

2021-2022

MASTERS OF ARTS IN
PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNICATION



TIPS & TRICKS FOR FINE DINING

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Welcome Message



LeAnne Grosso
"Creator of Handbook"

I instantly fell in love with the people and the feeling of excitement that each pop during dinner service provided. I understood then that this was my calling and that I was meant to be here. During this period, I was enrolled in a Masters's Program at The University of Tampa, earning a degree in the Arts of Professional Communication, which only helped me advance and become more secure in my role in the workforce and the world at large. With that stated, I wanted to write a handbook based on my experience and other studies to assist all restaurants in being the best they can be, not just financially, but also with a great environment that will have guests dying to come back again and again.

With that stated, this guidebook is being created to help employees such as guest service, servers, server assistants, food runners, and supervisors execute their jobs more effectively. The goal of this handbook will be to focus on service tactics that assure pleased clientele regardless of socioeconomic status and overall background. Overall, my goal is to turn as many restaurants as possible into welcoming and well-equipped workplaces for both visitors and colleagues.

Preface

The Master The Art of Fine Dining handbook is designed to serve as a guide for Front of House Restaurant Staff as they navigate the ropes of the fine dining world.

Fine dining is definitely not easy because of certain standards/reputations you have to uphold as well as dealing with the stressors of feeling like you are never going to be able to make this guest happy. However, there are many tips and tricks as well as real-life experiences that I will share in this handbook that you can add to your knowledge and make your job fun while keeping all guests happy as ever.

This handbook will serve as a central resource for all training and tips and tricks in fine dining such as specific verbiage to use, how to handle work-family relationships, how to enhance tip behavior, and how to stay on top. This handbook will be broken down into 3 different sections...

Part 1 Guest Service/Hostess...

Part 2 Servers/FoodRunners/Server Assistants...

Part 3 Managers/Supervisors...

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change.



PART 1:

GUEST SERVICE/HOSTESS

"What is Guest Services?"

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Depending on the restaurant, the Guest Service Team goes by a variety of names. Most people refer to this role as hostess. However, at fine dining, they do more than merely seat guests.

They coordinate seats for customers, assure great service, and guest enjoyment, and, as a result, increase sales opportunities for the restaurant. They also take charge of gaining repeat customers by establishing an excellent first impression and making all guests feel welcome both over the phone and during their visit.



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?



This is significant because they control the flow of the restaurant by accepting bookings and ensuring that all servers are seated at the right times and knowing all server sections.

In addition, they guarantee that all visitors' requests are met and accommodate every guest they can.

DIFFERENT ROLES



Co- Coordinator

Co-Coordinator; provides assistance to the coordinator, and will take over if the coordinator is not present.

They will also assist in delegating specific duties such as side work during the shift and will ensure that there are no overlaps in the timeline if one is used.

They will also keep the coordinator updated on any unique requests or important reservations that were just made or that will be coming in soon.

The Guest Service Team has numerous diverse tasks that extend beyond the coordinator and co-coordinator. However, these are the **two key positions** in charge of the entire production for the restaurant's ebb and flow. These are leadership positions that help delegate to the rest of the guest service staff and ensure that everything goes well.

Coordinator

The Coordinator handles all special requests and physically seats the guest in the system (Open table etc.). They are the only ones who have to be aware of seating preferences and other crucial variables while seating guests besides the co-coordinator.

They will make a guarantee that each server receives the correct quantity of covers and is not double/triple seated.

They are also making certain that all tables are set up in accordance with the size of the party.



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What Does The Guest Service Team Do During a Shift?

They seat tables, ensure great service, genuine hospitality and make repeat customers.

Why is The Guest Service Team Important?

They control the flow of the restaurant and make sure all guest requests are met.

What Roles Does The Guest Service team have?

Main roles are coordinator and co-coordinator. Then after that it is the rest of the guest service team which all have their own roles as well through out the shift.

SCENARIO 1

If someone wants to make a reservation for 5 at 7:00 pm, with Dave in the main dining room in a booth. And we aren't able to accommodate this because Dave is on the patio and we have no tables inside that can accommodate a party size of 5 or more. What are some things you can say to the guest while on the phone to still leave a good impression and offer everything we can accommodate?

ANSWER CHOICES

- A. I am happy to do that for you and overbook the reservation.
- B. Tell the guest that it's a straight-out no and that we cannot accommodate this request the day of.
- C. Tell the guest, I would love to be able to accommodate this for you, however, at this time Dave is outside on the patio. I do have a table for 5 outside with him at the time you are looking for if you would like I am happy to book that table for you.
- D. Tell the guest, you can book the table on your own and if we have it available we can do it for you.

Out of those answers which one did you pick and why?

The Correct Answer is C, this is because we were still able to accommodate everything we could for the guest. If we wanted to go even further we could tell them that you are happy to put in the notes if something does open up inside we are happy to move you to a formal table indoors and we can ask Dave if he will take care of you inside instead of the patio. However, at this time the only table we have available for 5 at 7:00 pm is outside on the formal patio.

"First Impressions Matter"

GUEST SERVICE DUTIES

In this section we will discuss the typical responsibilities of a hostess/guest service and why they are crucial to the flow of the restaurant. Due to the fact that there is much more to it than meets the eye, it is essential to have suitable training. We will go into great detail about each responsibility, then talk about what may go wrong with these responsibilities if done incorrectly, and we'll end this part with some real-life experienced guest service team members who have some tips and suggestions of their own.



List of Duties

1. Reservations
2. Greeting Guests
3. Managing lobby Wait Times
4. Seating Guests
5. Supporting Server Staff
6. Contacting Carry Out Staff
7. Host Dress Code
8. Menu Care
9. Restroom Care



RESERVATIONS

Making reservations may take some time, but it will go much more smoothly if you know what to ask for.

Ensure that you write down or use your reservation service such as OpenTable to take down the **number of visitors, the time, the date, the first and last names, and the phone number**. Depending on your restaurant's abilities, you may also ask about any special requests or any special occasions, such as a certain table, if the event will be held indoors or outside or if they are celebrating a birthday or anniversary.

