

How to Get

Free
Coffee?



Ebenezer CL Heng

Copyright

All materials, including, without limitation, design, text, and graphics are ALL RIGHTS RESERVED Copyright © 2009 Ebenezer CL Heng. You may electronically copy and print to hard copy portions of this Ebook for the sole purpose of using materials it contains for informational and non-commercial, personal use only. Any other use of the materials in this Ebook – including any commercial use, reproduction for purposes other than described above, modification, distribution, republication, display, or performance – without the prior written permission of Ebenezer CL Heng is strictly prohibited.

Free coffee is great, but it is even better when you share it with your love ones. In my case, with my lovely wife Miss Ong and my beautiful daughter Gi Gi. Without their support, there wouldn't be this little book...

Contents

Thanks for the coffee!

1. Introduction.....	6
1.1 Where do You Drink?	
1.2 How to Get Free Coffee	
2. Asking Strategy.....	8
2.1 Asking for Free Coffee	
3. Bargaining Strategy.....	10
3.1 Bargaining for Coffee	
3.2 With who to Bargain for Coffee	
3.3 When to Bargain for Coffee	
3.4 When the Transaction is Done	
3.5 When the Offer is Extended	
3.6 When the Job is Urgent	
3.7 No risk, No gain	
3.8 Festive Seasons	
3.8.1 Tip 1 – The Power of Small Gifts	
3.8.2 Tip 2 – The Power of Socializing	
3.8.3 Tip 3 – Be the Helpful One	
3.8.4 Tip 4 – The Advantage of the First Mover	
3.8.5 Tip 5 – Be Good to the “Gods”	
4. Crafting Strategy.....	18
4.1 Where Would the Free Coffee Come From	
4.2 How to Craft a Plan to Get that Free Coffee	
4.3 When to Sell the "Crafted Proposal"	
4.4 Why Should They Accept Your Scheme	

Thanks for the coffee!

Hey pal, thanks for the coffee! If you are reading this, you probably paid for it. If you did not, then you probably got it from some great friend that did – do not worry about piracy and copyrights, as long as someone did pay for it, it is their right to share it with you, same goes for the coffee. I want you to enjoy the secret of getting free coffee forever, so read on.

First, let me tell you the story behind this ebook. Eight out of ten people I know love coffee and they are constantly complaining about the expensive coffee machines, coffee powder, coffee pods. All in all, they are complaining about the expensive experience of drinking a quality cup.

Starbucks is expensive and the coffeehouse around the corner is lousy. You get the picture – those who love coffee want it cheap and good. So, wouldn't be better if they could have all the coffee they want free?

It started as a little project: "how to get a coffee machine into my office." Then slowly evolved into a complex "plot" to convince the management to offer free coffee to us, the employees.

Today, I am happy to say that me and my colleagues enjoy a full range of coffee including green Mountain. In addition, we have the Keurig single serve coffee maker in our office. Now, we are free to drink as much coffee as we want and the management is happy to cover the costs because of the increased productivity.

Motivated by this successful experience, I began a personal research. My aim was to discover the most efficient ways of getting free coffee. This document is the result of exact observations and tested methods of attaining on the house coffee. Please take advantage of the world's first "how to get free coffee" handbook.

1. Introduction

1.1 Where do You Drink?

Where do you drink most of your coffee and consequently waste your hard-earned money? The answer is obvious for the great majority: at the workplace, where we spend most of our time.

So, if we manage to get free coffee at our workplace, we can save a lot of money. Probably, with the money saved on coffee, you wouldn't be able to buy a new house or an extravagant car, but if you work out the sums, you could get a nice holiday.

Let's get you excited! Let us suppose you drink 2 cups of coffee per day, and you purchase them at \$2.50 a cup. You spend 5 days a week in office, therefore you have a total of 250 days a year (taking away 10 days of public holidays, leave etc) in office.

Do you know how much you spend on coffee in a year? Well, if you do the math, it is \$1250. This saving can probably send you to a pretty nice holiday. Isn't exciting to know that just by saving some money on coffee, your holidays are being paid for?

We now recognize that the office is the place to get free coffee, so let's investigate how we are going to do just that.

1.2 How to Get Free Coffee

"Free" is zero sum equation, which means that the money you spend on coffee is from someone else's pocket. However, in order to get your free holiday, first you must learn the art of getting free coffee.

Now, what I am going to propose have been tried and tested. Not every tactic might be applicable for all situations. However, I can guarantee you that at least 50% of what is presented here would award you some free coffee. I call this the ABC tactic.

Well, the first basic thing that can get you free coffee is to simply ask for it. I will show you how to ask and who to ask from.

