



Facilitator's Guide

Long-term Benefits of Quitting Cigarette Smoking: Week 3

Notes to Facilitator

Hopefully, most of the meeting's participants have quit smoking at this point or have tried to. Those who quit may be starting to feel physical benefits. They may notice a difference in the money and time they are saving, too. Underscore that this is just the beginning and, with long-term smoking cessation, they will have a lifetime of better health, and will save money and time (versus being a continuing smoker).

To prepare for this meeting, review this agenda, as well as the corresponding PowerPoint presentation and speaker's notes, in advance. Additionally, gather and familiarize yourself with the employee handouts listed below.

Your Tools

Week 3 Slide Presentation

The corresponding PowerPoint presentation is enclosed on the CD-ROM and includes speaker's notes.

Meeting Handouts

- *Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking*
- *How Much Are Cigarettes Really Costing You?*
- *Personal Progress Tracker*

I. Welcome and introduction

Welcome. At this meeting, we will talk about:

- *The health, financial, and time-saving benefits of quitting smoking*



II. Health benefits discussion

- *Do you notice any difference in your health since you quit smoking?*

This is a great opportunity to share positive feedback, which will reinforce the decision to stay quit. Hearing success stories from fellow employees may be much more impactful than general health statistics. If there aren't initial responses, elicit feedback by asking things like, "Raise your hand if you can now walk quickly with less effort," or "Who can breathe more easily going up the stairs?"

TIP: This is another opportunity to make a list to save and post at the next meeting, eg, Mary—coughs less, or Frank—breathes easier. Participants will be able to collectively share, be proud of, and reflect on these "real-life" results.

- *Do you know that quitting smoking can reduce the risk of getting cancer or heart disease?¹*
- *Do you know that quitting can reduce your risk of long-term smoking-related illnesses, even if you've smoked for years?¹*

III. Long-term health benefits

Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body.¹ Quitting has a lot of health benefits, which begin almost immediately. These include a lowered heart rate and blood pressure.¹ Quitting also has a lot of long-term health benefits²:

- *1 to 9 months after quitting: Less coughing, less sinus congestion, and improved breathing*
- *1 year: The excess risk of heart disease is reduced by 50%*
- *Within 5 to 15 years: Stroke risk is the same as for someone who has never smoked*
- *10 years: The risk of lung cancer is reduced by 50%. Risks of many other cancers also decrease*
- *15 years: The risks of disease are about the same as for someone who has never smoked*

No matter what your age or how long you have smoked, quitting can lead to positive health benefits.¹ Improved health and a longer life are not the only long-term benefits of quitting.



IV. Financial benefits

You can also save money when you quit smoking. Look at the Cigarette Time/Cost Calculator. Figure out how much money you'll save in the first year after you quit.

Group questions:

- *How much money will you save in 1 year by not buying cigarettes?*
[Allow time to review and calculate]
- *What will you do with the money you save?*

V. Time-saving benefits

There are also time-saving benefits to quitting smoking. Again, the Cigarette Time/Cost Calculator is a useful tool to calculate the amount of time saved versus the amount of time spent smoking.

Group questions:

- *How much time will you save in 1 year?*
[Allow time to review and calculate]
- *What activities would you like to do with the time you save?*

VI. Next steps

- *Next group meeting:* [DATE, TIME, PLACE]
- *Incentives:*
[If you offer incentives for attendance or not smoking]
- *Questions?*
- *Keep up the hard work! You're improving your health. You're saving time and money, too!*

References:

1. National Cancer Institute. Quitting smoking: why to quit and how to get help.
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Tobacco/cessation>. Accessed March 3, 2008.
2. American Lung Association. Quit smoking: benefits.
<http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK9O0E&b=33568>. Accessed February 29, 2008.