

Regular engagement with customers can help tuckshop staff and volunteers to gain a better understanding of customer's needs, which can lead to increased sales and even attract more volunteers. This fact sheet provides ideas on how tuckshops and parent bodies can find out more about their customers.

Surveys

Surveys are a simple and easy way to gain customer feedback. Try these tips when developing your survey:

- Be concise and keep as short as possible.
- Only ask questions that you need answered.
- Use a consistent rating scale, if applicable e.g. on a scale of 1 to 5 how happy are you with the variety of food at the tuckshop (1= extremely unhappy, 5 = extremely happy).
- Try to frame simple questions with a yes/no option e.g. do you regularly use the tuckshop.
- Explore digital formats such as Survey Monkey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com>) to make it easy for customers to complete the questionnaire. Results will be automatically summarised making them easy to use.
- Include some open-ended questions to allow customers to give some insightful feedback e.g. what would you like to see on the menu that is not currently available?

Put these types of questions towards the end of the survey.

Example survey questions

1. Do you use the school tuckshop?
2. What types of food do you usually purchase?
3. Are you happy with the menu selections at the tuckshop?
4. Are you happy with the variety of food available for purchase?
5. What other food items would you like to see?
6. Are you aware of what food items are available from the tuckshop?
7. How could the school tuckshop be improved?
8. What would you like to see on the menu that is not available at the tuckshop?

Focus groups

Focus groups are an excellent way to have face-to-face discussions with your customers. They allow you to discover how they think and feel about a topic and why they hold certain opinions. They can offer a broad range of information, offer the opportunity for clarification of responses and provide information more quickly than questioning people separately.

These types of forums also allow you to get information from non-verbal responses, such as facial expressions and body language.

To ensure maximum numbers at these types of events, try to identify and address any barriers that may prevent your customers from attending, such as childcare. You may also provide an incentive for participation such as refreshments or a lucky door prize.

Tuckshop committee

A tuckshop committee is a sub-committee of the parent organisation and involves a group of stakeholders such as, parent organisation representatives, parents, students, tuckshop staff/volunteers and even school staff members. This group may provide advice to the parent organisation about menu changes, new ideas, marketing and promotion, volunteer recruitment and even equipment requirements.

Competitions

To encourage customers to engage with your service you could organise a competition, such as:

- design a new healthy menu item
- design a poster promoting a healthy menu choice
- name the tuckshop.

Come and try days

This type of event is a great way to encourage customers to try and provide feedback on new menu items. Provide a small sample of new healthy menu items to students, parents and teachers for feedback. If conducting this activity in the classroom, ensure that you inform teachers so they can check allergy information of their students.

School pick up/drop off areas

Talking to parents as they wait to collect their children at school drop off/pick up is another useful way to engage with your customers. You may ask families set questions about the school tuckshop or conduct surveys as this face-to-face contact can improve return rates. Keep the questions or surveys short – parents might be in a hurry, and be sure to seek approval from your school principal beforehand.

Workshops

Hosting a workshop on healthy eating or another related topic is a useful way to engage with your customers. To ensure the workshop is a useful engagement activity you could include a short group discussion before/after the workshop to gather thoughts about the tuckshop or hand out a quick survey.

Celebrations of Cultural Diversity

Invite Elders or other significant community members to a celebration of cultural diversity where you could also discuss community member's thoughts on the school tuckshop. Alternatively, you could run a competition to design a culturally appropriate tuckshop menu item.