

# Management & Employee Training

Gaining the competitive edge with delivering personalized service

## One Size Fits All . . . NOT

Did you know that approximately 14 percent of your guests will not return to your business because of food quality and 68 percent because of service quality? So, doesn't it make sense to train your teams to deliver top notch service to win your guests back every time?

To gain the competitive edge today, operators have to do much more to place their restaurant on the "favorites" list. One way is through personalizing service for each type of guest that comes to your business. For example, the selling and service techniques required for a family with children are certainly different from those used with elderly guests. The same holds true for business guests versus vacationers. It is never safe to think that your restaurant staff will inherently understand these differences. Unless trained, they are most likely to offer *one size fits all* service.

Teach your team to be observant and follow the tips below to help assess the needs of your guests:

### Assess the guests . . .

- Time limitation (leisurely or time restricted)
- Mood (celebratory, romantic, stressed)
- Age group (children, teenagers, baby boomers, seniors, geriatrics)
- Purpose (social, private/intimate, or business)
- Gender

Since approximately 80 percent of communication is conveyed through verbal language and non verbal body language and facial gestures as opposed to the actual words, teach your team to focus on the following:

- Verbal Language (voice tone, rate, inflection, speech, pronunciation, and grammar)
- Body Language (eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and movement)

Look for telltale signs of a guest in a rush such as looking at their watch, rubber necking, talking quickly, or tapping their

fingers. Also, solid observation of your guests' image (e.g. clothing, accessories, hair, makeup, etc.) can also provide you with many clues about their dining mode.

Here is an exercise to share with your team. It lists various types of guests and ways to customize service for each category of guest. During a pre-shift meeting or company training session, review this exercise with your team. The *customized service tips* (next page) section remains blank for the last five types of guests. Assess your team's knowledge by having them think of ways to customize service for these five guest types. If you get stumped or need more information about completing the chart, call or email us at the contact information listed below.

**Please Note: When serving alcohol, train your staff to be aware of the signs of intoxication and avoid over-selling alcohol. Teach your staff to refuse alcohol sales to any minors.**

The service guidelines are meant as recommendations and are not set in stone. Be sure to fully assess each and every dining guest by observing verbal and body language to determine how to positively interact with every guest. Mike Owens, General Manager of Brick Oven LLC, located in Topeka, Kansas, says, "Using the above examples in role play scenarios is a highly effective method to properly train teams...it helps them fully understand the importance of tailoring their service versus delivering the same canned service to everyone."

"Service" is not just about delivering food and drinks to the table—it is giving the guest much more than he/she expects. Implementing a solid training program that focuses on personalizing service will set you apart from your competitors. Exceeding the needs of each guest with customized service takes a little extra time. However, it is worth the effort. When the guest wins, everyone wins and it's a triple play — more money for you, increased tips for your staff, and happy guests that become loyal patrons and refer their friends.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER



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Pam Simos is the Founder of Five Star Training & highly sought after keynote speaker. Her company specializes in driving profits through training programs proven to achieve a 500% ROI. Five Star Training offers a full line of 20 training services for mgmt. & staff including 15 seminars, mgmt. coaching/mentoring, train-the-trainer programs, training for restaurant openings, business solutions, keynote speaking, & mgmt., employee, & operational manuals on CD. Learn more by contacting Pam at: Web address: [www.five-star-training.com](http://www.five-star-training.com). E-mail: [contact-us@five-startraining.com](mailto:contact-us@five-startraining.com). Toll-free: (800) 385-7827(STAR).

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