KEEP IN MIND

It's really easy to make a mistake while making a reservation; instead of simply writing down the information from the guest, you should always confirm that the information is correct by repeating it back to the guest out loud.

Additionally, be careful where you make bookings because you don't want to overbook. In order to make sure that all of the guests are happy and that the restaurant runs smoothly, ask the guest what time they were looking for then offer what we have available that is closest to it.

BEST WAY TO GREET GUESTS



When making the initial impression of a restaurant, especially one that specializes in fine dining, make **eye contact** with the guests and pay attention to them even if they don't approach the hostess stand, some places call this heads-up hosting. Also, remember to greet each person with a polite greeting, such as "**good afternoon, gentlemen**". You should also always say goodbye to the guest and thank them for joining us for lunch or dinner. Lastly, always pay attention to who entered first and who the members of their party are to verify that you are seating the proper party (LeRoy, 2021).



Always keep an eye on the front hostess stand, you never want to leave it unattended (LeRoy, 2021). This gives guests the impression that they are being ignored.

Secondly, when caring for a guest, always make sure to stop the side talk, even if it is mid-conversation when guests are in front of the hostess stand. This is impolite, and you can always return to the conversation when the lobby is empty.

Finally, never sit at a party until you have double-checked their **final guest count** since it will alter and the guests will not always notify you. This makes the server assistants' job more difficult if you sit at the table and they have to rearrange it, and it makes your job more difficult as well if you have to switch the guests to a different table.



MANAGING WAIT TIMES



Walk-ins

Always acquire at least the guest's **phone number and first name**. Inform them of the restaurant's table wait time policy. Sometimes that policy is waiting for a cancellation, and other times there is a wait limit. If you know you don't have anything to offer, give walk-ins the choice of first come, first serve locations like the bar.

Reservations

Guests should **never** have to **wait more than 15 minutes** if they have a reservation; if they do, you can contact a manager to resolve the matter. Maintain constant communication with your guests, providing updates on the status of their table. It makes them feel valuable and shows that you value their time.

THANK YOU VS I'M SORRY



Most of us have been to a restaurant and have waited for a table, **can you remember what the hostess said when you went up and asked about the wait time?**

Now can you remember how you felt?

Were you annoyed? Impatient? Maybe even Hangry? Well, we are here to talk about how to make customers/guests feel appreciated while waiting for a table instead of those negative emotions. It might even make the job of being a hostess a little easier when you don't have guests staring at you and waiting to be sat.

When and Why Saying Thank You is Better Than "Sorry" Study

Consumers have higher expectations than ever before (eMarketer 2015). As a result, customers commonly have unpleasant service experiences or services that fall short of their expectations throughout their interactions with service providers (Sivakumar, Li, and Dong 2014; Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999). While apologies acknowledge service failure by blaming and holding service providers accountable, expressions of appreciation acknowledge these failures by recognizing clients as patrons and emphasizing their values and efforts. We believe that shifting the focus of the service provider-customer interaction (**from "sorry" to "thank you"**) will significantly enhance consumer self-esteem (e.g., Heine et al. 1999; Klein, Blier, and Janze 2001; Schaumberg and Wiltermuth 2014). As a result, gratitude will be a better option than an apology in terms of assisting with the recovery for the rest of the experience " (You, Yang, Wang, & Deng, 2020).

WHAT IS CONSIDERED CORRECT VERBIAGE?

- 01 "My Pleasure" vs "No Problem"
- 02 "Good Morning" vs "Hey"
- 03 "Certainly" vs "Of Course"
- 04 "I'll be happy to" vs "Sure"
- 05 "Ladies and Gentlemen" vs "Hi,
Everyone"
- 06 "I'll Escort You Over" vs "It's Over
There"
- 07 "It Will be One Moment" vs "Hold
On"

There is a specific manner to speak to guests, especially if you want to make them feel like VIPs. We want to ensure, much like the Ritz Carlton, that we are utilizing accurate terminology, such as what is listed above. They say "they are ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen", and while it may not be your motto, every one in private dining/hospitality should hold themselves to that same standard. We should all be like the Ritz Carlton (Sanders, 2006).



Verbiage Gone Wrong

What Happened...

Alex, a member of the guest service team, is speaking with a guest regarding a reservation they believe they had made. They had planned it for August 15th at 6:00 p.m. for 5 guests. Unfortunately, the guest was unaware that they had made it for the following week and is still insisting on being seated tonight for their "reservation."

Alex mentions in a snarky tone...

"You made the reservation on the wrong day; I don't know if I have anything available for your party tonight; you will have to return next week for your actual reservation day, or you can find a spot at the bar".

The guest becomes furious because they came all this way for a table assuming it was available tonight. They inquire if there is anything available.

Alex mentions that...

"There is a wait and they will not be sat until they have a cancellation because they are a reservation-based restaurant".

AND

"she cannot provide the party with a specific timeline for when they could get seated so they will just have to wait".

- 1. What do you think Alex can do differently the next time to comfort the guest?**
- 2. What can she do differently the next time to guarantee that the guest arrives on the correct day and time for their reservation?**



Verbiage Gone Wrong

What Alex Could Do Next Time To Ensure a Better Experience For All...

Next time Alex before the shift (the day before), can make sure to contact all lunch and dinner reservations for the following day. This can ensure that everyone who has a reservation for the day receives a reminder and that they know exactly how many guests they booked the reservation for, the day, and time, and can allow time for modifications if need be (allows them to do it over the phone instead of showing up with more or fewer people).

If a guest was concerned because you couldn't find their appointment and it turned out they made it for the wrong day, Alex could have said....

"The Mr. Watson Party of 5, I was able to pull up your reservation and noticed you had booked it for the following week. That, however, is not a problem. We will try our best to seat you as quickly as possible; we just need to check on a few tables to see what is available. For the time being, I can take your phone number and hold you a space on our waitlist, and if you like, I can have someone call you as soon as a table opens up. However, until we get a table set and ready for you and your guests I can show you over to our first come first serve bar areas if you wanted to start off with some drinks."