You already know that people show their appreciation by offering meals or coffee. I will explain you how to get into those situations and how to "bargain" in order to make people treat you with coffee.

The last tactic has definitely universal applicability. You would get free coffee not only for you, but for all your office colleagues. This tactic involves crafting a proposal which will get you and your colleagues free coffee from the management by creating a strong reason for your demand of coffee.

There you have it: the Ask, Bargain, and Craft (ABC) for getting free coffee.

2. Asking Strategy

2.1 Asking for Free Coffee

Now, asking for coffee requires technique and smart observation. Whether you get free coffee or not depends on the generosity of each person and on the size of the crowd.

Who do you think you should approach first for free coffee? Who should be top priority? The bosses? Wrong, they are second choice. The first group of folks who is most likely to give you free coffee is the sales people.

Why? Simply because they can claim it back from their company. If you invite them and they accept your invitation, it means they saw a business opportunity. So drink as much as you want. Don't worry about their pockets, they are spending company's money anyway.

Of course, bosses definitely are a group of people you should target for free coffee. You don't have to be a genius to figure out that they would pay when they meet you at a coffeehouse.

Pay attention now, I am going to give you exact details on how to transform your meetings and appointments into grand opportunities for free coffee. Be prepared to be offered coffee the whole week!

You might be thinking that you are putting yourself in a weird situation by having coffee with bosses and sales colleagues everyday. Now, think again, how often do you have meetings? It is almost on a daily basis, right?

You don't want to make your intentions obvious. So, structure your daily meetings as getaway sessions. Management and bosses like the idea of meetings out of the office. They call it "thinking out of the box". Management gurus argue that these kinds of meetings are more open and productive.

Let's say that usually you have eight meetings a week. Five major ones and three small ones. Here is how you "ask" from your bosses. On the major meetings it is easy. Just order coffee from Starbucks or from the coffee shops downstairs. Now, you already have five coffees to enjoy free.

The three small meetings might be with bosses or colleagues. Plan them outside in some coffeehouse. So, either your boss or your colleagues would pay for it. There you have it, three more coffees being taken care of.

If you drink two cups of coffee per day, in a business week, you would drink ten cups of coffee. You already have eight free cups, so all you need to do now is to Ask for two more coffees.

Remember, meetings require follow up. Therefore, you would arrange follow up sessions. Keep them small and informal (again, informal

means coffeehouses). Invite relevant stakeholders and let me assure you that you would get more than two cups of coffee.

It is not easy getting free coffee. Your timing and strategic skills must be top notch to depend on just this tactic to get free coffee. Nevertheless, let me tell you that according to my observations, there are people in my company who not only got free coffee following this approach, they even got free meals!

Then again, it is wiser to have more options. We also must take into consideration the "hit rate". Your bosses and colleagues might not like to go for coffee shops every time, so you need more schemes. Here the bargain for coffee method comes in.

3. Bargaining Strategy

3.1 Bargaining for Coffee

We have stated our goal: ten free coffees each week. Don't forget that this would get you a free holiday at the end of the year, so it is well worth the tedious work.

If you are good at asking coffee, you are sure to have free coffee at the office. Get this bargaining method right and you would have free coffee to enjoy with your love ones in the comfort of your home.

Sounds scrumptious? Good, the first thing you need to do is to create a "value" that people would want.

You might be knowledgeable in some specific area or have a valuable skill. However, in the end it all comes to pure information. Let me make myself clear.

Folks out there are always looking for information, and if you help them get it easily, they would be obliged to give you something.

Similar to "Asking for coffee", in "Bargaining for coffee" you need first to target the person to bargain with, and then plan carefully the time to ask for the "reward". Yes, it might sound like a lot of work, but trust me; soon it would come natural to you.

3.2 With who to Bargain for Coffee

Forget about the bosses in this scenario, they pay your wage, so you cannot possibly bargain with them. They dictate and you have to obey. Also, do not count on your department colleagues, because they have exactly the same information you have.

Firstly, you and your department colleagues basically have the same responsibilities and tasks. So where is the plus value here? Secondly, if you bargain with your colleagues for coffee, it would make you look really cheap.

As long as it is out of your department, go ahead and bargain for coffee. Just a brief note here, if you are in a purchasing position, never bargain for coffee or anything with your suppliers.

It is more than just unprofessional behavior; it could get you into trouble with the law. Therefore, keep all bargaining internal. At most, your colleagues would regard you as a "cheapskate".

