GIVING WEEK
3-9 Dec 2007

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Magda Szubanski is Honourary Patron of Giving Week

Ten Ways to Kick the Kringle (and still have fun)

1 **Go for the Warm Inner Glow.** Instead of giving out Christmas presents, make a donation on a workmate's behalf. Pick a group from the more than 1000 listed at the Australian Giving Centre at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations** that you think your colleague would support and give them a card telling them who you have donated to. You can give as little as $5 or as much as you like via credit card using the Australian Giving Centre - a safe, free service. The benefit will last longer than a pair of socks, a packet of soaps or box of chocolates.

2 **Set the Challenge.** At the start of December, set everyone in the workplace a good-natured "extreme challenge" - to grow a handlebar moustache; to jog up to the 20th floor without resting; to have a smoke-free workday; to swap chips for salads every day for a week. A week or so before Christmas bring everyone together to check the results. Everyone has to provide proof of having completed their challenge (take a vote if the proof is ambiguous). Those who have failed pay $20 to a community group via the Australian Giving Centre; those who have passed only pay $10. Give a prize for those who have gone further than required, those who have taken the most liberty with the wording of the challenge, etc.

3 **Make or Bake it.** Have people make their own gifts - a plate of biscuits; a hand-knitted scarf; a poem; a song. For those without talent at cooking or knitting or poetry or music, crumple up a sheet of A4 and say it's an Origami rock. Charge $5 for people to lodge and/or receive a gift, and donate the money to a community group chosen by popular vote.

4 **Paint Yourself into a Corner.** Get staff members to pair up, give them some paints or crayons and ask them to create a portrait of each other. Hold an auction during your Christmas party and donate the proceeds to a community group of the purchaser's choice. (Drive up the price by promising to display every portrait that goes for less than $10 on the company noticeboard for the entire month of January.)

5 **Let's Get Physical.** Hold an Office Olympics, with points awarded for the winner of each event. Get your most creative people on the job of coming up with the events - the Get the Sack Race, the Revolving Chair Marathon, Pencil Darts, etc. Entry to each event costs a gold coin, with proceeds going to a community group closest to the heart of the person who collects the most points. Give the winner a trophy to be displayed on their desk and handed back at next year's event to create some year-long buzz.

6 **Give it Away.** Set up a Christmas tree at your office (buy it from a community group - see **www.ourcommunity.com.au/christmastrees**) and ask for nicely wrapped presents. Find an organisation that could benefit and ask them what sort of things would be most useful - an organisation that helps kids may like toys that can be used as Christmas gifts; a pet shelter could probably use some dog food; a community legal centre might enjoy gifts of office supplies or a supply of biscuits for staff meetings (yep, community groups are really that poor!). If you don't know a group you can help, go to a Kmart store and place your gifts under a Wishing Tree (**www.kmart.com.au/community/wishingtree**) for welfare groups to distribute.

7 **Your Presence is your Present.** Ask your community group contacts about the sort of skills they could use in the year ahead: it could be accountancy or legal skills, secretarial skills, desktop publishing skills, painting and decorating skills - you never know until you ask the question. Make a list and post it on your noticeboard and ask people to pledge their time by putting their name against a list item. Those who don't fit any of the requirements may like to make a financial donation instead. Have a look through the Community-Business Partnerships Matching Service at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/matching** to get some ideas.

8 **For the True Addicts.** If you can't manage to Kick the Kringle this year, ensure that your gift-giving helps the community by stipulating that all presents must be purchased at an op-shop, or that they be Fair Trade certificated, or that they be produced and distributed by a community group.

9 **Give a Virtual Gift.** Another option is to exchange presents that go to people that really need them - go online and buy your Kringle a pig or a cow or a sheep or a goat or even a toilet from Oxfam (**www.oxfam.org.au/**) or Care Australia (**/www.careaustralia.org.au/**). The person gets a card saying what's been given in their name.

10 **Make a Bid.** Pool your Kris Kringle dollars and make a bid on an item listed for the 2007 Giving Auction. There are some terrific items listed for sale - from surfboards to cookbooks to cricket memorabilia to Star Wars figurines - with all items provided by an Australian celebrity and all proceeds to go to a specified community group. Visit **www.ourcommunity.com.au/auction** to find out what's up for grabs.

NEED MORE HELP?

- **Can't think of a group to connect with?** There's a list of great community causes you can search by interest area or postcode at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/directory**
- **Don't know how to make a donation?** There are more than 1000 community appeals listed at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations** You can give online and commission-free.
- **Want other ways to give?** You can find out about all the many ways you can make a contribution (by giving time, books, toys, furniture, blood, blankets, computers, phones, clothes, etc.) at **www.ourcommunity.com.au/giving**