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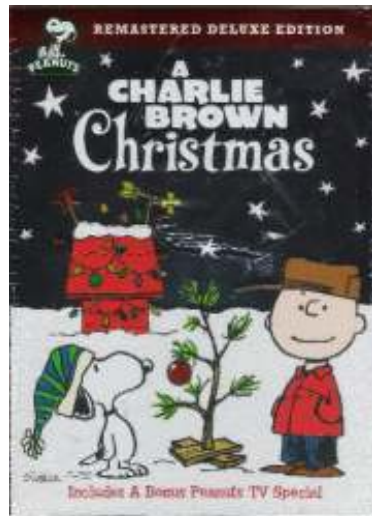
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5 workplace lessons from 'A Charlie Brown Christmas'



Christmas can be a stressful time for everyone as they try to finish workplace projects before they go off on vacation. During this time of year, work-life balance can become almost impossible—and many people are left feeling like they have no downtime for themselves. If you're lucky, hopefully you will find a little bit of time to enjoy yourself—drinking hot cocoa, enjoying good food and watching "A Charlie Brown Christmas". Just like other "Peanuts" films, this one is filled with workplace lessons that you can think about when you return to the office.

- 1. The boss thinks you're invisible.** When Charlie Brown is upset about not receiving any Christmas cards—and the pure commercialism of the holiday—he tries to get consolation from Snoopy. But this head honcho of a pooch is too absorbed in his mountain of bones to pay attention. Like many employees when they leave a meeting with their boss, Charlie Brown feels completely overlooked.
- 2. People who help people at work all day still love money.** Lucy may have a stand for psychiatric advice to help people, but her real love is the money that she makes from her pop psychology. When Charlie Brown gives her a nickel for her time, she is overjoyed with the money—not the love of helping others.
- 3. Don't let someone recruit you for dirty jobs.** In an effort to make Charlie Brown feel better, Lucy enlists him to be the director of the Christmas play at school. But when he gets there, he is soon overwhelmed because no one will listen to him and would rather dance to Schroeder's piano playing. When someone at work is excited about you doing a certain job, there is probably a good reason for it—no one else wants it.

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- 4. The new boss always has something to prove.** Once Charlie Brown begins working on the Christmas play, he tries to gain the respect of his peers by showing off how good he is at the job. But he barks out too many directions to his staff and no one understands him. As a result, they just continue to ignore him.
- 5. Your work doesn't matter unless you're famous.** Accomplishment isn't the goal—fame is the goal. At least that is what Lucy tries to explain to Schroeder about Beethoven. According to her, Beethoven isn't much to write home about because he has never had his face on bubble gum cards.

This article originally appeared on my [Workplace Communication Examiner](#) page on December 24, 2009.

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