

# Training for SUCCESS



Getting the right people for the guest proposition you offer is the most important step in giving your guests great service. Once you have good people, you need to turn your mind to getting the most out of them.

Great trainers take people with the right DNA and train them to do what needs to be done in a way that gets results. “You hire for attitude and you train for knowledge,” says Frank Hennessey, President of Bento Sushi.

Well-trained staff are able to consistently execute your service practices. Think of all the things a front-of-house or a back-of-house teammate needs to get right every day. It can be a mind-boggling list, and all of it gets done by staff who make a few bucks over \$10 an hour.

Training does cost time and costs money. So why do it, why train? Why not just be fussy and only hire seasoned staff? A few good reasons include:

- Overall labour costs can be kept in line by bringing in new staff and bringing them up; using your turnover to keep your average rate affordable
- Seasoned staff come seasoned with bad habits and cultures that may not fit, and
- Menu changes and cross training require that you train; you best be good at it.

## ATTITUDE + KNOWLEDGE

Restaurant operators that do not train their staff find it hard to find good employees. Why? Because they are fishing in a much smaller pool for pre-trained prospects to staff their restaurants. Attitude and DNA first; skills and knowledge second gets better results.

When you go to a restaurant you can see the effects of poor training. Some of the “tells” include:

- Staff that are unaware of what is on their menu, what is in it, how it is made and how it tastes
- Incorrect orders and inconsistent food and beverage that “just does not taste or look right”
- Slow and disorganized service, even when it is clear there are plenty of staff to go around

Deciding to not train your staff can actually cost you more. When you do not give people the tools they need to do their job they either fail repeatedly or they eventually leave for a better place to work. Both results can cost restaurant operators money from:

- Lower guest counts; as guests take their business elsewhere
- Spending money and time to recruit replacements for the people that are lost, and
- Suffering through the slow throughput and service failures that come with “green staff”

## SET CLEAR STANDARDS

So how do you train someone in our business? Well you need good, clear standards on what needs to be done and how to deliver your service proposition to the guests. You also need to remember that “people people” learn in ways that match who they are. Good people need time to practise and nothing works better than by mirroring how the best get things done.

What does not work? Some things that do not work very well include:

- Big, long, written manuals with lots of big words and no pictures; if hospitality staff were big technical readers they would not be in our business
- Yelling at, intimidating and criticizing staff; effective training is not Boot Camp, nor is it a loud and boisterous reality TV show
- “Throwing them in there” and seeing how they do. No one wins when new staff get in over their head

At the end of the day, great operators are also great trainers. They are credible, consistent, trustworthy, and more than anything, they are “worth following.” Great training will make you a lot of money in your restaurant. Do without it at your peril.

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