

Handy Hints for a Corporate/Employee Party

By National Santa, Tim Connaghan

To help you in making Santa's visit to your event, we have prepared the following list of suggestions.

1. **Have your camera/s ready.** Be sure to have all the video cards, thumb drives, film, videotape and batteries necessary to take the photos you want, or need to get. Be sure all batteries are charged.
2. **Reserve a special parking place for Santa.** It should be as close as possible to where he is visiting. Santa is a senior citizen and needs to park directly in front or next to the house or party location. He cannot park down the street or in a parking garage & hike to your location, He will be winded or exhausted, when he gets there.

If at a home, a car could back down the driveway a little, leaving a space in front of the car. When Santa arrives, the host could pull the car up and Santa parks behind it. Or, put a temporary barrier in the space reserved for Santa. Use a box, a chair or a sawhorse. Have some fun; put a sign out "Reserved for Santa!" If your event is at a company facility, office building or hotel, try to make arrangements for Santa to park in a valet or loading area.

This makes it easier for him to be fresh and ready to bring joy to your guests

3. **A host should meet Santa when he arrives:** to assist him; to show him where to park; to help load any presents into his special "Santa" bag; and to escort him to the location of the event. If there is a balance or payment due to Santa, place it inside a Christmas card or envelope. Never give Santa money in front of the Children. It can ruin the magic of the moment. The host or coordinator meeting Santa outside should take care of any final payments that are due, before Santa enters.
4. **Welcoming the Guests** is probably one of the best ways to use Santa at a corporate, or all-employee, event. Santa can be at the entrance to your event, just past your registration or check-in table. He can officially welcome everyone to the party and invite them to have a picture taken at that time. This is the best time to take photos of the employees and guests as everyone is arriving and looking their best.

Once the event gets going, the room will warm up and if there is dancing, it will really warm up. The men will start removing their jackets, hair-dos start to fall, etc. If you are not planning a photographer, Santa can still greet your guests, and some of them always have a camera or a camera phone.

5. **Have a sturdy chair for Santa to sit in.** Folding chairs and low chairs (the one's you sink into) are not good. Santa usually likes a chair that is sturdy and stable. A good straight-back dining chair, with no arms, works well. He should be able to sit comfortably and the chair needs to support him plus a person on each knee. And please no executive chairs with wheels!
6. **Place the Chair near your Christmas tree or in a holiday setting.** Your photos will have more impact when the background has a festive look. Place a wreath, a few Christmas cards or your children's drawings on the wall to make a wonderful difference. Leave a foot or two between the chair and the tree or wall. This will allow room for others to gather around and behind Santa's chair for group photos. Fireplaces do look nice but remember putting Santa too close to a real fire is not good for his comfort or health!
7. **Santa can mingle and visit tables,** after all the guests arrive and if there is any time left for the period you have booked him. He generally goes from table to table to say hello and to pose for group photos, etc.
8. **Think about photos with everyone.** Yes, some adults might think it is too childish, to have a photo with Santa. Don't worry; Santa can stand up for a "buddy" photo. What about the seniors attending the party? Take a photo with Santa and Grandma Hugging! And Santa can take group photos with all the ladies or a "Team" photo with the guys. And yes! Santa loves "Selfies!" More photos of Santa show up on Facebook than almost any other celebrity.

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