



Employee Christmas presents

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Introduction

The Waste Department of Kolding Municipality wanted to reduce the environmental impact of Christmas presents for its employees. The most obvious solution would be not buying any, but by making employee Christmas presents more sustainable, the organisation was able to send an important signal to both employees and local businesses in December 2020. The aim was to make the procurement sustainable and, if possible, to use only local businesses.

Procurement process

The procurement team searched the market for a great variety of suppliers. Selecting suppliers was difficult because sustainability can mean different things to different people, and several internal meetings were held before agreeing on the selection of suppliers.

In the end, seven suppliers were identified, with a combination of locally produced goods and experiences. Each supplier created a gift package or gift card matching the budget given and supplied text and pictures. Questionnaires were sent to the employees, so they could choose which gift they preferred. Getting employees to complete the questionnaire was a time-consuming process and the colleague responsible for collecting the questionnaires had to send out several reminders.

Results

The final figures revealed that 84 out of 88 employees selected a gift, which indicates that the selection was well received. The general feedback from the employees was that they really liked both the gifts and the sentiment.



Some were unhappy with the selection they were given, but this always seems to be the case in any Danish company.

39 employees chose material gifts and 45 chose experience-based gifts. As 56% of the gifts given were not physical, the waste reduction is substantial, although we cannot calculate the

CO₂ emissions exactly (as the baseline varies in relation to previous years). A 56% reduction of material gifts and 44% of sustainably produced gifts indicates that the reduction is well over 50%.

Lessons learned

- Clear criteria for success and well-established parameters are very important when looking into new suppliers. The procurement team spent more time than intended on market dialogue and internal meetings, and this could have been avoided with clearer project goals established from the start.
- To prevent spending time collecting questionnaire answers it is essential to put the responsibility for getting a gift on the employee and team leaders by asking them to fill out the questionnaire.
- Being sustainable is easy. Doing it within reasonable budget and time constraints is the challenge.