



There is no doubt that cooking can help bring people together, and many organisations are capitalising on this and using food as a way of driving team cohesion and employee satisfaction. Below is a case study of one such organisation which used the universal joy of cooking and sharing a meal to bring about an increase in staff morale and engagement.

The key objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Increase team communication
2. Get staff from different offices to know each other and hence break down geographical barriers
3. Break down barriers regarding age, position, seniority and tenure within the organisation

#### THE MENU

**Italian Green Pea Soup with Basil**  
**Creamy Lamb and Shitake Mushroom with Red Quinoa Pilaf**  
**Baby Spinach and Pomegranate Salad**  
**Mocha Mouse**

After deciding on what to prepare, the group talked through the menu ingredients, their health benefits and other general meal preparation tips for busy lives. People then divided into three groups, with each group deciding on a team name and which part of the meal they were going to take responsibility for preparing.

Teams then had to coordinate who would be in the kitchen, what equipment would be needed at different times and so on, so communication between individuals and groups was critical from the outset. Throughout the activity there was ongoing education regarding healthy meal choices, how people could promote their own health, and how they could facilitate the health and vitality of their colleagues. There were also team building exercises to ensure that the session was filled with fun, play and laughter.

The concept of injecting cooking with love was also discussed and individuals were encouraged to focus on positive emotions and eliminate any feelings of stress, anger or frustration. Participants learnt that, as well as making the food taste better and more satisfying, focussing on positive emotions has profound effects on general health and wellbeing.

**Outcomes:** The group came together in a unique and playful way to share a delicious, nutritious meal with ingredients that were new to them. The organisational benefits were that participants built connections, really started communicating with other as equals, and found ways to demonstrate interpersonal tolerance and mutual respect. Individuals also gained new insights into healthy food options and a multitude of practical tips on how to improve their own dietary choices.

*"Holistic Services helped us to create and manage a team building event that was a great success for a diverse team of males and females with varying levels of fitness, mobility and seniority. With a high end health focus, we came together to prepare a feast which was healthy to eat, easy to prepare and gave instruction for replicating the menu success again. Their facilitators communicated both office health and general life improvements and were flexible enough to cater for a range of tastes and preferences". Paul Nettelbeck. Regional Marketing Manager - GN Netcom*

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