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**CNN SATURDAY MORNING NEWS****Interview With Robyn Spizman**

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KYRA PHILLIPS, CNN ANCHOR: 'Tis the season to be patriotic this holiday. I think we all realize that. It seems September 11 has changed the way people are decorating and what we all want to buy.

Robyn Spizman, author of "The Perfect Present," joins us with some patriotic gift ideas. Good morning.

ROBYN SPIZMAN, AUTHOR, "THE PERFECT PRESENT": Good morning, how are you?

PHILLIPS: We -- great. We of course this is -- we've all been talking about this all morning. Let's get right to it. You've got neat little gift ideas. You're going to tell us how to get them and where they are. Let's start...

SPIZMAN: Yes. Well, when I logged onto google.com this morning, there were 74,000-plus patriotic gifts.

PHILLIPS: Oh, my gosh.

SPIZMAN: We've narrowed it down to a few of the most popular, and we're going to start with Christopher Radko's Braveheart ornament for \$34, this beautiful ornament is available at Macys.com. And these are very hard to find, and they're very collectible now, so this is something that you'll want to add to your tree. And a portion of the proceeds benefits the American Red Cross, very good cause, and again Macys.com, so you'll want to check this out.

PHILLIPS: And the -- the -- all these are pretty much collectibles, right? This set over here you have...

SPIZMAN: Yes, these are wonderful collectibles, Kyra, and what you're going to find with Jay Strongwater is, he creates some of the most collectible items, available at Nieman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue, and these beautiful frames and treasures in little boxes and candles really are wonderful. And a percentage of these are donated to Save the Children's World Trade Center Fund. Jay Strongwater feels very strongly about this fund because the money really goes to

help the victims of these families.

PHILLIPS: And these are both little friends right here, and then this is like a little charm box.

SPIZMAN: Yes, this little treasure box, and these are jewels, and they will be -- one day we'll look back on these and say these were the collectibles of our time.

PHILLIPS: Absolutely.

SPIZMAN: Absolutely.

PHILLIPS: All right, and the book, this...

SPIZMAN: Yes.

PHILLIPS: ... this is one of our favorite, Bill and I were thumbing through the book.

SPIZMAN: It's just beautiful, "Our New York," and the net proceeds benefit the Twin Towers Fund, which supports the victims' families. And this is from Tommy Hilfiger. And what he did with a well-known photographer is, they went around New York capturing American flags and moments across Manhattan and really captured the essence of the times.

And for \$20, you can check out this book at tommy.com, and again, proceeds to go to benefit a very good cause, and that is the net proceeds, so it's a wonderful opportunity to give a beautiful book. It's very meaningful.

PHILLIPS: I like the CARE package idea.

SPIZMAN: Beautiful.

PHILLIPS: We can send this to our friends out on the ship, right?

SPIZMAN: We sure can, sailors, servicemen, you name it. This is military.com. And what I'm crazy about is, they teamed up with carepackages.com and then made all the arrangements so that the servicemen could get a package of goodies for around \$20 plus shipping and handling. The USA Pride -- you can support our troops. You click on military.com, and they will ship out a package. You don't even have to know where it goes or to whom it goes, but it's going to go to a great cause. And some very, very well-deserving gentleman or woman's going to receive it and appreciate your kindness.

PHILLIPS: Wow, the cookie basket. We're going to start munching on that probably in about five minutes.

SPIZMAN: Well, it's a patriotic, you know, for a smart cookie, we'll call this gift, it's a patriotic gift. Cookies by Design or cookiebouquet.com is an assortment of cookies in the patriotic spirit,

perfect for that holiday addition. And of course they customize the cookies and they have quite a wonderful Web site as well as toll-free numbers all across the country. You can check out this great gift-giving service.

PHILLIPS: Now, this is a neat one here, the dog tag. This is Things Remembered, right? And you can actually -- you can engrave on back of that. SPIZMAN: Yes, it's just lovely. And rhinestone sparkles, and you'll see this for \$29.99 at mall stores nationwide to benefit the Twin Towers fund. And again that's Things Remembered. And they're well known for personalizing items, and this is a lovely one, as well as diamond.com, if we're going to go for the real thing for \$195, this lovely pin in diamonds and rubies, get a good shot of that, is available at diamond.com. And a portion of the proceeds also benefits a very good cause, and we want to really credit these companies, because they've taken a very, very difficult time and turned it into something that will gift-giving can help others. It's the gift of giving twice, because it's going to do a good deed.

PHILLIPS: Well, Ms. Spizman, thank you so much. And of course you can catch your book too, "300 Incredible Things for Women on the Internet." This was a great book also. Thank you so much.