This method of interacting with the guests was very formal, and calm, and may have even convinced them that you would do all possible to have them seated. **Guests like to feel heard**, and when you communicate well, you can prevent a potentially uncomfortable scenario from worsening or escalating, but instead, you deescalated—and may have made a raving fan out of them.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Why is Saying "Thank You" Better Than "I'm Sorry"?

Saying "Thank You" makes people feel valued and appreciated, where saying I'm sorry puts the blame on yourself and allows others to have power to also blame you for the mistake.

Why is it Important to Use Correct Verbiage?

It's important to use correct verbiage when talking to a guest because it number 1 makes them feel special, number 2 allows for clear communication that guests will understand because it is not vague.

Why is it Important Guest Services Greets All Guests?

It is important to greet all guests that come in the restaurant to make sure they all feel seen. Doing this also gives a great first impression and allows for people to feel welcomed.

SCENARIO 2

It is a Saturday night and there is a bunch of guests checking in for reservations. One guest approaches you and you greet them saying "welcome in sir, how are you this evening? He replies "I am doing fine", then you say, "do we have a reservation tonight that I can check you in for"? He replies, "yes", you then proceed to ask him his name. He says it's Mr smith.. You say "perfect, Mr. smith I do have you all checked in, is it still a party of 4"? He replies yes, You say "wonderful, we will get you sat in just one moment. We are just putting the final touches on the table for you all". He then stands to the side. When his table is ready, you say "Mr. Smith party of 4, Katie will show you on over to your table tonight. Please enjoy".

What was proper about what was said by the guest service team?

If Mr.. Smith gave the guest service team a hard time with his reservation, what verbiage could they have used to calm the situation? Think about this...



Supporting Serving Staff

COMMUNICATION

It is **vital to communicate** with your servers and server assistance. If you don't have a headset, I highly recommend getting one so you can call for bussed tables. You can also tell them how many guests each table will need to be set up for and what time they will be arriving so they know how much time they have.

FLIPPING TABLES

If you notice that tables aren't being bussed quickly enough, you can **ask if the server assistants need support**. If you know how to bus a table, you can set it; if not, simply removing the used linen will save them time. This will help the table get sat faster, earning them and the server more money.

UPDATING ON REQUESTS

It is critical to **notify the server and server assistant of any call parties and or special requests** for the table, such as getting a special bottle of champagne for the table before the party sits or the guest requesting a card to be presented at the time of the check because someone had already paid. All of this must be communicated to them to avoid mistakes or unhappy guests.

UPDATING COVER COUNT

Allowing restaurant staff to know how many covers are remaining can help the restaurant gear up and prepare for the "pops". When everyone is on the same page and prepared for what is to come, the restaurant will function more smoothly. **For example, the polisher should know how many glasses need to be polished for the remaining guests.**

What To Wear

It is essential to dress appropriately. It informs guests about who works at the restaurant and whom to contact if they require assistance. You want to present yourself as professionally as possible. Every restaurant is different, so simply obey your establishment's policy. However, I will offer you some examples of what is and is not appropriate at most fine dining establishments.

Males



Most places require professional wear, which includes a jacket, slacks, skirt or dress (proper length), and a blouse or button-down shirt. The colors will vary depending on what your restaurant requires, although many restaurants require black attire. Non-slip shoes are generally suggested for footwear, but they must still seem professional; many people wear rubber-soled heels, boots, or flats.

Females



What Not To Wear

When discussing what not to wear, it is crucial to mention sheer or see-through apparel, as well as short dresses/skirts or dresses/skirts with slits. You must remember that you still want to be comfortable and do not want to flash anyone as you walk down the steps. If you had to second-guess it, I would not wear it.

Many places will also have policies on hair color, piercings, tattoos, and nail length so if you have questions, I would consult with your management team to determine what is and is not permitted.

"SIDE WORK"

Side work is defined as **"all the jobs that must be completed in a restaurant to keep it running successfully"** (TimeForge, 2022).

*(*specific examples will be broken down further down on the page*).*

Everyone in the restaurant, from Guest Services to the Heart of House/Kitchen Staff, does extra work to ensure that everything is orderly and that the restaurant and kitchen run smoothly.

This benefits all employees since you will be able to...

- 1. Seat more guests**
- 2. Provide better service**
- 3. Maintain a clean and safe work environment for all associates and customers.**

This not only helps with taking pride in and respecting your work environment, but it can also build a sense of responsibility and help improve the work ethic and teach additional skills to employees to better assist in their growth.



Guest Service Side Work Morning (This may vary depending on the restaurant)

1. Confirmation Calls: For reservations for the following day
2. Call Backs: Calling reservations for the day prior to check on the experience
3. Polish Glasses
4. Light Candles
5. Get roses and champagne

Night (This may vary depending on the restaurant)

1. Check Bathrooms/Restock
2. Table Checks
3. Menu Sweeps/Clean Menus
4. Printing out requests for the next day
5. Cleaning up guest service area
6. Wiping Windows

POOR SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

Being one of the first people guests see when they enter a restaurant can be scary, especially if you are unfamiliar with the kind of customers you may encounter. If something does not go as planned, you may find yourself stunned. It can be stressful because so many things can go wrong in fine dining if you are not adequately trained or do not know how to handle specific scenarios. So here are a few real-life examples from fine dining restaurant reviews to aid you with this.

"For example, a potential passenger's first interaction with airline personnel is an obvious moment of truth; it can determine whether the potential passenger leaves your airline and goes to another, or whether a potentially lifetime relationship with the passenger is begun... **"the fifteen golden seconds"** during which an entire airline is represented to one guest by one server, because the success of the entire organization depends on those first fifteen seconds"(Best, 2011). The same thing could be said with restaurants, the first 15 seconds guests walk in you must create a positive first impression. Otherwise, you might cause the restaurant to lose a potential loyal customer, have them go to one of your competitors and or you might have to deal with an unruly guest.

REAL LIFE REVIEWS

As a member of the Guest Service Team, it is critical to understand that your efforts and how accommodating and nice you have a significant impact on restaurant reviews. It can display reviews such as the second one singling out every negative aspect of the restaurant, possibly because they were annoyed or upset from the start due to an unpleasant hostess.

