

Top 10 Ways To Boost Morale in the Break Room

The break room can serve many purposes. The most important is giving employees a place to relax and get away from their work stations for a while. In order to make the time away from their workstation as enjoyable and relaxing as possible, the break room needs to be inviting; a place they want to go. Here are some things you can do to increase employee morale in the break room:

1. **Pay for the coffee and supplies.** Free amenities are always the best, and coffee is one of the things many office workers rely upon heavily to get through the day. Providing free coffee is one of the easiest ways to make employees happier.
2. **Provide free lunch once a week.** Free lunch Fridays are a tradition many offices have instated to show employee appreciation. It can be something as simple as ordering pizza or something as much as having a full catered meal. Since everybody has to meet in the break room during a set time to get the free lunch, this will allow employees to congregate and socialize with other coworkers that they may not see on a regular basis.
3. **Install TVs.** Television will give your workers a window to the outside world and help break up the monotony of staring at the computer screen all day long. As with most things in the break room, control of the TV should be on a first-come first-served basis.
4. **Add some color to the walls and décor.** Plain white walls coupled with bright fluorescent lighting can make a break room look and feel more like an institution or hospital. But putting warm colors on the walls, like reds, will make the lunchroom a more inviting area that boosts employees' moods. Hanging artwork on the walls and placing live plants in the break room will also boost employee morale.
5. **Provide comfortable seating.** Couches and lounge chairs in the break room will make the room more inviting and give employees another reason to stick around and socialize during their lunch breaks as opposed to going somewhere else.
6. **Provide healthy food options.** Though it may sound cliché, healthy employees are happy employees; they are also more productive. Filling the vending machine with healthy foods options will help decrease the amount of sick-leave and let your workers know that you care about their health. Also, natural sugars found in whole foods, as opposed to refined sugars that are in candy, provide more sustained energy. You've never heard of anybody having a sugar crash after eating an orange.
7. **Offer games.** Foosball, pinball, air hockey, Golden Tee; these are some classic games that can be added to the break room. The obvious fear of this option is that employees will not get back to work. But most companies that have games in the break room have not had many problems. Allowing employees to take a game break can actually increase productivity. Workers that cannot tear themselves away from the game are usually those who already have problems with managing their time anyway, so the game didn't create the problem.
8. **Hold a potluck.** Most people have experience with potluck, or carry-in, meals during the holiday season, where friends and family in attendance bring side dishes or desserts. Holding a potluck meal in the break room will create a sense of family among your employees and give them another opportunity to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere.
9. **Provide magazines or other reading materials.** Employees that choose to eat lunch alone will appreciate something other than the wall to look at. Although the internet keeps most people up-to-date, magazines offer interesting articles from a variety of subjects. Take a poll of your employees to see what magazine subscriptions you should provide, but caution your workers to keep their choices tasteful.
10. **Ask employees what they want.** Your employees are the ones using the break room most, so their feedback is an important tool to designing the ideal work environment. If you are designing a new break room, renovating an existing one or just want to offer a few more amenities, you should place a suggestion box in the lunchroom to see what employees want the most. As long as the suggestions are within reason, like a vending machine or TV, you can simply tally up the most popular suggestion and factor that into your design.