

Approaching a Café to stock Fair Trade

Your step-by-step guide

It should be remembered that this is just a guide, not a rule-book!

1) Find a partner

- You'll find the whole process easier and more successful if you're working with someone else.

2) Identify an appropriate café:

- It will be easier to approach a café which is already supplied by a Fair Trade licensee.
- Think about what you want from the café: if you want them to switch entirely, or just provide a Fair Trade option.

3) Research

- Educate yourself on Fair Trade facts, and the broader Fair Trade picture (see fact sheets), check websites, talk to others with knowledge.
- Educate yourself on why the café should supply Fair Trade products (demand, prices, ethical arguments, examples of where Fair Trade is successful, including other cafés on campus, and the great success stories in Europe). Get down to the business/economics side of things.
- Research the local market. This is dependant on whether the café needs to change supplier. If they do, this will require more research of alternatives, prices, availability. If they don't, find out the costs involved in introducing the Fair Trade products from their current supplier, and to do this:
- Contact their current roaster: usually roasters with Fair Trade product will have a Fair Trade representative. Speak to them, find out about their normal approach to cafés, if they have approached your café before, find out about their Fair Trade product, prices, and how they've developed that product over time, and the success rate so far. Find out if they would be willing to meet with you and the café manager at the same time. This will probably be a positive step for the café manager.
- Don't forget about tea and hot chocolate in your research.
- Develop a dossier on each Café that you approach recording your research, interactions and dates of interactions. Share this information with your group so that when ever anyone has a report of this café, the information can be recorded and referred to for future interactions.

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4) Prepare Café Procurement Kit

- This prepared document can be obtained from the Hooked website. It is a professionally prepared information pack to give to the café managers. It will contain a letter introducing Fair Trade, what's in it for them, some Fair Trade opportunities, and a short survey. It is important that you edit this pack to make sure it applies to your café.
- Print your guide in colour, as the kit contains colour images, it adds to the professionalism of the proposal.
- Present your Kit in a Manila Folder including your supporting surveys. Oxfam Australia can supply you with "Make the Switch to Fair Trade" folders that look very nice. Contact your state campaigner for supplies.
- Keep your goal in mind – do you want them to make a complete switch or provide a Fair Trade option?
- Prepare supporting documentation, including campus surveys, petitions, more facts and figures to take to the meeting itself.

5) Role play

- Practice your meeting with your partner and other members of the group.
- If possible, get some advice/coaching from someone experienced at approaching cafés.

6) Things to Think About

- Be professional: know what you want, know about Fair Trade, know what's in it for the café.
- Be positive. A good first impression is essential. It's hard to change someone's mind once they've said no (so don't give them an opportunity to say no ;-))
- Café managers are not evil people! They primarily need to make profit, but they can be swayed by ethical arguments as well.
- Café managers are busy people. Approach them at first when they are less likely to be busy (late afternoon), and allow plenty of time for the appointment (at least 30 minutes, but try to allow for an hour).

7) Approach the Café

- Go when they are not busy. Introduce yourself (name, Hooked, Students for Fair Trade), say you have an exciting business proposal involving new Fair Trade products for the café, and that you would like to leave a procurement pack with the manager.
- If the manager is not there, or is too busy, ask when would be a suitable time to come back.
- If he/she is there, introduce yourself again, and say you have a business proposal for them which you would like to leave with them and make an appointment for a later date. Briefly run through the pack outlining the main sections, so at least they've seen it once. Ask them to bring the pack to the meeting.

8) The First Meeting

- Be prepared, and remember all the points discussed above.
- Remember to bring your supporting information (campus surveys, petitions, facts) that you can draw on in the meeting.
- Take the manager through the procurement guide, knowing well all the information contained in it.
- Be professional.

9) Follow-up

- This will depend on the outcome of the meeting.
- If the outcome is positive, things should take a natural course, but make sure you follow through until a deal is done. This might involve organising a meeting between the Manager / Owner and a Fairtrade coffee roaster.
- Continue to build relationships with the café, and tell people they can get their Fair Trade coffees there.
- If the outcome is negative or indifferent, be courteous and gracious, thank them for their time and hopefully, as Fair Trade becomes more available, they will decide to take it on board.

10) Group Debrief

- It's important to debrief with your campus group, going through what you thought went well, lessons learned, and what could be done better next time.

Remember

- Talk to your group throughout the whole process -their support will be important.
- If you have any queries/problems, don't forget Hooked National and FTAANZ are there for support. Keep Hooked National informed whatever the outcome.

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