"Wow! What an amazing experience! We went for the first time to celebrate our wedding anniversary. From the hostess to the rest of the staff everyone made us feel so special. The special touches, like the rose petals on our table, the complimentary champagne"

VS

"Very expensive, portions not large, food was good, the server was good, hostesses are not very friendly."

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

(POOR SERVICE ENCOUNTERSS)

SCENARIO 3

Mrs. Jameson tries to check in for her reservation. Molly completely ignores her when checking her in. Mrs. Jameson, on the other hand, was still standing there waiting for instruction or further direction from Molly regarding her reservation. Mrs. Jameson then asks, "do you have my table ready"?

Question 1

What goes wrong in this scenario?

Question 2

What do you believe Mrs. Jameson thinks of her first 15 minutes in the restaurant and her experience thus far?

Let's look at this scenario again and see what should have happened...

SCENARIO 4

Molly greeted Mrs. Jameson as she entered the restaurant saying "Good Afternoon", "Ma'am do we have a reservation today"? Mrs. Jameson replies, "Yes, it's under Marley Jameson". Molly then confirms wonderful, "Mrs. Jameson is it still a party of 2 today"? Mrs. Jameson then says "Yes". Molly then says to Mrs. Jameson "I do have you all confirmed, we are just putting the final touches on the table it will just be one moment to show you over".

Question 1

What makes these two scenarios so different?

Question 2

Compared to the first scenario, why is the second scenario better then the first?

Question 3

What do we think Mrs. Jameson thinks of her first 15 minutes in the restaurant this time around?

LET'S SUMMARIZE



Reading Part 1 of this handbook should have helped you understand why Guest Service/Hostess is so vital in the restaurant industry. A lot goes into having a restaurant function well and making the guests' experience memorable from the start. For more resources here is a link to more training information.

(<https://www.edapp.com/course-collection/restaurant-hostess-training>)

However, the Guest Service team is just one part out of many in the restaurant to help it flow.

What we Have Covered Thus Far

Guest Service/Hostess

What is up next?

Server Assistants/FoodRunners/Servers

Managers/Supervisors



PART 2:

**SERVERS/FOOD RUNNERS
(FR)/SERVER ASSISTANTS(SA)**

What are the Different Roles of a Restaurants Wait Staff



SERVER (Sales Associate)

Creates relationships with guests, takes food and drink orders, and is knowledgeable about the menu, ensuring that guests' food is accurately served and that all guests have a positive experience.



FOOD RUNNER (FR)

Assists the Heart of House and servers with food delivery. Have menu knowledge and are most likely in training to be a server. Ensures that all food is delivered to the correct table and correct guest who ordered it.



SERVER ASSISTANT (SA)

Assists the server in greeting guests, providing water and the right table place settings, bread, and setting the table. They often attend to a portion of tables and assist the server in whatever manner they can.

TIPS FOR MORE TIPS



Any member of the wait staff knows that tips are the main way they make a majority of their money. This means that they rely on that 20% tip that some person was contemplating giving them.

In the second section of this tutorial, we discuss how to **maximize tips**, the primary **parameters individuals tip on**, and the **techniques you may use to boost your earnings**.

Continue to discuss how to do this in the next few pages...

Taylor has been a server for over 15 years, however, he wasn't always making the same money as he is making now. But that is because he figured out what needed to change and what could be implemented into his service encounters.

Taylor, for example, has many individuals who explicitly request him because he actually cares about his guests. He has a couple of call parties that have been requesting him for years since he consistently goes above and beyond. Taylor said ...

"I really bonded with this specific family, I used to talk about fishing with the older gentleman till I started going out fishing with him and his family, I continue to serve them 7 years later, even after her husband, with whom I was close died. However, I feel the reason I got them to care so much for me was that I let them know that I listen and care. Since I knew they liked trying new things, I would bake special desserts specifically for them. I used to make them our special milkshake when they initially started coming in until I learned about their favorite dessert spots. I always order their favorite dessert from their favorite restaurant, and it makes them feel extra special since they know I listen and treat them extra special every time".



SOME SUGGESTIONS TO ENHANCE TIPS

We discussed what people base their tips on when dining in a restaurant on the previous page. However, based on current research, I will give precise recommendations on the next two pages of variables you can control to help you enhance your tips.

Ultimately, this is to help guide you or provide you tips to implement while conversing with guests, leading in recurring customers who will not only boost your money flow but also the restaurants. This could lead to a regular repeat customer who proposes you take care of them every time they come in to dine.



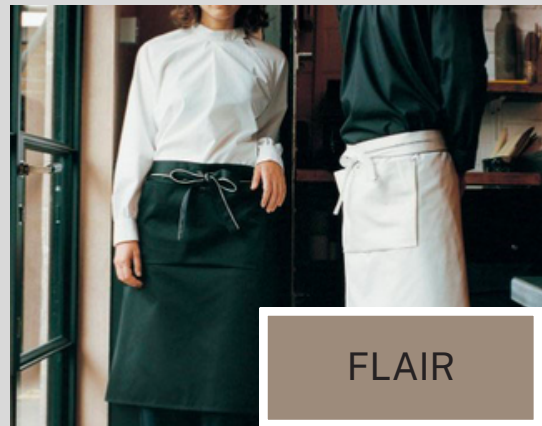
Drawing an image such as a **cheerful face** or saying "**thank you**" on the receipt/check, can make a guest feel valued. Finally, the guest will be more willing to tip generously as a result of this.



Physical touch, such as casually touching someone's **hand, shoulder, or arm**, can significantly raise tips because it conveys friendliness. However, be alert and read your guests since you don't want to come off as flirtatious or make any of the guests envious, as this will have a negative impact on your tip.



Being able to talk about the **weather** with your guests is important, as is **wishing them nice weather**, because if they have other plans after dinner, you can tell them how the weather will be great, for example. Or you can wish them great weather during their "so-called activity" because it shows you care about them and their experience.



