

The Office Holiday Party – Your Simple Guide to Navigating Conversations with Bosses, Co-Workers and Guests

*You know what to do and what not to do at your office holiday party to prevent yourself from being **that** employee who everyone talks about at the water cooler the next morning. Knowing what to do is one thing – but do you know what to say? Office holiday party conversations can make or break the night. Embassy Suites Hotels wants to make sure your discussions with managers and colleagues are merry and festive instead of cringe-worthy. Here are some pointers to help you keep your feet on the ground and out of your mouth at this year's party:*

- ❄️ Said the wrong thing that irked your colleague or boss? Don't even think about making up an excuse or story – apologize immediately and sincerely and then move on.
- ❄️ Just like at family holidays, it's best to steer away from topics of conversation that can provoke controversy, such as politics and religion.
- ❄️ BUT, don't be afraid to talk and start conversation! Think ahead of some appropriate topics so that you're not caught in that oh-so-uncomfortable awkward silence. Here are some relatively safe topics to consider:
 - 🔔 Local and professional sports (but be careful about those intense rivalries...)
 - 🔔 Music, movies and television (aka universal bonding points)
 - 🔔 Some of your fondest memories from the office in the past year
 - 🔔 Hobbies
 - 🔔 Holiday plans
 - 🔔 Hidden talents
 - 🔔 What ONE CD would you bring to listen to on a desert island?
 - 🔔 What five people (living or dead) would you invite to a dinner party?
 - 🔔 If you could have a super power, what would it be?
 - 🔔 If you won the lottery today, what would you do with your winnings?
- ❄️ Maintain eye contact – show interest in the conversation. Even if you get stuck in a boring dialogue, stay the course. It's polite (and in the holiday spirit!)
- ❄️ Still, it's wise to have some graceful exit lines prepared. You will want to mix and mingle with more than one group of co-workers, so be armed with a way to switch conversations smoothly. For example, "It's been so great chatting – look forward to running into you again later. If you'll excuse me . . ."
- ❄️ There's nothing wrong with shooting the breeze about work – you are surrounded by colleagues, after all. But too much house talk can bore your fellow co-workers. Liven up the mood with some topics that are not related to the workplace.
- ❄️ Don't be the one who dominates conversations and monopolizes your colleagues' time. No one likes a conversation hog.
- ❄️ If you call someone by the wrong name and realize what you've done, apologize right away. If you can't remember the person's name, admit it and ask!

❄️ If you wouldn't say it at the office, don't say it at the office party! Don't forget that an office holiday party is still a business function and professionalism is key.