SPIZMAN: Thank you.

PHILLIPS: Great ideas.

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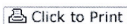
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Holiday gift etiquette for co-workers

- Story Highlights
- Be sure the gift is appropriate
- Consider what the person values, whether it's a pet, family or staying healthy
- Make sure to stay away from anything vulgar, obscene, racist or sexist
- Don't make a big scene when presenting the gift

By Rachel Zupek

When the editorial staff at her high school newspaper held a White Elephant gift exchange, Katie Schroder gladly participated. She ended up with a can of Popeye brand spinach instead -- a contribution from the editor-in-chief.

"She told me it was 'a reminder to be a strong, fearless writer,'" Schroder, now a print publicist for a division of Random House Inc., remembers. "Seven years and several moves later, that can of spinach is still sitting on my desk next to my keyboard. It's a token of how far I've come in my career, and a reminder to keep applying that strength in my writing."

Not every employee looks back on gift exchanges as fondly as Schroder. In fact, holiday gifting remains one area of the workplace where workers should tread lightly.

"One rule of thumb ... is to be sure it [the gift] is appropriate," says Jo Bennett, a partner at Battalia Winston International, a New York-based executive search firm. "Thoughtful, tasteful and neither too expensive, nor too cheap."

Check out these gift-giving guidelines from our experts to find your co-worker the perfect gift this holiday season.

Finding the perfect gift

Before buying a gift for a co-worker, it's important to be "in the know," says Robyn Freedman Spizman, author of "The Giftinary" and "Make It Memorable: An A-Z Guide to Making Any Event, Gift or Occasion ... Dazzling!"

Consider what the person values, whether it's a pet, children, family or staying healthy.

"Avoid gifts that are high risk," Spizman says. "Some people are allergic to smells and on diets. It's not a steadfast rule, but best to be safe or get the facts and know what the individual appreciates."

First, consider the purpose of the gift and then think about the gift itself, Bennett says. Are you giving a gift for a holiday or to celebrate a life event for your colleague? Contemplate whether the gift is meant to be funny or if it will embarrass someone.

What's appropriate ... and what's not

Many workplaces have instituted gift-giving guidelines, which are important to observe so as not to upset colleagues. To avoid offending your boss or co-worker with a present, find out the office protocol and follow it, Spizman advises.

"If you are giving a humorous gift, make sure to stay away from anything vulgar, obscene, racist or sexist," Bennett says. "Not only might you offend the recipient, but you may offend your co-workers if it's a group affair."

Avoid giving the following gifts to your boss and colleagues:

- Intimate apparel
- Perfumes, body lotion or highly scented items
- Flashy jewelry
- Food (some are restricted by certain cultures and religions)
- Art (or other items that are in your taste, but not necessarily anyone else's)

Deem the following items suitable for co-workers:

- Picture frames
- Gift cards
- Books
- CDs or DVDs
- Something for their pet or kids
- Useful desk objects

Creative gifting

To alleviate the pressure of gifting in the office, there are many ways to creatively give to colleagues without offending or excluding anyone.

A department lunch in place of a gift exchange alleviates pressure all around, Bennett suggests. Secret Santa exchanges, when co-workers put their names in a hat and draw to see who is buying a present for whom, are acceptable in most cases, but Bennett suggests making sure employees opt in to it.

Spending limits should be established, too. "It's only fair to expect that some employees will not want to spend more money on top of the usual holiday spending pressure," Bennett says. "Others, especially the younger staff, simply may not have the extra cash. If that's the case, you could be creating a very stressful environment for your employees."

To avoid spending at all, Spizman suggests a "sweet-tooth day."

"Instead of gifts, have each employee bring a goody. Then, give everyone a container to fill up and take home to their families."

Dos and don'ts

Spizman and Bennett offer the following 10 dos and don'ts of holiday gifting in the office:

Do be careful about buying gifts for your boss. He or she may think you're trying to gain favor. Don't give him a gift unless others do so.

Don't indicate an inappropriate relationship by giving a gift that is too intimate.

Do ask human resources about gifting policies. There may be a dollar-amount limit or gift giving might be prohibited altogether.

Don't make a big scene when presenting the gift. The purpose is not to show off for others.

Do give co-workers something that reflects their interests, values and tastes.

Don't give liquor unless you know the recipient drinks.

Do consider giving a work-related gift, like a nice pen or new planner.

Don't try to outdo anyone or impress people by spending a large amount of money.

Do remember that gift-giving is risky and sometimes awkward.

Don't give worthless gifts to co-workers or employees. It's insulting.

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