

Absenteeism during world cup could cost R750 m

Experience from previous World Cups has shown that one in every three employees is expected to take holiday or "sick" leave during this time and potentially this could cost South Africa up to R750 million.

"The reasons for this huge spike in absenteeism are because employees want to watch the soccer matches and also due to the fact that the extended school holidays will make it really difficult for working parents to juggle their children with work responsibilities," says Carmen Lerm, CEO of FusionDesign.

The company has suggested an internal marketing programme to reduce these losses.

- Set up a fan lounge with a couch for employees to watch the soccer during lunch breaks;
- Organise team incentive campaigns with a World Cup theme;
- Offer staff flexi-time and half days to work around matches and when traffic is expected to be gridlocked;
- Be upfront with your HR policies and leave, ensuring that staff has the opportunity to be upfront with you to avoid those unexpected "sick" notes
- Set up a special child day care for employees with children that will relieve pressure on those who do not know what to do with their kids over the holidays.

"These are just a few ideas that can be used as part of an internal marketing drive to rev up your staff, motivating them into attendance, productivity and ultimately ensure your company's success in 2010 and beyond. Don't ignore the possible damaging effects of having your staff continually sick during the six weeks of the Soccer World Cup," concludes Lerm.

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