

Lets Cook!

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TEAM COOKING AT SEA LEGGS

Introduction

Team Cooking, a recent innovation in the field of team building activities, provides a unique challenge and a significant opportunity for organisations and individuals alike.

Participants learn to work together to produce exotic and unfamiliar gourmet meals, using techniques and ingredients entirely new to most. No prior experience necessary. For those with little or no cooking experience this can be daunting. For those who think they know how to cook, even more so! It's not about how much you know it's about producing a Team result. The old adage, "If you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen" has no place in Team building.

Forging a team around the cook stove (or campfire) is fun, natural, effective, intuitive and essential to our nature (cooking is probably one of humankind's first group activities, after hunting and gathering.)

Cooking a gourmet meal for 10 to 15 people requires and builds teamwork. Cooking as a team develops service to others, close cooperation, planning skills, good communication, quality performance, leadership, consensus and attention to detail.

New techniques, ingredients and tools present opportunities for learning and innovation. For both the uninitiated and the experienced cook, it is a challenge requiring full focus, openness to constructive criticism, constant learning, and most importantly, teamwork.

Designing the Course

Each course is designed specifically to meet the needs and objectives of the team.

The course Menus includes Asian, European, Classic French, Contemporary, Indian, and Wok and Noodle quick productions and Bread Baking.

The Planning Process

The first task is for the group to choose the menu from the options provided. The group decides by consensus. Individual tastes and habits are balanced against the need to find common ground (The Menu) and to take the risk of the unknown.

The menus offered are based on the degree of cooking experience of the group, to provide a challenging learning experience, to take the group into new territory, to stretch whatever culinary skills they may have; and to teach the fundamental truth: the team won't get through this unless it works together.

There is no room for "prima donnas" in this kitchen. Secondly, the strategy for the meal will be developed and documented by the group. This will cover the resources, labor, and schedule required.

Each member will receive the selected menu and instructions prior to the cooking program. The group will study the material, and begin to understand the process and how best to distribute and perform tasks. This stage is monitored to observe and record group dynamics and the allocation of team duties and responsibilities.

An evaluation of each member's cooking experience (questionnaires will be completed in advance) will be used by the team as part of its resource evaluation and planning.

Trust and confidence in the ability of the team to accomplish the task is essential. After all, you are all going to eat what your team has prepared. Concerns, uncertainties, and any questions will be shared openly and dealt with throughout the course.

The Goal

The goal is for the group to become a team, to discover new facets and ways of working together; to establish a team in an environment where everyone starts out at zero, as equals, i.e., no one knows how to do this.

The end result is a sumptuous meal for everyone's enjoyment, the fulfillment of a new and challenging task completed, and a chance to evaluate the meal, the process and the learning that has taken place. At its best, this experience can affect and improve the daily work of the team. It depends on the group to take all that it can from this learning environment.

The Course

Cooking is performance art, where finite time, labor, and resources are tightly choreographed to produce an excellent result on time.

The group will learn to work as a team, set aside normal roles, plan carefully, cooperate closely, ask for and give help as needed, deal with mistakes and adjust quickly, and follow the strategy, the recipes and instructions.

We are not going to make production chefs out of the team, but we are going to lead the team through the process, and instruct, support and guide them to produce an excellent gourmet dinner.

They will experience the fact that in this environment, no leader or manager can succeed without the full support of the team. Each group member will have to set aside individual aspirations for "culinary stardom". Those who do have culinary skills may be selected by the team to lead team sections.

Inevitably problems arise in cooking, no matter how good the team. A moment's inattention can ruin a dish. Misunderstanding and emotions can disturb the group. Breakdowns happen and are opportunities for learning, for innovating and redesigning.

The benefits of preparing a delicious meal are obvious. In this case many other benefits accrue, such as the ability to evaluate the team's performance on the spot, throughout the process and after enjoying the results. We are also serving each other. We will rely on a thorough commentary of the dinner, and on the process and what has been learned. The convivial mood of cooking and dining together is very rewarding for the team.

The Program:

It's on with the aprons and into the kitchen!

Nothing demonstrates the value of cooperation towards an end result like team cooking.

Course duration approximately 5 hours including the eating!

Teams will:

- Work as a team to prepare a gourmet meal, course by course.
- Get hands-on cooking experience guided by expert culinary professionals
- Sit down as a group to enjoy the meal the team prepared and discuss the team member's learning.

The Outcomes

- Team members leave Team Cooking with:
- A clear understanding of what is required of high achieving teams.
- Consensus about how they will work together.
- Agreement about what they will work on.
- Short and long-term action plans to move toward the team's vision.
- Stronger, unified commitment to team achievement

Cooking lessons include:

- Full use of Specialist Asian and or European Training Kitchen
- All food ingredients
- Menu options
- Training in safety and Cooking skills
- Aprons
- Hat and Cooking equipment

Includes local beers (light & heavy), house bottled red, white and sparkling wine, soft drink and juices.

At every step our instructors will be guiding the process.

Testimonial:

Hi Tony,

I just wanted to say thank you for a great day yesterday. Everyone is still talking about that fabulous meal we prepared (as a team) last night.

It was wonderful to see everyone working together and helping each other out when needed.

Thanks again for a great day.

Regards,

Sally Bonser
Business Process Manager
ANZ Pacific and Personal Banking Asia

For more information, and a program designed for your group, please contact
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