted by BigBlue

In a training titled “Health Care’s New Normal,” employees had a chance to learn more about how health care changes were going to change their work at all levels. To re-iterate the idea of “game-changing” nature of healthcare reform, the interactive training event was held on the field at the Detroit Lions’ stadium in Detroit.

Organization: Gables Residential (<http://gables.com/>)

Submitted by Anon

The ECI program (Engage, Connect, Inspire) program at Gables Residential provides sales associates with an interactive way to learn that is effective and fun. The training is delivered in a fun, experiential way that includes videos starring some of Gables own employees teaching best practices.

Organization: Kiewit (<http://www.kiewit.com/>)

Submitted by Perk-o-late

Kiewit has an usual way of helping employees improve their skills. The company deals with heavy machinery (such as backhoes and compactors) which require practice in operating. To help solidify the training, after they learn how to use the machines, they compete in an “Equipment Rodeo” with a chance to win prizes.

Best Perk - Money Isn't Everything Award

Organization: Double Encore (<http://www.doubleencore.com/>)

Coworkers at Double Encore don't just work on projects together, they also spend time playing each other in games such as Foosball and darts. It gets people up and moving, interacting with each other, and working as a team. One of its newest additions with the videogame Marvel vs. Capcom.

Organization: Frederick County Bank (<https://www.frederickcountybank.com/>)
Submitted by Mandi

The group at Frederick County Bank have a number of initiatives to make work a more enjoyable, and healthy, place. One of those initiatives are different themed months, including Deskercise Month where each employee receives a daily deskercise email that of an exercise they can do right there at their desk.

Organization: Medallia (<http://www.medallia.com/>)
Submitted by GoGiants

Employees at Medallia can apply for cash to do something that help them overcome a fear (or a weak spot). The parameters are intentionally vague, but it could mean doing something to get over a fear of heights or improving as a public speaker.

Best Recognition Program - Better Recognize Award

Organization: Frederick County Bank (<https://www.frederickcountybank.com/>)

Submitted by Mandi

Recognition at Frederick County Bank doesn't just come from supervisors, it also comes from peers. Employees can nominate their coworkers when they have gone above and beyond with customer service, with the nominated employee receiving 2 hours of leisure time.

Organization: Globoforce (<http://www.globoforce.com/>)

Submitted by Awardee

It's not surprising that a company dedicated to helping other companies recognize employees is good at recognizing its own employees. With varying levels of awards, no good deed at Globoforce goes unrecognized. They also have a monitor that offers a livestream of employees who received an award and what they did to earn it.

Organization: Hilcorp Energy (<http://www.hilcorp.com/>)

Submitted by Steve-E

Managers at Hilcorp Energy are given flexibility with how they reward their direct reports. They are given a budget from corporate that allows them to recognize their employees in personalized ways, such as equestrian rides / lassoing lessons to a horse enthusiast.

Best Corporate Culture - The Most Humorous Company Award

Organization: DPR Construction (<http://www.dpr.com/>)

Submitted by nunchuks

DPR Construction celebrates both its work and its people. One of their biggest awards which includes a free week of vacation and a \$2,000 trip, was named after one of their employees who hit 30,000 consecutive hours without an accident. Each month they have a CelebrateThis party to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, and every work location has a wine bar where employees can socialize at the end of the day. All told, 95% of employees say that DPR is a fun place to work.

Organization: Frederick County Bank (<https://www.frederickcountybank.com/>)

Submitted by Mandi

Frederick County Bank does a lot to promote a positive culture at work. From the monthly wellness activities like Deskercise (mentioned previously) to motivational months, annual summer picnics, and onsite Health Fairs, the bank finds ways to engage and recognize their employees. To make sure the workplace stays fun and productive, they have both a Fun Bunch and a Special Events Committee.

Organization: Gorilla Glue (<http://www.gorillaglu.com/>)

Submitted by a_gorilla

Consistently ranked as one of the top companies to work for in Cincinnati, Gorilla Glue prides itself on being fun-but-serious. Some of their fun includes videos created by employees (such as a Harlem Shake video during its craze), themed days at work, and a family-atmosphere focused on family-values.

Best Email - Mark as Always Read Award

Individual: "Captain Mike" / Norman Horn
Organization: Netflix (<http://www.netflix.com>)
Submitted by VulcanFriend

It's not an email, but this text exchange between a customer (Norman) and a customer service rep.

Norman: hi
Norman: I have a problem to report
Mike: This is Cpt. Mike of the good ship Netflix, which member of the crew am I speaking with today?
Norman: Greetings, Captain. Lt. Norm here.