Wearing something distinctive also helps people **recognize and remember you**, making you appear **more genuine**. People will ultimately tip more as a result. They might even be willing to strike up a decent conversation based on a noticeable accessory (Schafer, 2012)

Important to Note

Keep in mind that if you are unsure whether any of these suggestions violate the dress code or policy/standards of the restaurant where you work, you can always ask and confirm before implementing them.



NEXT TO
TABLE

Squatting next to the table when taking orders or talking, depending on the restaurant and atmosphere, gives guests the impression that you are friendly and allows for better eye contact. This makes **people feel more at ease** and increases tips as a result.



USING
NAMES

Using the guest's names is a big factor that can increase tips this is because it allows the guest to feel **valued and remembered**, they are not just another face but someone you are taking care of. Especially if you remember their name the next time they come in.



SAYING
THANK YOU

Saying "**thank you**" to guests as they leave and including it on the bill makes them feel appreciated; it shows that you **valued them and their time**, as well as the experience/connection you formed with them.



TELLING
JOKES

Telling jokes can help break the ice and make you appear more genuine to others. People enjoy laughing, so take advantage of each opportunity to do so. People will love you for it and will tip you more because it is both amusing and allows you to connect with them, even if only for a brief moment.

Important to Note

Suggestive selling should be used frequently, read the guests and suggest certain wines that would pair well with foods they are looking at for example.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What Are Strategies to Make More Tips?

Some tips are to write "Thank You" or draw a picture on the check, wear something with flair, squat down next to the table, using first names, telling jokes (being yourself), using light touch, and talking about the weather.

Why is The Difference Between Wait Staff Roles?

The main interaction with the table is the servers, they serve the table and take food and drink orders. Food runners deliver food to the table and place it in the appropriate seat. Lastly tables are flipped by server assistants, they also bring water and bread to the table and help the server in any way they can.

What Can Improve Tip Culture?

Being genuine and caring for your guests are important. When you are able to create that genuine connection with people and truly show you care about them it will make a huge difference.

SCENARIO 5

James has been a server for years, he claimed he knows how to take care of his guests and that he knows how to make a lot of tips from each table. However, James recently hasn't been showing a lot of effort. He barely goes to the table, he waits like 20 minutes before even going over once they are sat.. At the last table, he had all he said was his name was James, and wanted to take their orders even though they never even got menus, plates, drinks, or silverware. He then hands them the receipt before they are even done with their food.

Question 1

What do you think James can do to make the guest's experience better?

Question 2

What do you think James could add to his tableside presence to get more tips from guests?

QUALITY QUANTITY



Understanding what motivates tipping and encourages visitors to tip more is crucial for servers, managers, and anyone else on the wait staff. A big question you might want to ask yourself working in the restaurant industry is... " **What are the primary characteristics that lead to higher tips so that I can make sure I make money and am more lucrative over time**"? According to Hana Shepherd's article, the **most influential aspect is overall meal quality**. A stunning food presentation is more valuable than responsiveness, assurance, and/or empathy from waiters' table side manner. However, the level of expertise or presentation of courteous and trustworthy behaviors displayed by servers to guests is crucial in assisting guests in seeing the perceived value for their money.

Another crucial component is the ambiance, which, while not as important as the other factors, does come into play while trying to improve tips. Overall, perceived value, food quality, ambiance, and server quality influenced tip size and amount. This is intriguing because **two of the three variables are absolutely beyond the server's control** (Shepherd, 2020).

So, when serving guests, it is your obligation to ensure that everyone on the staff is on the same page and working together to provide the best possible experience so that servers' and wait staff's time and effort are lucrative in terms of tips and improving them.



LET'S BREAK THIS DOWN

Factors for guests ratings on restaurant experience...



So we already know that guests rank their fine dining restaurant experience based on **food quality** but there is more....

- 1 Food quality whether the food is of good quality and how well it was cooked. (excellent, usually excellent and average)
- 2 Empathy (caring service, and uncaring service)
- 3 Assurance (waiter is knowledgeable about the menu vs not knowledgeable)
- 4 Tangibles (attractive decor vs unattractive)
- 5 Responsiveness (prompt service vs slow service)
- 6 Price (less than 15.00 per person compared to more than 25 dollars a person)

When looking at these 6 factors I want you to imagine you are at a table, are all of these factors met?

Try to answer these questions below.

What can you do to guarantee your guests have a positive dining experience with you as part of their wait staff?

What can you do to make it more memorable?

IS USING SCRIPTS A GOOD THING?



Using scripts in fine dining is common, especially when greeting a table or reviewing the menu (menu wrap). However, it is critical to ensure that the composition is authentic. You **don't** want to seem like a robot by repeating words that someone else has already said, but rather **construct a picture for the guest to whom you're attempting to sell the outstanding food, ambiance, and service.**

However, while scripts can be beneficial in terms of task-related outcomes, guests tend to judge them negatively when they appear to be disingenuous (Victorino & Bolinger, 2012).

When describing the menu, **for example**, you can utilize a script, but make sure it sounds genuine and add your own unique twists. Every time these guests come in, they should not hear the same thing, but rather the same concepts with your own small variations. Having the script, on the other hand, might generate a sense of continuity and assurance.



SCRIPT EXAMPLES

Restaurant table greet:

- **Good:** Hello, welcome to {restaurant}, my name is (insert name here) and I will be taking care of you today.
- **Bad:** "Hey, what does everyone want to eat?"
- **Good:** "I see you have already met my assistant (insert name here), they will also be helping take care of you today.
- **Bad:** "here's (insert name), he will be around if ya need anything.
- **Good:** "Today I will start off by telling you about our number one selling item, which is our famous number one selling Sea Bass it is served on a bed of creamy whipped potatoes and topped with our specialty Champagne truffle sauce.
- **Bad:** "we have sea bass"

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Why is it important to focus on quality over quantity?

The importance of quality over quantity cannot be overstated. When it comes to tipping, the quality of the meal is the most important deciding factor. This may be difficult because it is beyond your control, but you can act as a second set of eyes on the dishes to ensure it meets the restaurant's standards.

