



Tuckshop and Canteen Management Consultants

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Supplier Relationship Management

Establishing and maintaining good supplier relationships is a key element to being a successful canteen.

The relationship with your supplier is a two way relationship and you can both have successful businesses if you maintain good, honest communication from the outset.

Suppliers can directly impact the financial performance and profitability of a canteen, as they influence product costs, inventory levels and the timelines of delivery of goods.

Don't have too many suppliers. You should aim to have less than six. Many schools are now using Coles or Woolworths online for their odds and ends purchases rather than petty cash or going out shopping.

Establishing Suppliers

Sometimes finding suppliers will be difficult and at other times you will be overrun with them and literally hiding in your office to avoid them! Ask other canteens or QAST for a list of reputable suppliers.

When signing up with new suppliers always ensure you are aware of their ordering and delivery schedule. Try, where possible, to maintain the same delivery schedule as other businesses in the area who use that supplier. This means that the supplier is spending less time and money doing multiple deliveries which may impact their pricing.

Ensure the supplier will work in with your payment system- Most schools have a minimum of 30 days accounts so volunteer treasurers only need to pay the bills once per month.

You must work within the guidelines of the Purchasing policy of your P&C or P&F Association or school. For example state schools in QLD use the purchasing policy supplied by Education QLD
<http://education.qld.gov.au/corporate/pandc/pcpurchasingpolicy.doc>

Build relationships with suppliers in your own area, especially for fruit and vegetables. Not only will you be lowering your canteen's carbon footprint, you will be supporting your local community.




Maintaining Relationships

It is important to have any negotiated discounts, on top of the current published price list, in writing. This will ensure you have the correct pricing when you go to do your costings. Consider discussing new menu ideas with your suppliers to ensure they will be stocking the required products for the period you will be needing them. This also gives the supplier future information and may even persuade them to stock an item which they were not considering. Regular meetings with your suppliers will also ensure you are aware of new products on the market.

Often times at the end of the year your suppliers will send you a gift as a thank you, (if you are a P&C run canteen, don't forget to register the gifts on the P&C Gift Register), why not send your suppliers a Christmas card saying thank you for the year past.

These small tokens of appreciation will go a long way in ensuring your supplier is doing the best by you – and you never know when you're going to need an emergency delivery because the wheels fell off!

Additional help to manage your Tuckshop or Canteen

-  Tuckshop and Canteen Management Consultants Helpline www.canteens.com.au - Jocelyn Ashcroft
-  QAST is an excellent source of information for Tuckshops and Canteens <http://www.qast.org.au/>
Apply for your member log in details so you can access members only section.
-  Canteens.com.au- Follow us on facebook-www.facebook.com/canteens