3.3 When to Bargain for Coffee

We now recognize that people who come to us usually have a request to make. Sure, it is part of our profession to help them; however, some want it faster, others want it neater. Everyone has their own set of requirement and they would love to have their criteria met at the end of the day.

Delivering customized services requires more time and effort. And all we ask in return is a plain cup of coffee. Don't you think it's fair?

3.4 When the Transaction is Done

The best time to get your free coffee is when the people you helped come to pick the work or send a thank you email. When the "thank you" is uttered, make them feel obliged. Tell them how much effort you put in their assignment.

When another "thank you" comes out, simply joke that you need a coffee to relax, then be silent and wait for a response. Usually, it would be a "let's go for coffee" or you would find in your cubicle a hot cup the next day.

The trick here is not to try to have the cuppa delivered to you. It is impossible to control the timing or the "reward". Sometimes you could

get even a free meal. Remember that you want to get all your "coffee slots" filled up with free coffee. Having two free coffees for a single coffee slot means wasting one free coffee.

3.5 When the Offer is Extended

When a person comes to you asking as a favor to change this and augment that, highlight to them how busy you are. They would definitely try to persuade you. Now is your chance.

Pretend to stop what you are doing and analyze their request. Then, very unwillingly, announce that you would need a coffee for the job (specify the time for this free coffee). This is usually a done deal. If they are desperate enough to come to your cubicle, they are desperate enough to get it done with only one coffee.

3.6 When the Job is Urgent

What I am going to show you is not to be done too frequently. You have to control yourself, although I must admit that the temptation is huge to keep doing it.

If the job is urgent, it means that you have to either work late or spend your weekend at the office. It would disrupt your family time, and of course, it is not worth working for a single coffee cup.

Remember that you have to drink coffee at home too, so here is an opportunity to increase your home coffee supply. Let the office fellow tell you what he needs to be done. Then, patiently inform him that you

need to do certain things and you can only work on his project next week.

He would offer to help you with your problems. It is now that you tell him/her about your plan to shop for coffee. Do not omit anything. Tell him where the coffee shop is located and what brand of coffee you are planning to buy.

He/she would definitely get it for you. When you take the coffee from them (by then, you would have finished their assignment), always pass them the money. Theoretically, they would refuse, and say that the coffee is a treat from them. Although, on extremely rare cases, they might take the money and you just work for nothing.

It happens. Like in all business situations, bargaining for coffee comes with a risk. However, the risk is small and the reward is sweet. Right? The problem with this scenario is that if it's done too often, you will be seen as someone very greedy and not a team player. That is something bad for people to label you with.

3.7 No risk, No gain

There are times when coffee and food are yours for the taking! You do not even have to work for them! However, you do need to act quickly and your skin has to be very thick.

Invite yourself to parties and I can assure you that not only you would benefit from free beverages; free food is also at your discretion. Read

on to find the reasons to invite yourself at parties and learn the technique.

3.8 Festive Seasons

Christmas, New Year, National Celebrations, Family day at the office, all these are times where you do not need to Ask or Bargain. People invite you to enjoy yourself and take pleasure in free coffee and food. All you need to do is to be present.

However, such festive days are few and with long intervals between them. You need to have more such festive opportunities if you want to benefit from more free coffees. The solution to this dilemma is to invite yourself to other private celebrations.

People always celebrate birthdays, and usually they would organize the celebrations in a convenient place like the pantry or the canteen.

Here are five tips that guarantee you entrance to all the birthday parties at your office (there should be at least a few every month).

3.8.1 Tip 1 – The Power of Small Gifts

Always keep a small gift or nice card at hand and ask for a list of your colleague's birthdays. Then, as the birthday draws near, simply place the card or the small gift on the birthday boy/girl's desk. You would be invited to the party for sure.

3.8.2 Tip 2 – The Power of Socializing

Change your lunch and coffee buddies. Widen your social circle! You will come to know more people and your chances to be invited to a birthday party will increase. Do note that this comes with the danger of sharing the gift for the birthday colleague, which might happen to be more than a free cup of coffee.

Remember tip one? Always have at hand a small gift or a card. If you already gave your gift, you do not need to give money for other presents.

3.8.3 Tip 3 – Be the Helpful One

Be the organizer! Not only the people would appreciate you, but also you will get some extra delights.

After playing the role of the organizer for a while, people would come and ask you to organize birthday parties. You will become the official company birthday organizer!

3.8.4 Tip 4 – The Advantage of the First Mover

Be the one to pay for the meals of your colleagues. Yes, although it may sound strange, this is by far the best tip. After you have paid for the whole group (preferably with a credit card), people would give you money for their share. This means that they would give you more money than the value of their share. This is because few people would

care to give you an exact sum. In many cases, not only you would get a free coffee, you might even get a free meal!

