



M&S  
CORPORATE GIFTS

**Enrich employees'  
work/life balance  
and reap the rewards**







# As stockings are hung, carols are sung...

and warning bells over this year's looming final targets are rung, the end of 2018 is fast approaching. It is indeed that time again - and the Christmas period, whilst full of food, fun and festivities, can be a very stressful time for employees.

With hundreds of Christmas cards to write, family and friends to visit and business deals to finish, your workforce have got a lot on their minds, and as a HR representative, you're likely feeling the pressure too. It's no easy job finding the time to organise the office Secret Santa, plan the party and fit each of the team's Christmas dinners into the tightly-packed schedule – all on top of all of your day-to-day responsibilities.

So, with your to-do list already longer than Santa's, we thought we'd take a few tasks off your hands. That's why we've created this guide, designed to help you ensure you're maximising the potential of your employee incentive programme. Not only will this reduce your workload, it will also improve the work/life balance of your employees throughout the Christmas period, to ensure everyone has the happiest holiday possible, and the best start to the New Year.

---

## 53%

of employees say a role that allows them to have greater work/life balance and better personal well-being is "very important" to them.<sup>i</sup>

---



# The importance of balance

For many years, the responsibility of a good work/life balance was left to the employee themselves. 'We're all adults' and 'you just need to manage your time better' were just two of the many insensitive phrases thrown around workplaces. However, times have changed. Employers are now realising that employees who can better balance their time are happier and more productive in the workplace.

The result is a workforce who are happier in themselves, and who perform better at work – it's win-win for everyone. If you're still not convinced about the importance of helping your employees to find the right balance between work life and private life, it's a good idea to remember the results of failing to do so. A study found that the short-term consequences of not being balanced in the home and workplace include:

**60%**

of employees  
experience poor morale<sup>ii</sup>

**41%**

of employees experience  
burnout/fatigue<sup>ii</sup>


**36%**

of employees reported  
poor productivity<sup>ii</sup>

As you can see, this is not a topic to be overlooked or disregarded. And, as the chief of culture in your organisation, this is your opportunity to drive a work/life balance for all, and help your business perform better.







# Let's get physical

---

It's easy for your employees' work/life balance to get thrown off-kilter during the Christmas season, and when you consider that...

---

**42%** of workers agree that December is the most stressful time of the year.<sup>iii</sup>

---

It's clear that giving the wellbeing of your employees some extra care and attention during this period is a worthwhile pursuit. In order to ensure your workforce remain happy and healthy, we recommend finding easy, economic and efficient ways to encourage balance – be it in the form of healthier snacks, or office dance parties.







## Charity walks, runs and triathlons

With this in mind, why not consider organising charity walks, runs or triathlons? These are great opportunities to not only involve some exercise before the belt-busting Christmas food starts appearing, but also helps raise money during the festive period.

## Office yoga

Another alternative is a quick and easy office yoga class. Simply ask a local yoga instructor to come to your workplace and host weekly sessions where your team can work out and also relax.



It might seem counterintuitive to add exercise to your employees' already overflowing to-do lists, but these types of activities offer an opportunity to squeeze in a workout at work, and also relieve some of the stresses associated with this busy time of year.







# Creating a culture of communication

---

As technology continues to transform the way we communicate, the ways in which businesses approach the subject of communication in the workplace must adapt with these changes. A recent survey showed the negative impact of technology, with...

---

**87%**

of respondents citing an inability to switch off out of work hours.<sup>iv</sup>

---







## So, how can you train your employees to better communicate in light of our constant reliance on desktops, tablets and smart phones?

When engaging in internal communication, instead of sending that email or picking up the phone, train employees to talk to one another in person. This is a great way to reduce the chances of miscommunication, and develop stronger relationships among your team. In addition to this, train your team to talk (and more importantly, listen) to each other – without relying on technology to simplify the process. In doing so, you can help to reduce the likelihood of your employees taking work home with them

– and this includes last-minute late-night emails. Technology has had a phenomenal impact on the way we do business in today's world, however a by-product is that employees are potentially 'always on'. The result is that your team can quickly go from being productive, to being overwhelmed. It's for this reason that improving communications in the workplace and minimising technology (for work purposes) at home, can have a hugely positive impact on your employees' work/life balance.







# This festive season

With so much to pay out for at Christmas time, from the many cards and gifts, to Christmas outings and parties. Not to mention the added cost of travelling for those who visit far-away family members, your employees' financial wellbeing can come under significant strain over the holidays. It's no wonder that...

---

**69%** of people are stressed by a "lack of money" during the Christmas period<sup>v</sup>

---

So, what can you do to alleviate your employees' financial worries, short of giving out generous bonuses?



## The first thing is to avoid novelty gifts.

These may be funny at the Christmas party, but most tend to end up in the bin.

---

**82%** of corporate gift receivers keep products that are practical,<sup>vi</sup>

---

which is why we recommend giving your employees something useful. And, given that...

---

**82%** of people surveyed stated they'd like a gift card for Christmas<sup>vi</sup>

---

We suggest you give employees the gift of choice this year.





# The value of rewards in making everyone happy

**88%** of employees agree on the importance of rewarding great work<sup>viii</sup>

In order to do this, your managers require the right training to implement rewards-based programmes in the workplace. **And, given that happy salespeople close 37% more sales, and companies with happy employees outperform the competition by 20%,** training management to successfully execute employee rewards schemes is certainly worthwhile.

**Happy sales people close 37% more sales<sup>ix</sup>**







## Actions might speak louder than words,

but when you combine the two, you're left with a very effective management tool. At your annual Christmas dinner, take a moment to verbally recognise your employees' hard work. Additionally, when celebrating employees' successes with a Christmas gift this year, reinforce your positive message by giving them a kind and carefully considered card, explaining just how meaningful their contribution has been to your organisation. This is a great way to maximise the happiness of your employees, as well as the quantity and quality of your output as a business.

## Remember that a happy workplace is a key component of a good work/life balance.

If your employees feel valued and appreciated at work, they are more likely to take those good feelings and motivation into their personal and family lives.

---

Happy employees  
outperform the  
competition by **20%**<sup>ix</sup>

---





## Think M&S Corporate gifts this Christmas

To ensure every one of your employees finds the perfect balance between their work and home life well into 2019, show them you respect their interests. How? Empower them this Christmas with an M&S gift card, and give your business the gift of greater productivity, innovation and creativity.<sup>x</sup>

**To find out more, contact us on 0330 0580 734 or visit us today.**

i <http://news.gallup.com/reports/199961/state-american-workplace-report-2017.aspx>

ii <https://smallbiztrends.com/2018/02/work-life-balance-statistics.html>

iii <https://www.cnbc.com/2015/12/15/christmas-period-is-the-most-stressful-for-employees.html>

iv [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/health-and-well-being-at-work\\_tcm18-40863.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/health-and-well-being-at-work_tcm18-40863.pdf)

v <https://allonehealth.com/holiday-stress-guide/>

vi <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.426.7559&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

vii <https://www.creditdonkey.com/gift-giving.html>

viii <https://engagementtrends.com/12-shocking-employee-rewards-program-stats/>

ix <https://growtheverywhere.com/management/statistical-case-company-culture/>

x <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/26a9/5a18ad09fd3998263104a482a3d0081971a8.pdf>