

The Accidental Origins of Some Famous Products

Some well-known products and inventions weren't the result of careful research and planning. They were accidents that someone with a creative mind spotted some potential in. Imagine your life without . . .

- **Potato chips.** In 1853, a chef named George Crum in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., grew frustrated by a diner who kept sending his potato crisps back, complaining they were soft and soggy. Crum sliced some potatoes as thin as he could, fried them in oil, and sent them out. The customer loved them—and a new snack food was born.
- **The Slinky.** A naval engineer named Richard James was looking for a way to hold navigation instruments steady while a ship was in motion. He began experimenting with springs, hoping to use them as shock absorbers, but when he saw one of his prototypes drop gracefully from a shelf onto a table, he had a different idea. Introduced as a toy in 1945, the Slinky (named by James' wife) became a best-seller.
- **Corn flakes.** The Kellogg brothers were searching for healthy foods to feed patients at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. They inadvertently left some boiled grain on the stove for a few days, but decided to try putting the stale remains through rollers to make dough. It turned into flakes instead, and they decided to try toasting them. In 1906 one of the brothers, Will Keith Kellogg, founded the Kellogg's food company.

Monthly Celebrations & Causes

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. Whichever holidays you celebrate this month, be aware of the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Don't let your holiday turn into a preventable tragedy.

National Stress-Free Family Holiday Month. Don't let your family drive you crazy. Remember to make some quality time for family togetherness in the midst of the entire holiday bustle.

Tolerance Week, Dec. 1-7. A week dedicated to promoting the importance of tolerance and respect for people of different religions, races, and cultures.

National Hand washing Awareness Week, Dec. 6-12. Sponsored by the Henry the Hand Foundation, which seeks to raise awareness of the health benefits of washing your hands to avoid the spread of disease.

World AIDS Day, Dec 1. Devoted to sharing knowledge and understanding of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome: how it's contracted, how it can be prevented, and how it affects people's lives.

Rosa Parks Day, Dec. 1. To celebrate the day in 1955 that Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger on a bus in Montgomery, Ala. The day marked the birth of the modern U.S. Civil Rights movement.

Pearl Harbor Day, Dec. 7. Approximately 3,000 people died in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in 1941. The attack catapulted the United States into World War II.

Wright Brothers Day, Dec. 17. Wilbur and Orville Wright documented the first successful powered and controlled flights of an airplane in 1903.

Other December Dates:

AFL-CIO Founding, Dec. 5
Hanukkah, Dec. 12-20
Christmas, Dec. 25
Kwanzaa, Dec. 26-Jan. 1
New Year's Eve, Dec. 31



Receiving Gifts From Parents

Gift giving during the holidays can be stressful for both parents and staff. Parents, while giving from the heart, may choose to present unacceptable gifts, leaving you in a very uncomfortable position. One way to avoid awkward situations and misunderstandings is to create a list of acceptable and unacceptable gifts that parents can reference as they consider what type of gift to give.

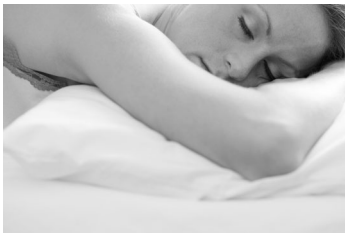
Need some ideas for appropriate gifts? Share these at your next staff meeting so your team can create a list that you can share with your parents.

1) Homemade gifts 2) Classroom supplies 3) Money that goes towards a supplies fund 4) Volunteering to help with activities, fundraisers, or even administrative duties.

Go To Sleep Peacefully With These Tips

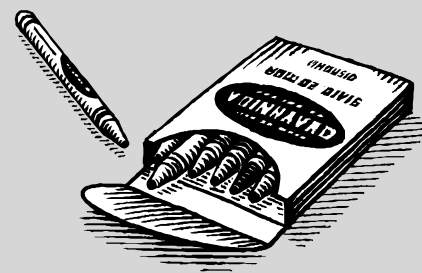
A good night's sleep is vital to good health: Without it, fatigue and loss of concentration can lead to accidents. Experts say lack of sleep may also contribute to health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. To get your 40 winks, follow this advice:

- **Keep a regular schedule.** Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day makes falling asleep easier. Establish a bedtime routine that prepares you for slumber: Drink a glass of milk or herb tea, read something relaxing, or listen to quiet music.
- **Exercise.** Regular aerobic exercise reduces stress and helps your body relax when it needs to. Just don't do a workout right before you go to bed. Exercise at least 4–5 hours before bedtime for the best effects.
- **Limit your eating and drinking.** You don't want to go to bed hungry, but avoid large meals right before getting into your PJs. Watch your intake of stimulants like caffeine or nicotine, both of which can keep you awake. Alcohol may knock you out, but it disrupts the body's normal sleep patterns. Drinking too much water can rouse you to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, and going back to sleep may be difficult.
- **Don't force it.** If you don't feel yourself dropping off after 15 or 20 minutes, don't lie there worrying. Get up, go to another room, and read or listen to gentle music until you feel drowsy. Though most experts advise against watching TV right before sleep, you may find it easier to relax if you watch something that's not too stimulating.
- **Keep your bedroom comfortable.** Create a dark, cool environment for sleeping. Make sure your mattress and pillow aren't causing problems. If you work at home, don't locate your office in the bedroom—the presence of work-related stimuli may feed stress and anxiety.
- **Limit daytime naps.** If you really can't keep your eyes open during the day, take a quick nap of 30 minutes or so, but don't sleep for hours. Long naps can interfere with your ability to sleep at night.
- **Sleep facing north.** Some people contend that sleeping with your head pointed north aligns your body with the Earth's magnetic field and makes sleep come more easily.



Cool Down, Then Decide!

Here's a small, but important piece of advice. If you're angry, it's probably not a good idea to make a decision until you are past the initial stages of the emotion. This is a great way to avoid making decisions you could end up regretting, as well as garnering respect from your workers for your position of non-reaction while you are processing your feelings.



What Color is Your Message?

Colors express a multitude of emotions without a single word.

Whether you're painting a sunset or designing a banner ad, consider the powerful messages these simple shades can communicate:

- Red: love, beauty, blood, the heart, heat
- Orange: energy, enthusiasm, excitement, adventure
- Yellow: joy, positive feeling
- Green: nature, hope, luck, fertility (but also jealousy)
- Blue: peace, faithfulness, tranquility, the ocean
- Violet: royalty, wealth, power
- Pink: gratitude
- Brown: earth, home
- Black: death, mystery, power, elegance
- White: innocence, purity, reverence, safety (but also death in many Eastern cultures)

Networking Necessity!

If you're going to spend time networking at an event, keep this one thing in mind: Have Fun!

Susan RoAne in *How to Work a Room*, says this is a key ingredient to making successful connections. Why?

People sense when you are genuinely enjoying yourself during your interaction with them. Especially at events, people want to connect with others who are having a great time.