Manager’s Corner

Getting Buy-In From School Administration and Staff

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**PURPOSE**
Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

**VISION**
Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

**MISSION**
Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING TRAINING – 4100

Employee will be able to develop plans that include involvement with school and community members, empower school nutrition leaders, and address excellent customer service.

4120 – Program Promotion
Promote the Child Nutrition Program

4150 – School and Community Communication
Communicate within the school and to the community through multiple approaches to inform and educate stakeholders.

Manager’s Corner: Getting Buy-In From School Administration and Staff is designed to empower managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This lesson plan contains:

• Learning objective
• Statement explaining the importance of the topic
• List of materials
• Instructions on how to present the information
• Questions to ask staff
• An activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff
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Lesson Overview

Instructions for lesson:
- Review the lesson objective and background information.
- Review why it is important.
- Ask staff the questions.
- Facilitate the activity outlined.
- Provide time for staff to ask questions.

Objective: Identify tips and techniques for getting buy-in from school administration and staff.

Background information: The school nutrition program is a business that requires buy-in from its funders (administrators, parents, and teachers) as well as the customers (students, staff, parents, and administrators). Buy-in means that the stakeholder (i.e., administration, staff, parents, and students) has indicated acceptance of the program and a willingness to actively support and participate in program activities.

Why it is important: Getting buy-in from school administration and staff helps to increase participation and involvement in the school nutrition program. It is mutually beneficial for stakeholders and school nutrition programs to have a positive working relationship. Your attitude each day helps provide a positive working relationship. Students, teachers, and administrators are more likely to eat with us when we provide excellent customer service.
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Questions for Staff

• Why is it important to get buy-in from school administration and staff?
  **Answer:**
  - Administration and staff can model healthy eating behaviors and help encourage students to participate in school nutrition programs.
  - Administration and staff can be advocates for the school nutrition program.
  - Support from administration and staff can be leveraged when upgrades to school nutrition program spaces are needed.

• What are some things our school nutrition department would like to do that requires buy-in from our school administration?
  **Answer:** Potential responses may include:
  - Provide refreshments on Back-to-School Night and have the cafeteria as a showcase for parents and students.
  - Purchase ball caps instead of hairnets to change the image to become more like a restaurant server.
  - Host the monthly wellness team meetings and have members test taste new entrée items.
  - Invite teachers into the cafeteria or our staff to the classroom to showcase new menu items and their health benefits.

• What are some ways we can get buy-in from our school administration and staff?
  **Answer:** Potential responses may include:
  - Host a celebrity server day. Invite the principal or local celebrity to serve lunch or breakfast on a certain day.
  - Share your personal child nutrition program story.
  - Invite the administration and staff to lunch and breakfast.
  - Invite the administration to visit local farms when your program goes for a visit.
  - Involve administration and staff in testing menu items.

• What special events or occasions can you host to get the administration and staff involved?
  **Answer:** Potential responses include:
  - Taste Testing
    - Holiday Meals
    - Themed Meal days (i.e., National Back-to-School Month, Chili day)
    - Foods to celebrate a school-wide initiative (i.e., foods that tie into a book or series

  **Please note:** The answers provided are only examples and are not an inclusive list of possible responses.
Activity: Getting Buy-In

Activity materials included in this document:
- Getting Buy-In Activity Worksheet

Materials provided by the school nutrition operation:
- School site or district holiday and events calendar
- Copies of handout
- Writing utensils

Activity Instructions:
- Ask participants to get into two teams, if you have a small staff have them work as a group.
- Ask participants to list ways they can get buy-in from administration and staff.
- Have participants list ways to incorporate their ideas to increase staff buy-in.
- Give participants a school site or district holiday and events calendar for inspiration.
Getting Buy-In

Instructions:
List ways you can get buy-in from administration and staff. List ways to incorporate your ideas to increase staff buy-in. Use a school site or district holiday and events calendar for inspiration.

Getting Buy-In

1. _________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________
4. _________________________________________________
5. _________________________________________________
6. _________________________________________________

Increasing Buy-In

1. _________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________
4. _________________________________________________
5. _________________________________________________
6. _________________________________________________
