

How to create a workplace experience that helps your organisation thrive

To inspire confidence and spread knowledge, we have developed BM's 'Recipe for Success' best practice guides for workplace and contract catering. You can download other guides from our website: www.bmcaterers.co.uk/category/expert-guides

You've probably heard a lot about workplace experience – how providing the right work environment can help you recruit and retain the best people. With many employers now having to try harder to attract new talent and encourage existing teams back into the office, creating a great place to work is becoming an urgent priority.

And the need to achieve good ratings for benefits and work conditions on review sites like Glassdoor is adding to that urgency. But it's not something to rush into. It's worth taking time to ensure the experience you offer is exactly right for your organisation and the people in it.

“Employees are happiest and most productive when they control their work areas”
Professor Allen, MIT Sloan



For example, simply installing a gym won't improve the workplace experience if your teams feel they don't have time to use it while at work. But if you arrange fitness sessions at set hours, employees will understand they have 'permission' to take time out from their day jobs. They'll not only use and enjoy the new facilities, but also appreciate the difference they make to their working life.

1. Make the experience fit

A good workplace experience can involve many things, from enhanced amenities or well-being initiatives to improved social or leisure opportunities. Identifying what's best for you depends on the type of organisation you are – what you do, where you do it, who your customers are. And most importantly, the environment you provide must be appropriate to your culture, and the needs and aspirations of your people.



All pretty obvious, you might think. But it's easy to get carried away with ideas that might seem exciting, while forgetting the specific realities of a working day in your organisation. Before you invest in new or improved facilities for your employees, think about how they'll work in practice. To reap the full benefits of your innovations, you'll need to spend time and thought on them, as well as financial investment.



Similarly, opening a new café offering tempting treats won't be very successful if your workforce is mainly health conscious or discerning coffee aficionados. Before planning menus – and committing to the equipment needed to produce what's on them – it's wise to find out the likes, dislikes and dietary requirements you're catering for. Again, sounds obvious, but many in-house catering facilities have low patronage simply because no one has researched what the customers want.

2. Ponder the possibilities

Another trap to avoid is throwing everything at the first idea that comes along, without considering the full range of elements that could – or maybe even must – go into developing the right workplace experience. Creating the conditions where employees can work happily, healthily and productively could mean providing anything from yoga classes to nutrition workshops. It could also mean rethinking how you use technology – for improving security or booking ‘hot desks’ to work with your closest colleagues, for example. Combining a careful selection of measures such as these is the basis for a successful workplace experience.



3. Start here

To help you think about all the factors that might go into developing your workplace experience, we've produced a handy guide, 'Workplace experience: future possibilities'. Covering trends for tomorrow and the realities of today, it's designed to provide inspiration while you're planning how to make your workplace as attractive, supportive and welcoming as possible, now and in the future.



About bm

BM Caterers 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 900 experienced foodies, serving 45,000 customers every day in over 90 locations in the UK.

We are a responsible company. We work hard to support our clients' sustainability objectives, with a laser focus on reducing carbon. We are the only caterer to hold Planet Mark accreditation which measures and reports on our carbon and social data.

Fresh ideas every time

Because we're an entrepreneurial business, our catering focuses on tailor-made solutions driven by innovation. We take time to develop bespoke concepts which match the client culture, employees' tastes and the physical environment. We don't have a one-size-fits-all approach.

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.

