Club Resources INTERNATIONAL

Food Service Management on the Go

#82 *The Value of a Super Service Employee*

Teachable Moments

For those of us who eat out with any regularity, we've all had the experience, unfortunately too rarely, of being waited on by what I call a "super server." From the moment she approaches the table we know we're in for a treat. Sparkling with personality, she overflows with knowledge about the food, beverages, and accompaniments. She immediately sizes up our interest in engagement and calibrates her contacts accordingly. She speaks with confidence and authority, questioning us regarding our preferences and without hesitation recommending what she thinks we'll enjoy. The best of the best can even unerringly take and serve orders without benefit of pen and dup pad – an ability that never ceases to amaze me.

Such extraordinary individuals are worth their weight in gold. [illegible] flair and expertise, but they sell, thereby increas[illegible]tly favorable impressions [illegible]d again. [illegible]ate the rec[illegible]

Far mo[illegible]ed employ[illegible] knowle[illegible] seldom[illegible] drinks – that t[illegible]perience. If truth be told[illegible]ployers and in many cases are doing outrigh[illegible]

SAMPLE

The oft[illegible]epeated maxim for employers "to hire for personality and train for technique and competence" encompasses a basic truth. Attitude, personality, and engagement seem to be inborn skills and are difficult to teach. While training can provide service skills and knowledge, thereby increasing a server's confidence and maybe even engagement skills, the best service employees posses an indefinable quality that is difficult, if not impossible, to replicate.

Given the dearth of these extraordinary service employees, they should be recognized and compensated for the rare skills they possess. Too often though, their presence on an employer's staff is viewed as simple good fortune with little or no effort made to differentiate them from the common herd. The result is that in short order they move on to greener pastures where their talents are more fully appreciated. When this happens the loss to the establishment is often more than can be [illegible]. Not only has the employer lost a super server, [illegible]maker, an ambassador, and an example for other less accomplished [illegible]

So why don't we recognize and [illegible] super service employees for their special abilities? I suspect it's a combination of cost consciousness, [illegible] to go beyond the status quo, and a fear of exchanging [illegible] benefits.

To purchase the complete set of Service on the Go visit the CRI Marketplace

Take Away: While a club will never fill all positions with super service employees, a handful of such talented individuals scattered throughout the club's workforce will have a dramatic overall impact on service, member engagement, and ultimately the club's bottom line.

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