The H-E-B “Fresh Perspectives” partnership in San Antonio

Background
Incidence of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes is strongly related to unhealthy behaviors like poor diets and sedentary lifestyles. While many people strive to eat more healthy foods, various barriers exist: time, financial cost, food preferences and lack of knowledge. Humana Inc., a healthcare company providing healthcare coverage to people across the US, is invested in helping its employees make healthy choices. Because local partnerships can effectively improve community health, Humana and the Texas-based grocer H-E-B developed a program to address barriers to healthy eating.

Objective
To reduce employee fast food consumption by 25% (one meal per week) by replacing it with a healthy meal.

Methods
- **Program Description:**
  - All full-time employees (n=1,239) of Humana Inc. who resided in San Antonio, TX, received communication (e.g., emails, flyers, social media invitations) regarding the program beginning February 23, 2015.
  - Employees received recipes, shopping lists and grocery coupons so they could prepare a healthy meal instead of eating out. Communications also included program instructions and a link to the H-E-B website. Grocery receipts could be submitted for a prize drawing.
  - H-E-B registered dietitians led lunch-and-learn sessions and store tours to teach employees how to prepare healthy, easy recipes and make better nutritional decisions.
- **Program Evaluation:**
  - Two online questionnaires were developed using Survey Monkey and made available to the 1,293 employees residing in the San Antonio area.
  - Surveys evaluated program satisfaction, ease of use and successful meal substitution.
  - A mid-point survey was completed between 3/16/2015 and 3/20/2015.
  - A final survey was completed between 4/17/2015 and 4/24/2015.
- **Survey Overview:**
  - Pilot program participation and understanding were measured using yes/no response questions.
    - Example questions:
      1. Did you print the coupons and recipes?
      2. Did you try to make any of the March recipes?
    - Likert-type scales were used to identify challenges and barriers to participation.
    - Example questions:
      1. Was it easy to follow and prepare the recipe?
      2. How long did it take to prepare, cook, and clean up?
      3. Did your family like the food?
      4. How was your experience at the Lunch-and-Learn?
      5. How likely are you to make the Lunch-and-Learn recipe at home?
      6. How likely are you to purchase different products based on the store tour?
  - Space was provided for employees to enter additional comments/questions and to state what they learned during the program.
- **Survey Analysis:**
  - Yes/no and Likert-type scale items were analyzed using descriptive statistics
  - Free text responses collated and reviewed manually.

Limitations
- The small sample size and low response rate limit our ability to fully evaluate program effectiveness.
- Limitations common to self reported survey data, such as recall bias, acquiescence bias, and extreme responding, apply to this program.
- This program evaluated employees of a single healthcare company and may not be generalizable to other employee populations.

References

Results

**Figure 1. Program Impact and Goal Attainment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Replacement of Fast Food Meal</th>
<th>Receipt Submission</th>
<th>Lunch-and-Learn Participation Goal</th>
<th>Survey #1 and #2 Response Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>5% of employees (n=65)</td>
<td>10% of employees (n=129)</td>
<td>50% of employees (n=25 per session)</td>
<td>10% of employees (n=129 total respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>40 (out of 65)</td>
<td>6 (out of 129)</td>
<td>32 (out of 50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Employees submitted receipts for ingredients to prepare a recipe from H-E-B’s monthly guide</td>
<td>Employees responded to mid-point survey</td>
<td>Employees responded to final survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2. Survey Results**

**Mid-Point Survey**

Based on 87 responses

- Found the Feb recipes appealing/relevant to diet: 91%
- Attempted to prepare a recipe: 34%
- Responded that the food was reasonably priced: 100%
- Are “extremely” or “quite likely” to cook the recipe again: 70%
- Substituted the meal for eating out: 50%

**Final Survey**

Based on 82 responses

- Were “extremely” or “quite satisfied” with the Lunch and Learn: 94%
- Changed thinking about groceries based on Store Tour: 100%
- Found the March recipes appealing/relevant to diet: 86%
- Attempted to prepare a recipe: 51%
- Substituted the meal for eating out: 69%

**Figure 3. Key Learnings and Considerations for Future Programs**

- **Employee Engagement**
  - Look for better ways to engage work-at-home employees and those working at other locations (e.g. clinics, Guidance Center)
  - Evaluate other means of communication (e.g. text messages, etc.)
- **Partner Selection**
  - Evaluate opportunities to leverage pre-prepared meals using H-E-B capabilities
- **Technology Solutions**
  - Leverage new H-E-B digital platform (e.g. e-coupons)
- **Expectations and Participation**
  - Encourage participation in new and different ways
    - Alternative methods for communicating program information
    - Ways for employees to share the recipes they tried at home
    - Recipe “makeover” contest
- **Incentives**
  - Identify non-financial incentives
  - Conduct focus groups with participants and non-participants to gain deeper insight into better ways to help modify employee behavior

Future programs will focus on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.