



Laughter is
the best medicine.
But if you're laughing
for no reason,
you might need medicine.

**MY SUCCESS IS YOUR
SUCCESS**

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HUMOR

A sense of humor can be an amazing line of defense when it comes to dealing with stress. Unfortunately, stress is inevitable, and you cannot eliminate it, no matter how hard you try.

However, you can better prepare for stress with several coping techniques.

Developing a sense of humor in the face of life's challenges is a great place to start.

A sense of humor will help build your resilience to stress and improve your overall physical and emotional health.

It will also allow you to:

- Connect with others.
- See things in a different way.
- Normalize your life experience.
- Keep your relationships strong.

Fortunately, developing a healthy sense of humor isn't too difficult, but it does take some practice.

Humor is the quality of being amusing or comical. More specifically, the humor effect is a cognitive bias that causes people to remember information better when they perceive it as humorous.



For example, when students learn a new concept in a humorous way, such as through a funny story, they are generally more likely to remember that concept, compared to non-humorous teaching.

The effect of humor can be very beneficial, and humor in general provides a wide range of benefits, such as increased interest and increased energy levels.

1. *The benefits of humor:* one of the main advantages of humor is that people are generally better able to remember information that they perceive as humorous, compared to information that they do not perceive as humorous.

This benefit, called the humor effect, extends to different types of memory, such as recognition memory, which involves the ability to recognize things one has encountered, and recall memory, which involves the ability to retrieve past information.

Similarly, humor can also improve people's memory when it comes to verbal information, such as words and sentences, as well as when it comes to visual information, such as pictures, and mixed information, such as cartoons and videos.

Moreover, in addition to improving memory, humor has various other benefits. More specifically:

- a. *Humor increases energy levels:* reading or watching something funny, has a positive and energizing effect. This is beneficial for people's general well-being and can help improve people's memory.
- b. *Humor reduces negative emotions:* humor can distract from negative emotions, such as anger or anxiety, that may be felt when processing certain information.

This can be attributed, among other factors, to the fact that processing humor places a heavy cognitive demand on working memory, which means that people focus on humor rather than the negative emotions they would experience otherwise.

- c. *Humor leads to increased interest:* adding humor to the information you present can make it more interesting and appealing to others.

For example, ads that use humor get more attention from people, and are more memorable and compelling.

- d. *Humor can make others see you in a more positive way:* Humor, when used correctly in the right circumstances, can improve the impression others have, of you.

For example, including humor in a speech can have a positive impact on how listeners perceive the speaker.

Likewise, using humor can improve people's perception of your friendliness and competence, especially when you combine it with negative information that you need to update.

Additionally, humor and laughter, have additional social, mental, and physical benefits, in a wide variety of areas.



Overall, the humor effect represents a noticeable advantage, where humorous information is remembered better than non-humorous information.

Additionally, humor provides a variety of other benefits, such as increased interest, increased energy levels, and reduced negative emotions.

2. *Situations where humor can be beneficial:* as we have seen above, humor can be beneficial in various ways.

As a result, there are many situations where humor can be beneficial, such as:

- When you want to cheer someone up.
- When you want to establish a relationship with others.
- When you want to make a speech more interesting.
- When you want a project, you've worked on, to stand out and grab people's attention.

In addition, specifically regarding the benefits of humor on memory, there are various situations where humor can be beneficial, such as:

- When trying to learn new material.
- When teaching a subject to others.
- When you create a slogan that you want people to remember.
- When you formulate a key message that you want your audience to remember.

3. *How to use humor effectively:* in order to make your humor effective, you must pay attention to the following elements:

- *The type of humor:* you generally want to avoid hurtful humor aimed at people directly, as such humor can alienate them.
- *The style of humor:* you will often want to avoid, very subtle, shocking, or radical humor, as such humor may be less effective than more cautious humor.
- *The amount of humor:* you will often want to avoid using humor too often, as it can be boring and make you look like a clown.
- *Humor timing:* even good humor can end up being inappropriate and ineffective if you deliver it poorly.
- *The delivery of humor:* even good humor can end up being inappropriate and ineffective if you deliver it poorly.

4. *Adopt the right kind of humor:* To use humor effectively, it's important to pay attention to the type of humor you use.