The exchange can be read in full here: <http://i.imgur.com/e0LcT6J.jpg>

Individual: Dan Lewis
Organization: Now I Know (<http://nowiknow.com/>)
Submitted by Anon

Dan writes a daily newsletter about random facts. Thinking about how productive (or not) some offices seem, this email could easily be about some workplaces.

Six Monkeys One Month, Dan Lewis

"Grab enough monkeys, enough time, and enough typewriters -- an infinite amount of each, which the theorem importantly notes -- and you'll almost certainly end up with the complete works of William Shakespeare. That's a mathematical theorem, not a literary one, one which helps explain the concept of infinity. But the saying has, at times, demonstrated just how difficult it is to understand the concept of infinity, as the number of monkeys and typewriters is often curtailed to merely a thousand of each. (The typewriter-using monkeys are still given "enough time" to write, of course, unless they're working for Montgomery Burns.) As evidence that the saying is about math and not literature, just look to its origins. It dates back to 1913, when a French mathematician named Emile Borel wrote an article titled *Mécanique Statistique et Irréversibilité* (Statistical Mechanics and Irreversibility), and over time, it's entered the wider lexicon. It's obviously impossible to test -- there simply aren't an infinite amount of monkeys or typewriters. But that didn't stop others from trying.

Read the full email here: <http://nowiknow.com/six-monkeys-one-month/>

Individual: Mandi Runkles
Organization: Frederick County Bank (<https://www.frederickcountybank.com/>)

Submitted by Mandi

To celebrate Humor Month, Mandi sent out a daily email that encouraged her coworkers to take a break with humor. Here are a few examples of the fun she encouraged:

National Humor Month

National Humor Month was founded in 1976 by best-selling humorist Larry Wilde, Director of The Carmel Institute of Humor. It is designed to heighten public awareness on how the joy and therapeutic value of laughter can improve health, boost morale, increase communication skills and enrich the quality of one's life."

Create a Funny File of Your Own

Find out what makes you laugh and nurture it. Each of us has an individual sense of humor. There are many life experiences we can look back on and laugh about uproariously. Childhood incidents, school situations, even marriage mishaps.

Remember the embarrassing moments that were so painful when they happened but are funny now when you think about them.

Doodle for Your Noodle

Researchers suspect that doodling helps keep people more alert and reduces daydreaming. In a study of 40 adults, half of the group shaded in a row of shapes and the other half did nothing while listening to a boring phone message. Later, when asked to remember what they had heard, the doodlers recalled 29 percent more information than the nondoodlers.

Best Presentation - Let the Man/Woman Speak Award

Individual: Kelly McGonigal

Organization: KellyMcGonigal.com (<http://kellymcgonigal.com/>)

Submitted by Stop Stressin' Out

Most people know that stress is bad... but what if it's only our perception of it that matters. In her talk *How to Make Stress Your Friend*, Kelly shares the research on an unlikely angle for understanding and using stress.

Presentation:

http://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend

Individual: Gavin McMahon

Organization: fassforward (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/fassforward-consulting-group>)

Submitted by hello1

Gavin shares Pixar's *22 Rules of Phenomenal Storytelling* in a creative, artistic way. Each slide has an interesting design and references characters and themes from Pixar's movies, connecting the images to the content.

Presentation: <http://www.slideshare.net/powerfulpoint/pixar-22rulestophenomenalstorytellingpowerfulpointslideshare>

Individual: Christopher Pruijsen

Organization: National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs (<http://nacue.com/>)

In *The Journey of an Entrepreneur*, Christopher explains the phases you go through when starting a business. Rather than having a standard list, the presentation uses Prezi to tell a compelling journey.

Presentation: <http://prezi.com/hdpsxnszcrdm/the-journey-of-an-entrepreneur/>

Best Video - Hollywood Bound Award

Individual: Katz Americas Marketing Department

Organization: Katz Americas (<http://www.katzamericas.com/>)

Submitted by Superfly

The Katz Americas Marketing Department (with some help from their fellow employees) made a video to celebrate the holidays with *12 Days of KATZmas*. If you're wondering, yes they sell coasters.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptXSG_YOz34

Individual: Lauris Beinerts

Organization: Two Eyes (<http://two-eyes.co.uk/>)

Submitted by Anon

The production team at Two Eyes wanted everyone to know what it felt like to be *The Expert* in a meeting. Here's a great sketch of the absurdities of some of the requests people have.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKorP55Aqvg>

Individual: Tripp and Tyler

Organization: Green Tricycle Studios (<http://www.greentricyclestudios.com/>)

Submitted by Caller

We've all experienced the woes of conference calls, but what would it be like if you had a conference call in real life? Tripp and Tyler helped us experience just that in *A Conference Call in Real Life*.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYu_bGbZiiQ

Best Story - Gather Around and Listen Award

Individual: Jackie Chan

Organization: George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight (<http://www.cbc.ca/strombo/>)

Submitted by nunchuks

We all have hazards in the workplace, but not everyone has to fight Bruce Lee. Jackie shares his *Best Story Ever* of what it was like to work with, and get hit by, one of the great martial artists.

Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8CtOqJy6xM>

Individual: A Greenster

Organization: NA

Submitted by redditor

Sometimes you have to find ways to pass the time at work and those ways aren't always appreciated. Greenster shares how he kept himself busy in a factory and the results (both short and long term).

Story:

I worked at an automotive parts manufacturing factory while going to art college, and part of my job was boxing up parts and attaching a tag onto the box with thin wire. But for every box I completed (one every couple hours) I sculpted a little animal out of the wire with needle nose pliers. I gave the little sculptures (bears, rabbits, whatever) to random employees, which they left on their workstation. One day as I was making one of the little sculptures, I looked over my right shoulder to see my supervisor standing directly behind me just watching me with a clipboard. I paused, looked her dead in the eye, held out the sculpture and said, "Want a bear?" She fired me on the spot.

I'm now an Animator at Disney.

Individual: Chris Hadfield

Organization: ChrisHadfield.ca (<http://chrishadfield.ca/>)

Submitted by iwishiwereanastronaut

It would be scary enough to go blind, but imagine doing that in space. In his TED talk *What I Learned from Going Blind in Space*, Chris astronaut shares his story of that exact thing happening and how he reacted.

Story:

http://www.ted.com/talks/chris_hadfield_what_i_learned_from_going_blind_in_space

Best Prank - And We're Still Friends Award

Individual: Greg Benson

Organization: Mediocre Films (<http://youtube.com/MediocreFilms>)

Submitted by hello1

It can get pretty annoying to hear people talking loudly on their phones, business people sometimes being the worst offenders. Greg and team show one way to deal with those loud talkers.

Prank: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YA1J-raGinQ>

Individual: Improv Everywhere

Organization: Improv Everywhere (<http://www.improveverywhere.com>)

Submitted by coffeelady

The crew at Improv Everywhere decided to spice up a typical day at Starbucks with a funny prank to make everyone's day a little bit better.

Prank: <http://improveverywhere.com/2013/11/26/spartacus-in-real-life-movies-in-real-life-episode-9/>

Individual: Swiftkey Team

Organization: Swiftkey App (<http://www.swiftkey.net/>)

Submitted by 1337hacks

Swiftkey is one of the best ways to type faster on your mobile phone, so for April Fool's Day, they introduced Swift key for physical keyboards. If only this were real.

Prank: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QfhTWJIDCM>

Best Humorist - The Most Humorous Individual Award

Individual: Johnny Barnes

Organization: NA

Submitted by Anon

Johnny Barnes, dubbed Mr. Happy Man, has made it his lifelong ritual to greet morning commuters every single day in Bermuda. He doesn't get paid for it and just started doing it on his own, but he brings joy to people who pass him just by saying hello.

Short film about him: <http://vimeo.com/36673515>

Individual: Liysa Callsen

Organization: NA

Submitted by Ann

Liysa does a lot around the office to keep the mood light. She has:

- Revived a "dead" plant from a co-workers desk, renamed it using a mnemonic and requests the co-worker to ""talk"" to the re-incarnated plant, infusing fun into the cubicles.
- Met with a leader to set up a meeting, used a one sentence cue to develop a fun, theme filled meeting set up to invigorate and get attendees excited and infuse into the project
- Led the team in an improv exercise on a Friday afternoon to lighten up the environment and spur creativity!

Individual: Kathy Keaton

Organization: San Angelo Community Medical Center (<http://www.sacmc.com/>)

Submitted by KK

Kathy is a Therapeutic Clown Practitioner, sometimes called A Caring Clown. As a stress management humor professional, she is one of the few in her state employed to practice gentle and light hearted humor. Nurses guide her to rooms where patients could use a little lift, which she provides. Whether it's in the emergency, common waiting areas, or ICU, Kathy finds people who may be experiencing the stress, anxiety or pain that come with an unexpected accident or illness, uses humor to help them give them renewed hope and a smile.