

FOUR STEP PLAN:

MAKE FOOD THE SECRET
INGREDIENT TO HAPPINESS
IN YOUR OFFICE



INTRODUCTION

According to Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report, just 11% of UK employees are engaged in their work¹. In fact, a staggering 21% are actively disengaged, which means they aren't just unhappy, they are resentful that their needs aren't being met and are undermining what your business is trying to accomplish. Engagement is correlated to productivity and profitability; Gallup found that businesses with the most engaged employees had 17% higher productivity and 21% higher profitability.

It's no wonder that caring for the happiness of employees has become a trend in workplace well-being. Until recently, it was unclear whether there was a real link between happiness and productivity or if it was a management myth. However, a new study by Oxford University that tracked sales workers at one of the UK's largest employers found that an increase in happiness resulted in an 18-24% increase in sales².

So, the big question is, how can you boost employee engagement and productivity? What will make your staff happy, healthy and ready to thrive?

Well, we think we have the answer. It's all about taking a proper lunch break and eating a nice meal – preferably with your colleagues.

1. Gallup's 'State of the Global Workplace report', 2017. [View online](#)

2. Saïd Business School 'Does Employee Happiness have an Impact on Productivity?' report, 2019. [View online](#)

Check out our 4-step plan for bringing a little happiness into your office.



“Research has shown that skipping lunch is detrimental to productivity.”

STEP 1

BRING BACK THE LUNCH BREAK!

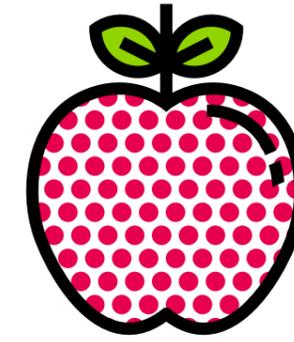
One in 5 Britons don't take a lunch break at all³. For those that do, the average lunch break is just 22 minutes. The most cited explanation for skipping lunch is an excessive workload. Yet, research has shown that skipping lunch is detrimental to productivity.

It goes without saying that you need your brain to do good work; the brain consumes about 20% of the body's energy. By skipping lunch or not eating the right lunch, you starve your brain and muscles of the key nutrients needed to function at peak level – killing concentration and productivity.

We know from observing our own clients that many take upwards of an hour for lunch. They eat, they chat, then they play a game of table tennis – sound familiar? In one survey, all respondents reported eating lunch and 35% took more than half an hour for their break.

Lead by example and show your staff that taking a lunch break is more than okay – in fact, make it mandatory.

3. Independent news 'Average lunch break lasts only 22 minutes' article, 2018. [View online](#)



STEP 2

DISCOURAGE DINING “AL DESKO”.

Okay so you've got people taking a break to actually get some sustenance in them – that's great. But you also need them to get away from their desks and their screens.

Research has shown that when you take a break from the task at hand and do something totally unrelated, you are able to think more creatively when you return to the original task⁴. Staying inside, in the same location, makes it hard for employees to develop new ideas. Taking a break gives us a second wind and a fresh perspective on our most challenging projects.

In a survey of our own clients, 47% reported they never eat at their desk and 28% said they rarely do so. One of the pleasures of working with our clients is seeing the cultures they've built around food and conviviality. The canteens we work in are buzzing with chatter and laughter – clear markers of happiness.

Encourage your employees to change their scenery, go for a walk, hit the gym – or better still, share a meal with their colleagues.

4. Creativity Research Journal 'The Incubation Effect: Hatching a Solution?' article, 2009. [View online](#)



STEP 3 FIND SOME SPACE. MAKE IT NICE.

If you want to get people away from their desks, it's helpful to offer them some space to do it. Understandably, this is easier said than done with the cost of office real estate in London. But, if you can get people taking their lunch break in a comfortable and social space it will pay dividends.

There is plenty of evidence that points to a link between office environments and productivity. Efficient and aesthetically pleasing workplaces help to reduce employee absenteeism, reduce staff turnover, and increase occupant productivity and satisfaction, thus increasing the perceived health and well-being of their occupants. In fact, a nationwide survey-based study using professionals from different sectors in the UK indicated that a good office environment can help to increase productivity by up to 20%, equivalent to £135B per year.

We're experts at eking out cooking and dining space in existing offices. Our flexible delivery model uses minimal permanent equipment, allowing for clients to repurpose the dining areas for the rest of the day. We can service clients that need anything from a one-off pop-up to 3 meals/day, 5 days/week without an onsite kitchen or extraction. At one client site we serve 800 meals/day with not much more than some counters and a dishwasher!

5. Creativity Research Journal 'Creative and productive workplaces: a review' article, 2015. [View online](#)

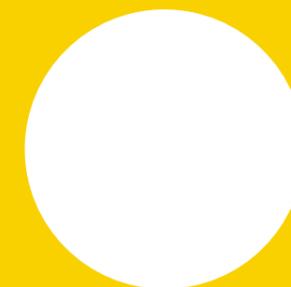
STEP 4 BUY LUNCH.

If you want to make sure your staff take a break – or take a break together – then don't just provide the space, provide the food too. After all, who doesn't like a free lunch (or breakfast or dinner!)?

Sainsbury's commissioned research from Oxford Economics and the National Centre for Social Research to learn more about living well in the UK⁶. The study found that the four greatest factors affecting our well-being are sleep quality, sex life satisfaction, a sense of having enough time and social eating. Instances of eating socially relate to a sense of having enough time and are impacted by our working lives. The study found that those who worked longer hours were more likely to eat alone. Even worse, eating alone was second only to having a mental health condition as an indicator of unhappiness.

Again, we surveyed our own clients and found that 48% said they always eat with other people and 32% said they usually do, illustrating that offering a free meal motivates people to eat together more often.

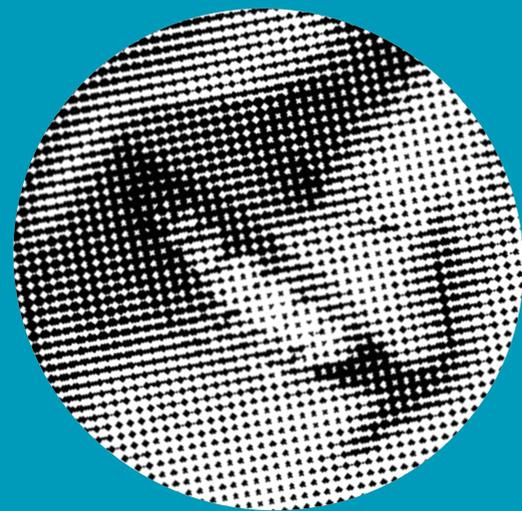
If you want to make your staff happy and more productive then providing free meals is a fool-proof and cost-effective way to help people feel more connected to their colleagues and motivated to do their best work.



6. Sainsbury's 'The Sainsbury's Living Well Index' article, 2018. [View online](#)

Did you know?

Twitter, Verizon and Netflix use Fooditude for their catering needs.



LET'S TALK!

Want to find out more about Fooditude?
Book a 15 minute consultation with Andre, our Business Development Manager.



fooditude
FEED YOURSELF HAPPY

Connect with us online:

Twitter: @WeAreFooditude

Facebook: @WeAreFooditude

LinkedIn: @WeAreFooditude

www.fooditude.co.uk