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WHAT'S EVERYONE ELSE DOING?



A healthy workplace is good for business

CASE STUDY – KRAFT FOODS

Kraft Foods is a multinational food manufacturing company that has been operating in Australia for more than 85 years. In 2010, the company acquired Cadbury. Kraft Foods employs 620 staff in the Clarendon factory on the outskirts of Hobart. Employees are a mix of factory-based and office-based workers in an approximate ratio of 3.5:1.

Based on the strength of staff feedback and strong support by management, Kraft decided to tackle the issue of worksite smoking. For many years, staff had been permitted to smoke during normal work breaks. However, with the introduction of a Good Manufacturing Practice framework across the site, smoking was identified as a workplace safety and health issue.

A new policy was developed that still allowed on-site smoking, but directed employees to be fully changed from factory clothing into regular clothing while smoking. Employees then had to change back into factory clothing before entering the factory again.

No additional break time would be permitted for these clothing changes.

Kraft recognised that this change in policy would make it significantly more difficult for employees to smoke while at work. To help determine the best ways to help employees cut down or stop smoking, a committee was formed with representatives from both the Quality and Occupational Health and Safety groups.



Some of the strategies identified as suitable included:

- supplying self-help materials, including brochures and smoking cessation books
- engaging Quit Tasmania to deliver a 'Fresh Start' quit smoking program on site (within paid working hours)
- working with a local pharmacy to provide fully subsidised nicotine patches and smoking cessation advice.

These strategies were delivered at the same time as the new smoking policy came into effect.

As a result of implementing these strategies, there has been a visible drop in the number of people smoking on site, and increased awareness of smoking cessation opportunities for employees.



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Sally's story

I was 12 when I started smoking – over three decades ago! Around seven years ago I gave up for about five years, but I gradually started smoking again. I used to smoke about 25 cigarettes a day – the strong ones, too! Back when I started smoking you could only get 16 mg cigarettes, and we thought you got more value from the strong ones anyway, so we stuck with those.

I knew I had to stop some time – with the changes at work, I didn't want to be trying to cut back with everyone else. I started cutting back about six weeks before the new policy came in. It was pretty easy to cut down – it was a hassle to get changed every time I wanted a cigarette, so I gradually smoked less and less at work.

I started the Quit Tasmania 'Fresh Start' program held at work. I just came along to the course to see what they had to say, although I really had no intention of giving up. After all, the company was offering to help for free, so why not try and do it now? I was really just coming along to gather information for 'later on', when I was ready to quit. I even thought I'd collect the free patches and use them later!

But something changed during the course; I just realised I could do it. I didn't read much of the workbook, and didn't do any of the exercises. They made me too stressed.

Two weeks later, I had my last cigarette. I smoked a few in the morning, jumped in the shower, put on a patch and went to work. I didn't really plan that this would be the day, although I was fairly strategic about the week. I was on day shift so I knew I would have more support from my partner that week. For me it was too stressful to plan in advance.

It wasn't easy – my stubborn nature is the thing that has got me through. I know I am the only one I would let down, the only one who would get upset.

When I feel like a cigarette now, I just try to distract myself, move around, do something else. I tell myself I don't need it. I never used to be able to smell them either, but I can now, so that makes me realise how awful they smell.

I used the patches for about 2½ weeks. I found sleep a bit tricky, though; I think using the patches at night made me a bit wired. Since I gave up I have changed everything around so that there is no longer room for the ashtray next to my bed. It used to be strange that there was a blank spot where it always sat.

I am still confident and stubborn about my future without cigarettes. I hate being upset with myself, I can't let myself down.

I am buying a new PC with the money I am saving from not smoking. I think it's really important to have new goals.

'I am really grateful to Kraft for providing the support to quit smoking – I don't think I could have done it without them. Quit Tasmania were also fabulous – Craig our instructor was very inspirational and I am very thankful for his help.'



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