Why is it important to use scripts?

It is critical to utilize a script to ensure consistency in what you say to guests. Especially while reviewing the menu because you want to be able to explain to all of the guests about the items you're offering without seeming robotic.

What should you be careful of when using a script?

When utilizing scripts, take care not to seem robotic. You want to ensure that you sound authentic even if you have to stay consistent.

SCENARIO 6

Consider this: you are preparing to meet your first table as a server assistant. But you're not sure what you'll say when you get to the table. Let's collaborate to build a script to help you, and then you may put your own spin on it to make it uniquely yours. This will provide you a starting point for what you'll say, and bear in mind that it will change as you get more comfortable.

Put your script here...

(Hint: start by greeting, then introduce yourself)

HOW TO COMMUNICATE

It is critical to be maintaining constant communication with the rest of the wait staff and guest service team. Especially when you are a server and you have a **call party** ("a person who requests you"), sometimes they even request a specific table. Other times table sizes increase or decrease as well.

It is crucial for servers to be able to communicate this to the rest of the staff so not only does the restaurant run smoothly but the guests are happy as well. But the same is true for food runners/Server assistants.

Server assistants must communicate with not only their server but the guest service team. The guest service team **needs** to know when tables are flipped and set and if the party size is correct at each table (Dahmer & Kahl, 2008).



Server assistants also must communicate with their server in order to continually check in on new tables that were just seated and/or if their server requires anything unique for the table, such as water, assistance in clearing the table, and so on.



In Case You Wanted to Know

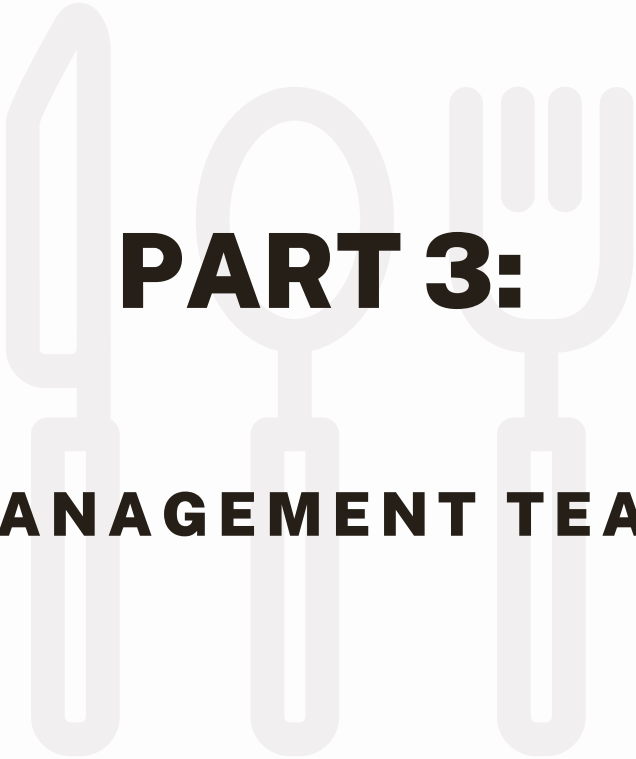
In some restaurants staff will use radios/walkies to be able to communicate so everyone is on the same page and tasks can be done more efficiently.

LET'S SUMMARIZE



The most important component in guest satisfaction is **food quality**. However, server empathy and ambiance also play an important role in tip culture. You can enhance a guest's night by doing something special, such as putting a **thank you note on a receipt or delivering jokes and being genuine with your guests** while remaining professional and up to fine dining standards. Furthermore, service personnel utilize scripts all the time; just make sure they are not robotic, which you may do by adding your own **authentic spin to them**. Finally, **effective team communication is essential for success**. You may not be able to control every situation but you can control communication with other staff members, which will guarantee that everyone is on the same page.

Up next is the supervisor and management section, so keep reading...



PART 3:

MANAGEMENT TEAM

MANAGEMENT TEAM



The management team is intended to be the **glue** that ties the rest of the restaurant together. They are there to advise, make decisions, handle conflict resolution procedures, and do what is best for the associates, the guests, and the restaurant as a whole.

Some may be perplexed as to how they do it. Especially since workplace conflict can be challenging at times, managers must know how to handle it, particularly in a work-family setting.

A question you may have is...

What are the important techniques to handle this and be a good manager/supervisor in the process?

Let's Brainstorm

Before we dive too far into this section... write below what you think a good manager or supervisor looks like?



WHAT THE MANAGEMENT TEAM DOES



Managers are required to help guests with their needs and to guarantee that the restaurant runs smoothly while generating profits. They will usually come by your table while you are eating to see how your meal has gone so far and if there is anything else they can do to make it better.

Being a manager or supervisor requires much more than simply caring for the needs of guests; nevertheless, this is only one component of their responsibilities. They are also considered therapists, friends, a shoulder to cry on, and someone you can rely on.

They **exist to make your life easier and to solve the problems that we all confront** in the fine dining industry. When life gets tough, having a connection with your managers can help guarantee that you have people to lean on and have people to support you.

This is why restaurant managers and supervisors are so important in the fine dining industry. In the next pages, we will go over managers' roles and tactics for creating a fantastic atmosphere for all employees to manage.

MANAGER VS SUPERVISOR

Have you ever wondered what the differences are between managers and supervisors? Well in this section we will dive in a little deeper to define the two roles.

To begin, regardless of where you work, both managers and supervisors are forms of leadership inside an organization. Where managers are higher level in the business or organization compared to supervisors. However, to move forward through this chapter I think it is important for everyone to understand the roles and have a clear definition of them.

1. **Managers** are typically the people in the organization who make decisions and set specific goals for their organization to meet, as well as the parameters that surround them, and they also establish the appropriate structure to ensure that all work is completed in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

1. Whereas **supervisors** typically lead a group of people in the workplace to get them to the desired goal. They typically guide, give direction, and give feedback to fellow employees. Ultimately their goal is to lead the team successfully on day-to-day tasks. For example, your supervisor is usually the one who guides and supports you throughout your shift, whereas managers are the ones who work behind the scenes to ensure that everything is ordered on time or that clients are satisfied when they come in to dine.

