

ShowCase

Experience Food at Work

Topic: Healthy eating

Organisation: Breckland Council; Uscreates

Location: Breckland, Dereham (East of England)

Dates: 2007 - 2008

Budget: £2,000 (council grant); £25,000 (work-in-kind from Uscreates)

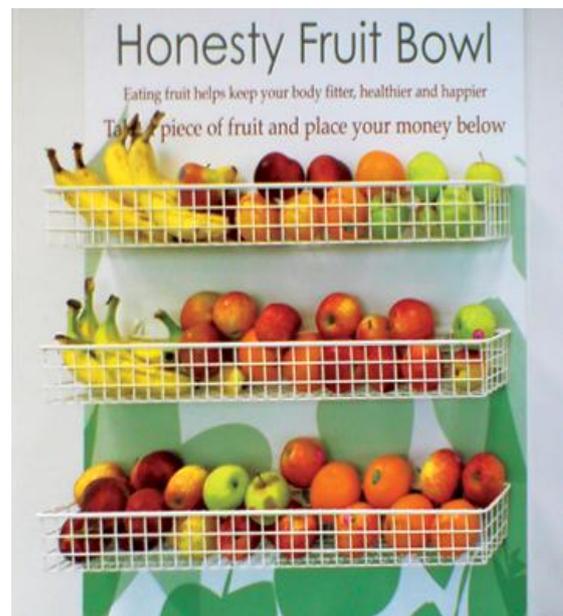
Website:

www.uscreates.com/work/workplace_eating_behaviours

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Overview

'Experience Food at Work' was a pilot initiative that aimed to improve workplace eating behaviours at the Breckland District Council offices in Norfolk. Led by London-based design and behaviour change consultancy Uscreates, the project used creative research and co-design techniques to develop innovative methods to improve eating behaviours, such as encouraging staff to eat more fruit and vegetables during the work day and take lunch away from their workstation.

Five interventions were introduced: an honesty fruit bowl system; a visiting chef; a healthy lunch pack delivery service; health and nutrition MOTs with a dietician; and redesign of the communal eating facilities in the staff room.

One year after the interventions were introduced:

- 23 per cent of employees rated their lunch as healthier than a year ago
- The number of people who ate no fruit at work reduced by half
- 72 per cent of staff ate two or more portions of fruit at work
- The percentage of those who ate lunch at their desk every day dropped from 41 per cent to 29 per cent
- 70 per cent of action points for change set by employees at their MOTs had been achieved

1. BEHAVIOUR

- Increase lunch breaks taken away from workstations
- Increase amount of fruit and vegetables consumed in the workplace

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Creative consultation methods used to understand workplace culture and workforce needs
- Research 'probes' – including camera task and regular text message questions
- Workforce Interviews
- Statistical data around workplace diet
- Stakeholder Roundtable co-design event
- Workforce Champion Group to pre-test intervention ideas, provide feedback on development and support delivery

3. THEORY

- **Social Cognitive Theory:** people learn behaviours, based on personal, environmental and behavioural factors.

4. INSIGHT

- High levels of at-desk eating
- Limited variety of diet
- Limited facilities nearby
- Lack of inspiration
- Limited onsite facilities

5. EXCHANGE

- **Benefits:** improve health, morale and staff productivity
- **Barriers:** Poor onsite facilities; No onsite canteen; Healthy eating seen as 'difficult'; Busy schedules meant lunch taken at desk; Lack of knowledge about nutritional and wellbeing benefits of a balanced and adequate lunch break
- **Solutions:** Improved availability of healthy options; Revamped communal breakout area; Health and nutrition MOTs; Visiting chef

6. COMPETITION

- Sandwiches: Easy and convenient, bought from local supermarket – Introduced new competitive menu through sandwich delivery van)
- 'Lunch at the desk' – Renovated staff dining facilities
- Office snacking culture – Changed social norms

7. SEGMENTATION

- Those who bring lunch into work (but not necessarily a healthy one)
- Those who buy lunch
- Those who eat at their desk (a large proportion)

8. METHODS MIX

- Health and nutrition MOTs
- Honest fruit bowl system
- Healthy lunch pack delivery service
- Re-vamp of the breakout zone
- Visiting chef event
- Publicity