



Food waste employee engagement at PENNY

Overview

The need

Every year, each German discards approximately 55 kg of food [1]. It is likely that this level of food waste is partly due to consumer uncertainty about how to act, and what to do, to tackle the problem.

The solution

Inspired by the REFRESH project, PENNY and CSCP developed a program to train 800 new employees on food waste. The aim was that this would:

- Raise awareness of food waste at PENNY
- Contribute to PENNY's strategic focus on food waste
- Enable the apprentices to contribute to food waste reduction in their professional as well as in their private life

The benefit

Apprentice feedback on the training was very positive. This was evident from questionnaires as 96% of apprentices (443 respondents) said that the training had raised their awareness of food waste. In addition, the feedback suggested that the training inspired conversations about food waste, as 80% of the apprentices said that they had discussed food waste with others since completing the training.

Training for more than 800 Penny apprentices improves food waste awareness and inspires conversations about food waste

PENNY is one of the leading discount supermarkets based in Europe. The organisation has approximately 2,180 stores in Germany and employs 27,000 staff. PENNY has a turnover of around €12 billion (2017) and store sales in Germany generate around €7.4 billion [2]. The discounter belongs to the Cologne-based REWE Group.

Background

Every year, each German discards approximately 55 kg of food, of which about 44% could have, in principle, been avoided [1]. As a retailer, PENNY is aware of its environmental and social responsibility and is concerned about the conscious handling of food. PENNY actively contributes to the appreciation of food and has been committed for many years to support the continuous reduction of food waste.

PENNY has been keen to explore, in cooperation with REFRESH partners, how employees could reduce food waste. PENNY was particularly looking to develop a new food waste training program for its apprentices. Their vision was to equip these new employees with the knowledge and practical solutions to reduce food waste in their professional and private life.

What was the solution?

Inspired by the REFRESH project, PENNY and The Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP) developed a concept to train new apprentices on food waste. WRAP were able to share experiences from the "[Your Workplace Without Waste](#)" program, and helped to inform the process and content of the training program.

Implementation

PENNY and CSCP decided to implement a "train-the-trainer" approach; where CSCP trained 12 staff members at PENNY on the topic of food waste who, in turn, rolled out the training



to apprentices. The training was integrated with the existing apprenticeship program so that it was received by all new employees.

Prior to implementation, PENNY and CSCP developed the necessary materials for training which included:

- A PowerPoint for a “train-the-trainer” workshop
- A PowerPoint for trainers to use in the apprentice session, including speaking notes (“Guideline for trainers” - Figure 1)
- Posters of PENNY supermarket layouts for interactive working sessions

“The apprentice training within the framework of REFRESH was a very successful activity. We are satisfied that we were able to anchor the important topic of the appreciation of food and the great importance of reducing food waste even more firmly in our company. We are assessing a repetition with new trainees.”

Mirka Stark, Senior Project Manager for Sustainability at the REWE Group

<p>TrainerInnen-Leitfaden</p> <p>PENNY Azubi-Schulung zum Thema Lebensmittelverschwendung</p> <p>TrainerInnen-Leitfaden</p>  <p>Ein Pilotprojekt in Zusammenarbeit mit</p>  <p>Azubi-Schulung zum Thema Lebensmittelverschwendung Ein Pilotprojekt in Zusammenarbeit mit</p>  <p>0</p>	<p>TrainerInnen-Leitfaden</p> <p>INHALTSVERZEICHNIS</p> <p>HINTERGRUND 2</p> <p>Format und Dauer 2</p> <p>Unterlagen für Sie 2</p> <p>Materialbedarf 2</p> <p>Vorbereitung - Bevor Sie anfangen 3</p> <p>Nach der Schulung 3</p> <p>Hinweise zur Wirkungsmessung 3</p> <p>SCHULUNGSABLAUF 4</p> <p>Überblick 4</p> <p>Modul 1 – Einführung in die Thematik 5</p> <p>Modul 2 – Relevanz von Lebensmittelverschwendung 7</p> <p>Modul 3 – PENNY-Aktivitäten gegen Lebensmittelverschwendung 12</p> <p>Modul 4 – Herausforderungen im Markt 17</p> <p>Modul 5 – Ausblick 19</p> <p>ANHANG 21</p> <p>Weitere Informationen zu Lebensmittelverschwendung 21</p> <p>Weitere Informationen zur Azubi-Schulung und zum REFRESH-Pilotprojekt 21</p> <p>Danksagung 21</p> <p>Quellenangaben 22</p> <p>Azubi-Schulung zum Thema Lebensmittelverschwendung Ein Pilotprojekt in Zusammenarbeit mit</p>  <p>1</p>
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Figure 1: Cover page and table of contents of the guidelines for trainers