A good way to summarize this and put it into simple terms is a quote from business training experts which says "supervisors focus on helping ensure that the teams work gets done on time, effectively and in accordance with quality requirements. Managers focus on what needs to get done" (Ulberg, 2022).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

There will always be friction in any environment or profession. When conflict arises, it can be challenging to cope with if you don't know how to **properly diffuse a situation**, especially with people you have to interact with on a daily basis.

This is a skill that managers or supervisors must have because if something goes wrong, you will have to know how to handle it appropriately since associates and/or workers where you work must still respect you and keep the relationships with employees regardless of the outcome of the conflict.

This is why it is critical to understand how to develop appropriate solutions in order to establish relationships among the personnel, which will result in high-quality service for your guests and each other (Yirik, Yildirim & Çetinkaya, 2015)



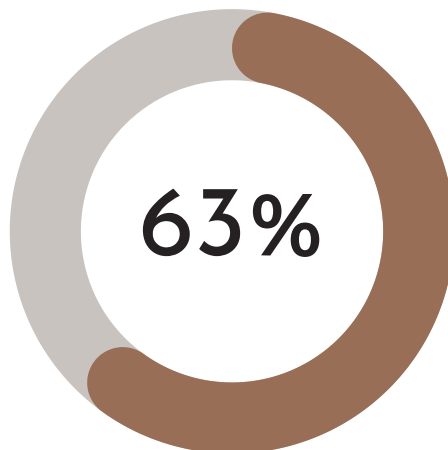
According to research, when the management team is **consistent** in taking actions to settle or reduce negative conflict in the workplace, employees are far more likely to be **enthusiastic** and have **positive attitudes**.

As a result, we may conclude that when *managers use suitable conflict resolution tactics, the work environment becomes significantly more pleasant and productive* (Jung & Yoon, 2018).





"63% of people feel unappreciated by their employer and on a daily 59% feel they never had an employer truly value their work" (Cariaga, (2022).



WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

When the conflict in the workplace environment affects the work-family balance, it can have a significant impact on the turnover rate as well as many other variables such as task performance and organizational citizenship.

However, if managers establish a work atmosphere that is healthy and supportive of employees by enabling a space of **mutual respect** and **interests**, this can prevent additional conflict and produce a work environment that is not threatening. The aforementioned aspects, including turnover, task performance, and a sense of belonging, are all very much under the management's control. Managers can improve these factors simply by creating a safe work environment.

For starters, you can do this by organizing training seminars to help staff members gain confidence in their roles both inside and outside of the company. By *encouraging* a culture of **collaboration**, permitting **transparency**, giving each **person a voice**, and enabling them to feel **appreciated** and **valued** at work.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What is the difference in roles between supervisors and managers?

The difference between managers and supervisors are that supervisors put a lot of effort into ensuring that the team's job is completed on schedule, efficiently, and in accordance with performance standards. Managers concentrate on the tasks at hand, while creating goals for the team.

Why is it important for the management team to be knowledgeable about conflict resolution strategies?

It is essential for management to be knowledgeable about conflict resolution methods since doing so shows that they are concerned about the security and welfare of everyone at work. Management may promote a healthy work environment that will, in turn, produce positive and enthusiastic attitudes if they are consistent in how they handle issues.

What is important to note when dealing with a work-family balance?

The majority of people report feeling unappreciated at work, thus it's critical to have a secure and healthy workplace. Mutual respect and shared interests can result in a positive work environment for everyone, lower turnover rates, higher task performance, and a stronger feeling of community/belonging.

SCENARIO 7

If you have work experience think about this... if not go to scenario 8

In past workplaces have you ever been in a conflict that wasn't handled correctly by management? If so, please explain what you think could have been done differently that could have diffused the situation effectively while leaving all parties in the conflict feeling respected and appreciated.

SCENARIO 8

Skip this one if you have had past work experience.

Think of a time you were in a conflict with someone from your life and how you dealt with it. Do you believe you handled the conflict correctly? If so what did you do? If not what could you have done differently to have diffused the conflict better? If you were a manager would you use these same strategies in a work setting?



CREATING CONNECTIONS

The front of the house and the back of the house (**Heart of House*) are a restaurant's two main divisions. Sometimes when both areas are perceived as separate managers and supervisors, we occasionally neglect to take into account the likelihood that if communication attempts are not made, there may be a communication and community disconnect.

Managers need to be aware of this since good relationships and communication make the process simpler and boost your chances of success. As you network more, both front- and back-of-the-house staff will respect and believe in you.

This is important because you need to foster community and a sense of belonging in order for colleagues to work hard and trust in you (Editorial Team, 2021).

TRAINING TO IMPLEMENT



Every restaurant should highly encourage managers and supervisors to complete department training so that they can get a better grasp of what it's like in each department.

This helps in being able to assist these other departments by supporting them as well as knowing where to offer assistance when it is busy.

For example, the team at the restaurant where I currently work understands that the waiters and serving personnel will be busy and will want assistance once everyone has been seated from guest services.

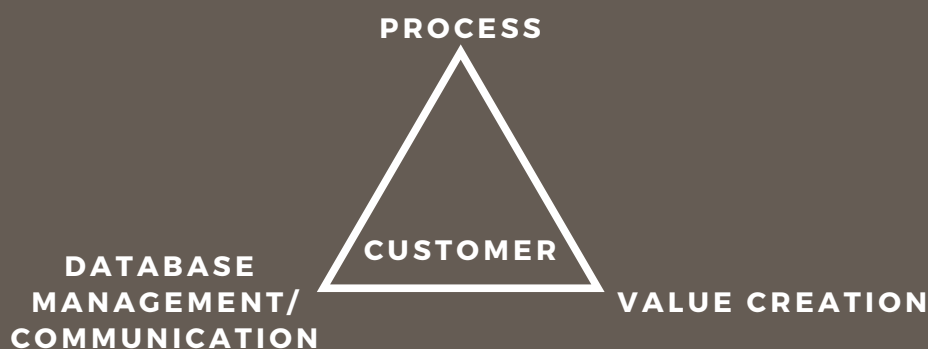
Following that, they anticipate a busy kitchen due to food preparation and the need for food runners due to everything in the window (where the food goes when waiting to be served). If you are able to aid in the areas that are overburdened, it will relieve some of the stress and anxiety off your employees, keeping them happy and feeling supported (Wilson, 2020).

