

How to develop a contract catering strategy

To inspire confidence and spread knowledge, we have developed bartlett mitchell's recipe for success guides for workplace contract catering. You can download other guides from our website www.bartlett-mitchell.co.uk/expert-guides

In order to get the best value from contract caterers, the organisation and facilities manager must be clear why they are providing catering to their staff. A catering policy laying out clear objectives encourages smooth decision making, effective processes and a successful catering service.

Objectives

Some organisations provide meals at no cost or subsidised for their employees. This can be a valuable part of their employment package and a key element of an organisation's attraction and retention strategy.

Other organisations may need a catering service because their building is located in a remote area or where there is very little choice for staff to buy their own lunch. In-house catering can aid productivity as it encourages staff to stay on site.

With the increased importance of wellbeing on the corporate agenda, some organisations choose to provide a contract catering service that supports the wellbeing of their staff.

A well designed restaurant and café can act as a hub for connectivity and sharing ideas. There are plenty of examples showing the value created when the walls in corporate silos are removed.

Some organisations require hospitality and fine dining as a client relationship and business development tool for entertaining guests.

Clients and caterer must understand their objectives before they start to build a picture of how they want their catering to be operated.

To complete a catering strategy these additional areas need to be addressed:

Scope of services

- Do you want a full service restaurant or a pre-prepared or made-to-order 'grab and go' service?
- What opening hours are required?
- How much emphasis should there be on healthy food?
- Where does the catering offer fit into the company's wellness strategy?
- What is the range of food to be provided?
- Do you want a separate coffee bar?
- What is the competition?

- Is a comprehensive range of hospitality services required including fine dining?
- How should beverages be supplied - over the counter or vended?
- What payment solutions should be utilised?

Customers

- Who are the customers?
- What is the staff's demographic and where do they eat when they are not at work?
- How technology savvy are customers?
- What type of guests will be visiting and what are their expectations? How important is hospitality to the contact's success?

Quality

- Provide tangible indications of quality
- Outline the sustainability aspirations

Tariff

- Is the tariff designed to return a gross profit, or to recover just the cost of food and VAT or free issue?
- If a gross profit is to be generated, what level is realistic?
- If the service is free issue, what is the daily allowance?
- How are hospitality service costs recharged?

Financial objectives

The financial outcome of the catering service will be driven by the range of services, number of staff on site, the tariff and contract style.

For example, if a policy of free issue meals is adopted, the cost to the organisation will be considerably higher. Conversely, a gross profit will reduce the subsidy.

5 ways bartlett mitchell powers your business

Great food, eaten in great surroundings, can make a huge difference to your business. It's our job to help you make the most of this, in five ways...

1. Attracting the best people

Today's employees expect more from their workplace, and the food you provide is a crucial part of that – especially as many people now care more about what they eat. We can help you enhance your 'employer brand' by creating a food and drink offer that sets you apart from other companies. You'll have a happier, healthier, more engaged workforce, and find it easier to recruit and retain the most talented people.

2. Improving productivity

Well-fed employees are more productive. In 2013, the Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine argued that employees who eat well are 25% more likely to perform better. And, of course, if there's an appealing restaurant or café in the workplace, they will stay on site. More importantly, taking lunch and coffee breaks with colleagues encourages interaction. People talk more freely, information flows more easily, and your business benefits.

3. Enhancing your reputation with customers

When customers and other guests visit you, you want them to enjoy the experience and be impressed by your workplace. An appealing, well-run café, restaurant or executive dining facility, serving great food, says a lot about your business. We can ensure your food, drink and hospitality reflect your brand style and values, and uphold its reputation.

4. Providing return on investment

Every square foot of your business premises is highly valuable, and the space you dedicate to catering and hospitality has to work hard for you. We ensure these facilities work efficiently and cost-effectively, making best use of your resources. Also, choosing us to manage your food and drink services leaves you and your team free to focus on running all the other vital aspects of your business.

5. Collaboration

You want your business to have a positive impact on the environment and your community – and your customers, staff and shareholders want to know about it. We can boost your reputation as a responsible organisation through our strong track record in sustainability. Our achievements become your achievements. And inspiring stories – like the Thirsty Planet water we sell helping to pay for clean water in Malawi – can be associated with your brand.

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About bartlett mitchell

bartlett mitchell is a multi-award-winning contract caterer. Our experienced, energetic and enthusiastic team takes a fresh approach to food and drink – with delicious results for you and your business.

We've grown steadily to a team of over 800 experienced foodies, serving 40,000 customers every day in over 90 locations in the UK.

We're also a responsible company, and can help yours to be one, too. We were the first contract caterer to achieve the Sustainable Restaurant Association Three Star Champion Status, known as the Michelin stars of sustainability.

Fresh ideas every time



Because we're an entrepreneurial business, we don't have a one-size-fits-all template that we attempt to force on each client. Our catering focuses on tailor-made solutions using innovation. We take time to develop bespoke ideas to match the client culture, employees' tastes and the physical environment.

We also recognise the importance of value for money. We work as a tight, agile team to develop solutions that reduce costs and use resources more smartly.



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