Paying for it using credit cards will earn you points to exchange for some cool gifts like a coffee maker.

3.8.5 Tip 5 – Be Good to the “Gods”

I saved the best for the last. Remember the birthdays of all department heads. Similar to tip one, leave them a small gift at their secretary or at their cubicle.

I can assure you that in 90% of the cases, you will get a free meal and in 100% of the cases, you will get a free coffee.

Phew, that was some wall of words! Let's take a break.

If, as you read this, are smiling, it means you agree with me. But, if you keep shaking your head and think: “What a cheapskate!” you fail to realize a fact of life. You live in a corporate world, so you must try to think corporate.

Companies make the impossible possible to cut expenses. They ask you to recycle and reuse and they also think it is a good strategy to exploit the employees by making them work longer hours with less money or no money at all.

This is how companies control their costs and build their wealth. I know this isn't pretty, but this are the rules of the game. You should obey them too, if you want fame and glory.

Look at it this way: the money you save is yours to spend with your family. You would be able to provide your love ones with the things they want.

The current trend in money management is "passive earnings". This means you are not working for it but still enjoying it. Conversely, Asking and Bargaining for coffee methods are "active earnings". That means you need to put a little effort to see results.

What I am going to teach you next is "passive earnings". You work at the beginning and then you get your free coffee perpetually. This involves crafting a proposal.

4. Crafting Strategy

4.1 Where Would the Free Coffee Come From?

Isn't it something to get free coffee forever just by making a one time effort? So, where would the free coffee come from?

The bill will be paid by your office (we would show you why they want to pay) and coffee suppliers will provide the other things you need to enjoy a cup.

The pantry used to be just a place for drinking quick coffee. The employees were the ones to buy coffee provisions for the entire week. The pantry used to be a messy place with just a water boiler, a fridge and maybe a microwave oven.

Not anymore! The companies realized that they could improve their image at a low cost. And in no time the pantry became a place to entertain guests. It was upgraded and now is looking more and more like the Starbucks.

At the same time, coffee suppliers started to offer ingenious coffee solutions for office. Initially, there were the coffee vending machines that gave you anything from espresso to cappuccino with a push of a button.

Now, you get gourmet coffee from brands like Keurig (a popular single cup coffee maker) and Saeco (a fully automatic espresso machine).

Making the stakeholders desire that special corner in the company is the secret to get perpetual free coffee. Read on and find out how to accomplish this feat.

4.2 How to Craft a Plan to Get that Free Coffee

To receive something from your employer, repeat this mantra: "give them more to give you more". Therefore, if you want free coffee from the company, you have to give the company something that has great value to the company.

Now, ask yourself this: "what is the one thing an employer would love to have from their employees? No matter what form your answers might take, it would ultimately be linked to "productivity".

If you can increase the productivity of the people working for your boss, he would give you anything, let alone coffee.

Of course, you are not a leader and you are not supposed to rally your colleagues and make them work harder (if you are able to do so, then you should be your boss' boss). However, you can introduce some "drivers" in order to promote productivity.

As a corporate rule, if you want to gain free coffee from the management you should first write a proposal. If you simply tell the management: "Give me free coffee!" They would probably reply: "Go fly a kite!" However, if you tell them you are thinking of transforming the pantry into a creative spot where employees could hold brainstorming sessions, you would be seen as a positive employee.

You are getting the point, aren't you? Write: pantry and productivity and add in a few words to connect those two concepts. I would add "motivation", "more time spent in office", "brainstorming corner", etc. These are just a few of the terms you could use to produce the desired effect.

Fringe benefits always motivate the employees. So, making the pantry a better place to work and providing free drinks is a good start in fostering an image of a company preoccupied with the wellbeing of its

employees. The coffee doesn't cost management much. However, with the tag "we care", it could prove an excellent PR campaign.

The above idea should usually get the bosses interested. Next, I will tell you how to make your boss support your "pantry project". Everyone takes coffee breaks, either according to the company policies or otherwise. This translates to fewer hours on the job and lower productivity.

The more time you can keep an employee in the office, the higher is his/her productivity. Sure, they are still taking some time off to drink coffee, but they are in office. How long do you think they spend drinking? Moreover, you would save the traveling time.

Let's assume that one employee drinks coffee for 30 minutes at Starbucks. In the office, he would drink for 15 minute and another 10 minutes would have been saved, because he no longer needs to travel back to office. You would have saved 25 minutes per coffee break.