- *Positive Humor:* the use of positive humor is associated with a relaxed learning environment, better retention of information, increased motivation, increased participant satisfaction.



- *Negative humor*: the use of negative humor, and particularly aggressive humor, is associated with poorer, learning outcomes, an anxious and uncomfortable learning environment, more distractions, and reduced participant satisfaction.

This indicates that it is important to use humor that is perceived as positive, while avoiding humor that might be perceived as negative, as the latter type of humor can harm your goals.

Although it can sometimes be difficult to distinguish between the two types of humor, it is generally better to err on the side of caution and avoid using humor that your target audience is likely to find insulting or offensive.

Also, remember that what is perceived as appropriate, will depend on the context and the audience to which you are presenting information.

For example, a joke that's appropriate to tell your friends while you're sitting in a bar may not be appropriate during a work session or other social gathering.

Remember when you use humor incorrectly, in case it negatively affects people's opinion of you, even if they find the humor itself amusing. This may be the case, for example, if you come across as a « clown, » as a result of inappropriate or overly cheap humor, or if you use humor too frequently.

5. *Adopt the right style of humor*: when it comes to using humor effectively, the style of humor matters. More precisely :

- *Humor generally works best, when it's not too poignant*: often, restrained humor can be more beneficial than humor that goes beyond the ordinary measure, for example, when it comes to improving people's memories, and in many cases even simple humor, such as a funny pun, can help people to remember the transmitted information more.

Also, over-the-top humor can often lead to various problems, such as leaving an unpleasant impression of you.

- *Humor generally works best, when it's not too subtle*: while you don't want to use radical humor, you should generally avoid using humor that is too subtle, as some people just won't notice it, rendering it ineffective.

Remember that the optimal style of humor depends on factors such as the context and audiences.

For example, in some situations you can be sure your audience will respond well to subtle humor but not overly poignant humor, while in other cases you might know that the audience won't notice subtle jokes at all.

6. *Humor as an effective reminder*: there are also some things to consider when using humor specifically as a way to draw people's attention to information and improve memory of it.

- *Humor generally works best, when tied to the information at hand*: so try to use humor that is relevant, and especially humor that relates directly to the information you want to emphasize.

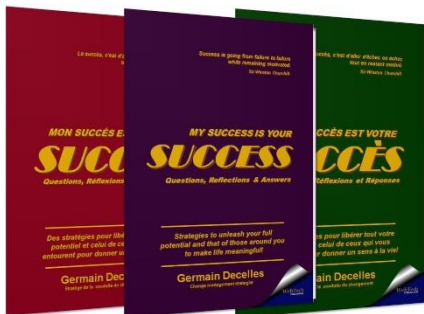


- *Humor can serve as a better aid to attention and memory when it is unexpected in some way:* therefore, try to avoid information that might be perceived by your audience as too predictable.
- *Attention to humorous information at the expense of related non-humorous information:* it is mainly a problem if two important pieces of information are presented one after the other. Keep in mind if you use humor in a presentation or conversation that it is a memory enhancer.

Remember that there is no one right way to use humor, as the relevance and effectiveness of humor depend on factors such as the circumstances you are in, the people whom you talk to and the goal you hope to achieve. This is up to you when deciding when and how to use humor.

Remember our *Minion* friend comment, « Laughter is the best medicine. But if you're laughing for no reason, you might need medicine. »

Find out more about « how humor will help you achieve well-being » with *My Success Is Your Success*. The book through questions, quotes and reflections provides the necessary elements to explore all about motivation so to shape your success and help those around you do the same. Remember that success is all about team efforts!



This 404-page book, available in French and English, is the fruit of forty years of experience acquired with local and international organizations and companies and during consultancy, change management, transition, and marketing services. For more information and to consult the flipbook, go to: www.webtechpublishing.com.

About the Author

In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.



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Information

Printing and Distribution: <http://www.lulu.com>

Available to Librarians through the Ingram Content Group: <https://www.ingramcontent.com>

- Paperback format: ISBN: 978-1-7388000-0-1 (\$32.20 us - \$45.16 ca - 29.18 Euro)
- E-book format: ISBN: 978-1-7388000-4-9 (\$12.92 us - \$17.58 ca - 12.16 Euro)

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