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Calling All Field Service Teams: Tips for Getting Lunch in Before 3pm

by [Dwight Macon](#) | August 20, 2020

As a field tech, I've spent many days not eating lunch until after 3 pm or settling for something quick and not the healthiest for me—convenience stores, fast-food outlets, food trucks. And more times than I can recall, *I took no lunch at all!*

Most of us know that [lunch is a vital part](#) of having a productive day. Lunch raises your blood sugar level in the middle of the day, making you able to focus for the rest of the afternoon.

But as field technicians and engineers, we are intensely busy serving our customers all day. Our number one goal is always to help the customer as fast as we can. According to research by the [Service Council](#), 51% of technicians interviewed stated that solving customer problems was the best part of their day-to-day.

But this focus on the customer often means that your needs, like eating lunch, often fall to the wayside. To help ensure lunchtime happens on time, below are some steps that technicians and managers can take.

1. Technicians: Plan Ahead

Pack your own lunch box. A simple, inexpensive cooler and thermos will keep hot what's hot, and cold what's cold for up to 6 hours. You don't (and should not) have to settle for [low-quality](#) fast or junk food choices.

For quicker options, you can take advantage of pre-cooked heat & eat entrees or ready to cook meal kits like those from:

- HelloFresh
- Freshly
- Sun Basket
- Fresh and Easy
- Home Chef

With the myriad of options available for quick and healthy meals, simply taking the time to plan ahead for your lunch hour can make a big difference.

2. Technicians: Take Your Time

For many techs, the day is not structured into manageable segments. Instead, it is catch-as-catch-can for rest breaks and meals. The workday is structured for you by so many work orders, signing into and out of calls, debriefing work orders, etc. But when it comes to meals, you are on our own. Lunch is left for *you* to plan.

Too often, techs “snack” through the day and suddenly it's after 3:00 pm. Lunch is a time to detach from routine tasks. A few tips on maximizing your lunchtime:

- Don't answer phone calls or check texts and emails
- Set up auto-responders in email and text to alert everyone that you are at lunch
- Unwind and enjoy your meal
- If you finish eating early, still take your full half-hour or hour to devote to 'being on break'

Taking the time to have a true break and not think about work will allow you to [return refreshed](#) and ready to excel for the customer.

3. Managers: Give Technicians Time Back in Their Day

Technicians spend a lot of time each day writing up paperwork and sifting through notes and manuals to find information. A [global research project by The Service Council](#) found that completing paperwork and other administrative tasks was the worst part of the day for 44% of the technicians interviewed. By reducing these administrative burdens, managers can help ensure technicians take their lunches and breaks each day.

Leveraging [field service management software](#) to automate repetitive tasks and eliminate paperwork goes a long way in improving the day to day for technicians. In addition to cutting out time-consuming paperwork, field service management software makes technicians' jobs easier by providing mobile access to:

- Past service history
- Asset history – performance, installed parts, red flag events
- Knowledge and service manuals
- Bulletins and other information
- Upcoming planned maintenance events

With less time spent on pen and paper, technicians can focus their time on serving the customer and fueling up at noon rather than after 3 pm.

Takeaway Tips for Technicians

- Plan/Prep Your Lunch – Plan and prepare for the day, the week – but *do* have a plan.
- Take Time for Lunch – Don't plan and prep, then get too busy and end up taking the meal back home – that's dinner!
- Do it Every Day – Discipline yourself to be a consistent 'luncher'. It gets easier with practice.

More Tips for Improving Technician Satisfaction:

- [Here's What Your Service Technicians Want You to Know](#)
- [3 Effective Ideas for Boosting Employee Engagement](#)

ABOUT DWIGHT MACON



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