The “train-the-trainer” workshops took place over a 3.5-hour session, then each PENNY trainer delivered food waste training to groups of apprentices in 2-hour sessions. The training included information on: consumer tips (including smart grocery shopping), storage and use of leftovers, stock and market information, and challenges in the market. Apprentices were then encouraged to take part in a competition where they proposed “creative ideas for customers to avoid food waste”. PENNY received more than 200 entries, including many creative, fun and innovative ideas.

PENNY anticipated that the training would:

- Raise awareness of food waste at PENNY, including hot spots in supermarkets that would benefit from future solutions
- Contribute to PENNY’s strategic focus on food waste and to their sustainability priorities
- Enable the apprentices to contribute to food waste reduction in their professional and private lives

The impact of the training was assessed through feedback questionnaires, which were completed immediately after training and again 6 months later. Feedback was gathered from trainers for the train-the-trainer workshops and from apprentices for the apprentice training sessions.

In total, over 800 PENNY apprentices, from three consecutive years of apprenticeships, were trained between fall 2017 and summer 2018.

Outcomes

Initial feedback questionnaires showed that 8 out of 12 trainers felt they could “raise the apprentice’s awareness of food waste” after taking part in the “train-the-trainer” workshop. This was evident from apprentice questionnaires, as 96% of respondents (443 apprentices) confirmed that the training had raised their awareness of the issue.

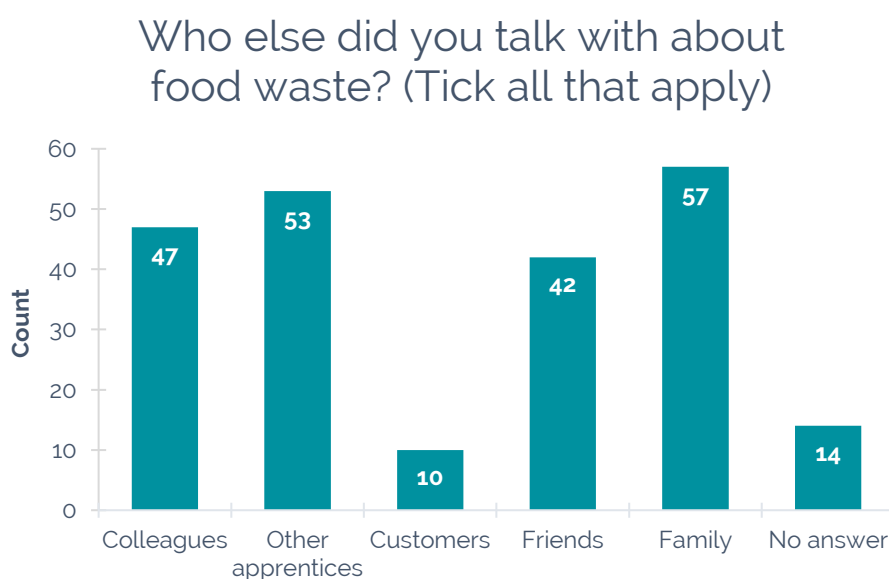


Figure 2: The type of person apprentices spoke with about food waste, after the food waste training program at PENNY. Reported in evaluation 6 months after training (179 respondents)