Multiply that by 10 employees at a normal executive pay of \$20 per hour. The firm would have saved \$83.00 $[(10 \times 25 \text{ minute})/60 \text{ minute} \times \$50]$. Further, multiply it by one year of 250 workdays (take away weekends and public holidays) and you would get a saving of \$20 750.00!

If you present it smoothly, your boss would even urge you to quickly get the project done!

Having a brainstorming corner is like having your own nice restaurant right in the office. Goodbye dull meetings, hello productivity! Your colleagues would definitely thank you.

Again, highlight the costs of a meeting at a real restaurant, and then show your boss the savings. By now he should be the biggest supporter of your project.

However, do not over sell the project or they might suspect you have a hidden agenda! (Sure, you do have hidden motives, but you wouldn't want anyone to know.)

4.3 When to Sell the "Crafted Proposal"

Yes, I am aware of your worries. You probably cannot announce out of the blue that you want to improve the motivation of the employees. Firstly, if you are a "foot soldier", you might not have the authority to make such a proposal.

Secondly, who says that staff motivation is low in the first place?

Therefore, you need a platform and an approach angle to start your pantry project. Fortunately, the frequent management reviews and quality awards would provide many opportunities to "sell" the idea.

With intense competition in the market, customers look for qualifications in all things, be it people development, quality, service etc. In line with this trend, companies also spend a lot of money to win quality and service awards.

This is to show the world they have the best people and the best management and so on. Within one of these awards, you would find something related to motivation, teamwork or creativity.

Do you get where I am aiming? Recognition and maybe prizes are awarded to those who identify and solve problems. They plan to get you folks to solve their problems.

Isn't it amazing how easy "consultants" are earning money? They ask you to identify problems, to come up with solutions and then charge you thousands for their "services".

Well, good for them! But we must get something good for us too. Do volunteer to be part of these projects, then steer the whole team towards the pantry project. Use the tactics presented above to build your arguments.

Do it well and is possible to get more than free coffee. You might even get a plush increment or a promotion because of your "initiatives".

Other platforms for your pantry project are WIT (work improvement team) and SSS (staff suggestion scheme). Although, I must say that these regular improvement projects are fast becoming old-fashioned.

The trend now is company health surveys or climate surveys. These surveys are carried out to assess the "health" of the company and contain themes like teamwork and motivation.

Take note of these assessments and join the project groups to "push" your pantry project.

4.4 Why Should They Accept Your Scheme?

Showing you how to craft the pantry project and when to propose it, should get me your agreement. However, I know that there are some cautious folks who want an infallible strategy. Next, I would show you how to "seal the deal"!

Remember that no matter how good your plan is, if you do not carry out the plan it remains only a good idea. To realize the plan, you need to shrink the time line and make this whole idea urgent.

If they are management, they will always have lots of things on their agenda. So, no matter how good your plan is, if you leave it to them it would never be executed.

Hence, getting them to quickly put the pantry project into practice, would get you their commitment and free coffee.

No worries, if I have brought you thus far, I would provide the solution for you. Now, is the time to involve in your scheme the coffee suppliers. They want to sell as much coffee as they can. And of course, they also have to plan a budget for your project.

The first rule is, no matter how big is your pantry project, to make it sound bigger. If it involves only a team, make it sound like you need coffee for a whole department. This would not only get the suppliers'

interest, it would also make them want to make more discounts to you.

Now, these discounts are what you need to get the management hooked. These discounts translate into free samples, machine installation and giving you a trial period of their products.

You want to get as much samples and as many machines as possible. So, you need to sell your project big in order to determine the suppliers to play strong.

Then, communicate to the management your achievement: one month free trial with no obligation. They would definitely pass it through. At this point, you would also want to emphasize that you want to run a survey to assess the changes in the employees' productivity.

Management would sure approve and employees would definitely enjoy the free coffee. Yes, closing the deal would depend on the survey. When management sees how happy and excited employees are, they would never want to terminate the pantry project.

Voila, you have free coffee from your bosses and you never have to "crack" your brain again for it.

Feedback is welcomed

So, what do you think after reading my suggestions? Was it worth the cup of coffee that you have treated me? I certainly hope so. The fact is that most of the people who read the book liked it and they even asked me to come out with a more detailed format for this book.

It would be a handbook you could follow to obtain free coffee. I am working on it right now, and it would be great if you could drop some feedback. Please, tell me what you would want to read in the coming project.

You can email me at oncoffee@oncoffeemakers.com. I run a site that provides free information on coffee: <http://www.oncoffeemakers.com>.

How to Get

*Free
Coffee?*



Ebenezer CL Heng