Brainstorm a few activities you can implement with your staff to help create innovation and creativity. Write them below.

Creating Loyal Guests



You most likely have hundreds of guests that come in to your restaurant daily which is an amazing feeling. The hard part is how do you get them to keep coming back and recommending your place to others.



This figure above is something that as a manager you can look at to keep your customers coming back. On the next page we will go in depth into each part of the triangle and how it impacts the customer. 44 (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999).

Loyalty Traingle



PROCESS

The process incorporates everything the guests service entails, such as...

1. phone call to make a reservation
2. departing and retrieving their vehicle from the valet.

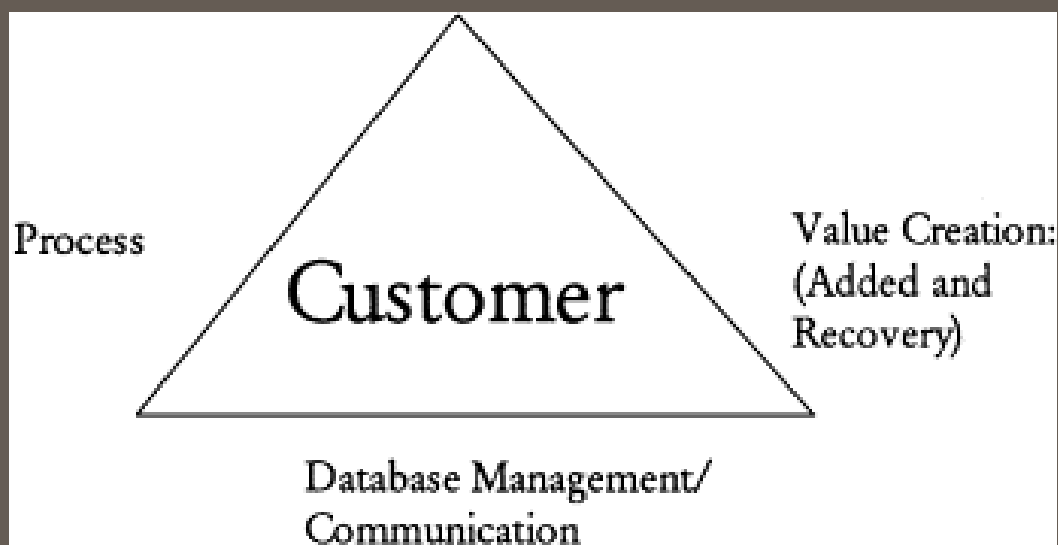
That is why we must monitor these experiences because in order to gain a loyal customer, the process's standard must remain consistent every time the guest comes to dine. There is a lot that goes into this section of the triangle, but the essential issue is determining the **customers' needs, wants, and expectations** and **ensuring that all of them are met** so that they leave satisfied and wanting to return.

VALUE CREATION

The value creations section is crucial since it makes customers feel valued. For example, if you have a regular customer, you can "upgrade" them and seat them at the table they prefer.

This makes people want to return because they know they will be treated well. Or, if something goes wrong, going out of your way to assure nothing more goes wrong and giving them a perk. For example, if a guest waited a long time to be sat, management team may purchase the party a round of drinks on the house.

Loyalty Traingle



This sector involves communicating with your guests. This can be through any platform that is available that your target audience uses.

For example...

1. sending out newsletters
2. promotions or specials you may be running
3. Allowing your guests to feel in the loop about the restaurant (new menu items)

Something management can do here is create a reward program and have only these special "VIP's" get the special deals, or special info. That way the guests feel like they are part of an exclusive club and they can earn points for every time the visit.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

What is the Process Sector of the triangle?

This sector helps to retain customers by meeting their experience requirements and expectations. As a manager, you can analyze this by conducting research, such as reading open table or Yelp reviews and discovering what your customers like and dislike, or even calling them directly to inquire about their experience.

What is the value creation sector of the triangle?

This area contributes to making your visitors feel loved and respected. Especially if you see that they spend a lot of time at your restaurant. When you do this, you can ask them where their favorite area to sit is, and then include that information in their reservation notes to ensure they always get that table. For example, if they prefer booths in the main dining room, ensuring that they always get that booth is critical.

What is the Database management/commu- cation part of the triangle?

This sector is all on maintaining open and honest communication with your visitors. This can include sending out specific news letters or simply engaging with them about certain deals when they arrive for a reservation. For example, gift card offers or specific features that they should be aware of that can enhance their experience.

SCENARIO 9

Brainstorm

Consider the triangle and how you can incorporate it into your present restaurant work if you don't already. What can you do for your guests to entice them to return time and time again? Please write it down below.

SCENARIO 10

Since you just thought of some ideas about how you can implement the loyalty triangle. Write down what you would do if you were faced with an upset guest. They'd been waiting for their table for 30 minutes and are getting irritated. What can you do as a manager or supervisor to save the day and make them want to return a second time and become a loyal customer despite their wait the first time?

LET'S SUMMARIZE



You've finally made it to the end. What an achievement. Being in the hospitality industry is truly a gift. It is a melting pot of people from many cultures, backgrounds, and personalities. Working in this profession requires a unique kind of individual, and you are hand-picked by the best to work in fine dining. Sometimes it is hard because you deal with a variety of people as a supervisor/manager, server wait staff team, and guest services, but you can have a significant impact on the environment you create and how it can positively impact your employees and guests make them feel valued and appreciated.

What We Have Covered Throughout the Manual

Guest Service/Hostess
Server/FoodRunners/Server Assistants
Managers/Supervisors

What is Up Next?

Take this knowledge and apply it to earn more money, develop fans of your restaurant, and create fans of your managerial and supervisory abilities.

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