After 6 months, apprentices completed a second questionnaire. The number of respondents dropped from 443 to 179, mainly because one third of the apprentices had finished their apprenticeship by this time and could no longer be reached. But of those respondents, 80% said that they had discussed food waste with others since completing the training. Results show that PENNY apprentices discussed food waste most with colleagues, friends and family, but only 10 apprentices said they had spoken to customers about food waste [Figure 2]. However, over half of the apprentices (179 respondents) described an increase in food waste awareness and felt that the training taught them to behave more sustainably in the workplace and at home [Figure 3]. The results closely match the objectives set out by PENNY and the training was considered successful.

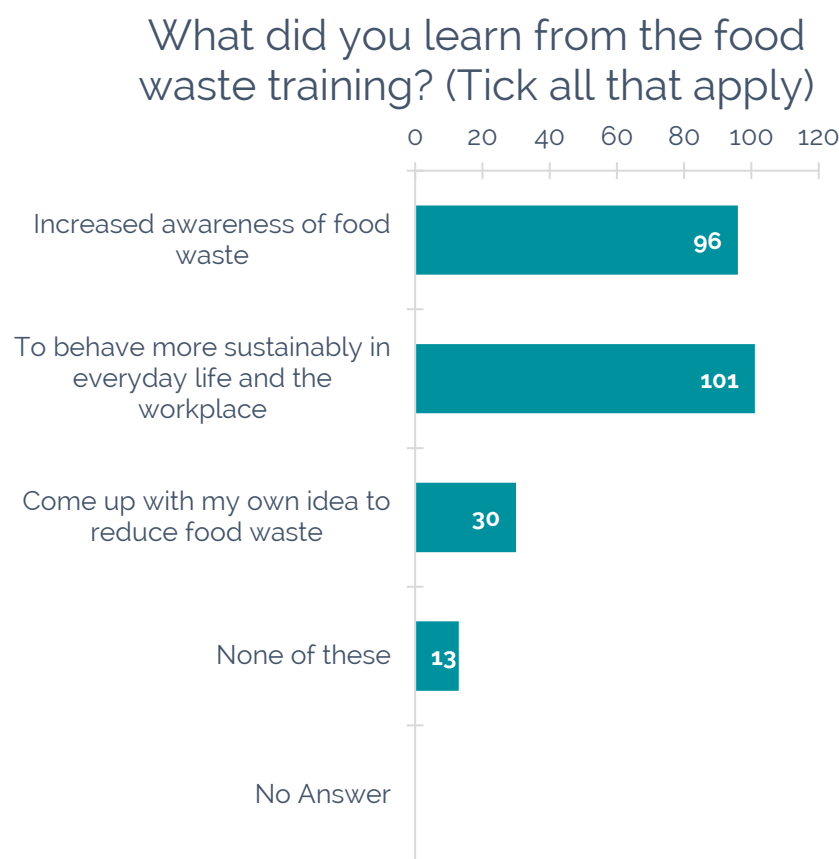


Figure 3: What apprentices felt they learnt from the food waste training program. Reported in evaluation 6 months after training (179 respondents)

Thoughts for the future

PENNY works on the topic of food waste with their employees, customers and stakeholders. Raising the awareness of employees, especially new employees, is a valuable basis for improving, for example, the distribution of food to social institutions and charities. Here, market employees can exert direct influence.

PENNY continues to have a strategic focus on food waste and are considering the continuation of this training as part of their apprenticeship program.



Results from the questionnaires show that the PENNY “train-the-trainer” approach was effective at raising awareness of food waste in-store and at home. For anybody interested in pursuing a similar path, PENNY confirms that the “train-the-trainer” concept has proven effective and that the topic is very popular with young people.

References

1. GfK SE (2018): *Systematische Erfassung von Lebensmittelabfällen der privaten Haushalte in Deutschland. Schlussbericht zur Studie.*
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2. PENNY. (n.d.). *Über uns.* Retrieved from <https://www.penny.de/unternehmen/ueber-uns/>