

## **The Price of Office Coffee**

According to research carried out by Deal Jungle – the UK’s favourite B2B social commerce site - providing free coffee in the workplace costs employers an average of £288 per employee per year. So businesses with a headcount of 40 staff could be paying out an incredible £11,520 per annum (excluding the price of the coffee itself!).

The reason for this startling statistic is that according to the research a person spends approximately 45 minutes each day making hot drinks and chatting by the kettle to their colleagues – using up valuable time which is outside of their authorised breaks.

Firstly, it is not a legal requirement to provide free refreshments to staff, so you could ask them to “bring their own” (but keep the bullet proof vest close by!). Although this may sound stingy, you are perfectly entitled to do so.

You could insist that any coffee trips to the nearest café should be done in their own time (i.e. before or after working hours or during lunch time) and not within company time – thus limiting time spent away from the workplace. Alternatively if you have several staff requiring a tea/coffee ‘fix’, you could suggest they ask the café to deliver a plentiful supply.

Although you might risk a back-lash from staff by introducing any of these measures, it may nevertheless be worth pointing out to them (in as subtle a way as possible) the hidden costs of supplying free teas and coffees as workplace “perks”, thus demonstrating what a generous and considerate employer you are!



## “Putting the Human into Human Resources”

This article was written by Grania Sweeting, Managing Director of Grapevine HR Ltd. Grania is an experienced, independent HR Consultant providing outsourced HR support to organisations on a retained, project or ad hoc basis.

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