

# LAUGH AND THE OFFICE LAUGHS WITH YOU

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A study by the Yale School of Management focused upon how one's mood affects the work environment. Here are some interesting results.

"Emotions spread like viruses, but not all emotions spread with the same ease. Cheerfulness and warmth spread most easily, while irritability is less contagious and depression spreads hardly at all.

"Laughter in particular, demonstrates the power of the open loop in operation-and therefore the contagious nature of all emotion. Hearing laughter, we automatically smile or laugh too, creating a spontaneous chain reaction that sweeps through a group.

"Laughter offers a uniquely trustworthy sign of friendliness. Unlike other emotional signals-especially a smile, which can be feigned-laughter involves highly complex neural systems that are largely involuntary. It's harder to fake.

"In a neurological sense, laughing represents the shortest distance between two people because it instantly interlocks limbic systems. This immediate, involuntary reaction...involves 'the most direct communication possible between people-brain to brain-with intellect just going along for the ride.'

"In any work setting, the sound of laughter signals the group's emotional temperature, offering one sure sign that people's hearts as well as their minds are engaged.

"A good laugh sends a reassuring message--We're on the same wavelength, we get along. It signals trust, comfort, and a shared sense of the world - as a rhythm in a conversation, laughing signals that all is well for the moment." From Primal Leadership, Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goldman.

There is seldom a time in your life when you won't experience some sort of emotional challenge. During emotional times like these, or the wake from Hurricane Katrina or the anniversary of 9/11, or the latest presidential election, it's important to share laughter along with the sadness.

Help others to find something to laugh about. Create joyful experiences for your friends at work. Get a group of friends together and go see a funny movie (Wedding Crashers is hysterical). Find humor in your daily doings - your children returning to school, the emergence of football season, or flopping into a batch of brilliantly colored fall leaves.

The most gut-felt, authentic and contagious laughter has little to do with a 'punch line' and everything to do with the connectedness between two or more individuals. Become actively conscious about making these connections with your friends, your family, your significant other.

Enjoy your week and go out to find something to laugh about! It's this attitude that governs your life.

*Master Certified Coach Ann Golden Eglé is passionate about transitioning good leaders into great leaders, the kind that followers are inspired to follow rather than have to follow out of duty. Be inspired each week with her innovative 'Success Thought for the Week' as an aid to your success. You can sign up here: <http://www.GVAsuccess.com> or email: [info@GVAsuccess.com](mailto:info@GVAsuccess.com)*