

A photograph of a restaurant scene. A waitress in a white long-sleeved shirt and black vest is standing and writing in a small black notebook. She is smiling. A customer in a bright green turtleneck is sitting at a table, looking at a laptop. The table has a lit candle, a glass of water, and a glass of wine. The background is slightly blurred, showing other diners.

# Employee Handbook

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## Introduction

Congratulations on being selected to perform one of the most important, challenging and rewarding jobs at **[Restaurant Name]**! As a Server, you will set the stage and have a direct impact on each guest's experience. You will determine whether each guest feels welcome, appreciated and well cared for.

We will provide you with the training you need to be successful. We take great pride in our quality food and friendly, responsive service. Our high standards can only be maintained through great people like you who share our values and desire to do the very best job possible for our guests every day.

As a server, it is essential that you maintain an energetic, friendly and caring attitude at all times. It is your responsibility to see that each guest is made to feel special and enjoys our fun atmosphere and great food and beverages.

The guidelines listed on the following pages have been established to help you in your effort to provide these qualities to our guests. Along with the hands-on training you will receive, this manual will provide answers to questions you may have regarding your tasks, responsibilities and operating procedures for **[Restaurant Name]**.

Once again, welcome to the **[Restaurant Name]** Team!

## Server Functions & Responsibilities

Successful sales and service result from confidence, which can only be developed through knowledge. We will provide you with ample material to develop the necessary knowledge and confidence in relation to service techniques, the menu and the wine list. You, as a server for **[Restaurant Name]**, must learn it.

### General Job Guidelines And Responsibilities



- ▶ When taking an order, always look the customer directly in the eyes, and stand erect. Never lean or write on the table. Never crouch down on your knees.
- ▶ Never handle a glass by the rim with your hand over the drinking surface.
- ▶ Never handle silverware with your hand over the eating surface.
- ▶ When handling plates or food, never let your hand touch the eating surface or the food.
- ▶ Help your guests as much as possible. Get them cigarettes, be aware of the city's favored bars and dance places, know what movies are showing nearby.
- ▶ Know your schedule.
- ▶ Know what time to be here for each shift.
- ▶ Know what the daily specials are and what they cost.
- ▶ Know the history of the restaurant.
- ▶ Know the managers.
- ▶ Avoid any long conversations at any particular table. This will only upset your other customers.
- ▶ Clear your mind of everything except work when you walk in the door. When you're at the table make sure you're mind is at the table too. Guests can tell when their server is not totally mentally present with them at the table and it has a negative impact on the guests' experience and the server's tip.

- ▶ If you get behind, ask for assistance. You'll never get in trouble for asking.
- ▶ Keep yourself geared up so that you are ready for any rush. We get most of our complaints during the Restaurant's slow period.
- ▶ Don't ever stand around or lean on anything. You can always be cleaning. Running clean-up, wiping shelves or the sales station, taking bus tubs to the back, etc. A server never goes into, or leaves, the kitchen empty handed. Full hands in, full hands out!
- ▶ Always be sure that all your food is secure when you leave the kitchen. Never attempt to carry too much. Two safe trips are better than one catastrophe.
- ▶ Always ENTER the kitchen keeping to the right. Always walk quickly, but never run. This will prevent serious accidents and extra work for everyone.
- ▶ If an order is delayed in the kitchen, first inform the manager, and then tell your customers. The manager will go to the table and explain the situation as well. Get your stories straight. Never hide from your customers.
- ▶ Learn to use your time wisely. When in your station, check all the tables before going back to the kitchen. Don't go to one table then go to the kitchen. Consolidate your trips. Fill up all glasses in your whole station, clear all plates, and then go on to something else. This is the secret to running volume and making more money.
- ▶ Always try to take out complete orders. If the entire order is ready except for a side order, like a vegetable, take out the entrees and have someone follow you in a few seconds with the side order. Don't let the entrees get cold because of a side order. Everything goes out hot.
- ▶ If your entire section clears at one time, don't take orders from four or five new hits at once. You'll end up running yourself to death for twenty minutes, and then have nothing to do for ten. Take one order, then go to the next table and tell them you will be right back to take THEIR order. Take drinks and appetizers out to the first

table, and then go to the others. Never take three or four salads out at one time. This only means that you will have three or four orders of hot food coming out at the same time, which would be impossible to get out all at once. Think ahead.

- ▶ You won't believe how patient people will be if they just see you. Don't hide from your customers. If you use this method in taking orders, you will find that your food will be out more consistently on time, and you will give much better service over all. You will have more time to converse with your customers. People look for more than just good service and food when they go out today. They want a total dining experience. They look for that little extra personal touch which only you as their server can give them. Never spend more than two minutes away from your station. No server ever made any money in the kitchen.
- ▶ Anytime you wait on a customer, put yourself in their place and ask yourself if you would be happy with the job you did at that table.
- ▶ If one person asks for something at a table, make sure you ask everyone at the table if they too would like that item. This will save you a lot of extra trips. If one person requests more tea, ask everyone at the table if they need more tea.
- ▶ When serving coffee or hot tea, always turn the coffee cup so the handle is facing the customer. Place the cup on the right side. Ask people if they would like cream when they place their order for coffee instead of making an extra trip later.
- ▶ When pouring tea or water, never handle the rim of the glass and always take the glass off the table and pour in the aisle.
- ▶ Whenever you are reaching across someone or serving in front of someone, excuse yourself.
- ▶ Always keep your fingers and thumb off the plates you serve.
- ▶ Punctuality is very important. If you get to work late, you start out behind. BE ON TIME.
- ▶ We know that servers work for tips. All people do not realize this. If you get slighted on a tip, it may be because people think the tip is

included in the bill or because they just don't like to tip. The customer is NOT required to tip. If you get stiffed, it is unfortunate, but you must take the good with the bad. Any customer feedback about an employee regarding a bad tip will not be tolerated and is grounds for immediate dismissal.

- ▶ NEVER SIT DOWN WITH A CUSTOMER or friend while on duty, even if they ask you to.
- ▶ When waiting on parties of one, or an ace as they are called in the restaurant business, special attention should be paid to them. They are generally in and out quicker than other parties, and they are usually the best percentage tippers.
- ▶ If a customer leaves you an offer to buy you a drink, just tell them you will be happy to accept the offer another time, when you are not on duty.
- ▶ The most neglected customer in the restaurant is the late customer. People who come in the last few minutes of the evening are usually the best tippers. They don't care how busy it was or how tired you are. They are here to enjoy themselves. Restaurants are noted for hurrying along late coming customers. We are not rushing them, but we must get their order because the kitchen is closing. They may sit there and enjoy their meal as long as they wish. Treat them as though they are the first customers of the evening.
- ▶ A tip should never be removed from a table while the customer is still there. Unless, however, the customer hands it to you or motions for you to come and get it.
- ▶ If you are having a problem with a door hostess or another employee, go directly to the manager. Do not harass the employee.
- ▶ If you must go to the bathroom during the shift, ask someone if they will please watch your station while you are gone, and inform a manager so that they are not looking for you.
- ▶ Unauthorized persons are not allowed in the kitchen. If one appears, politely but firmly escort them out and get the manager, or whomever it was they wanted to speak to.

- ▶ No server is to change his or her station or pick up extra tables without the consent of the manager on duty.
- ▶ Tips are not included: except for parties of 8 or more, and only with the manager's consent (15%).
- ▶ Never serve a salad on hot plates.
- ▶ Always check your glassware for cracks and dried food before filling them.
- ▶ No eating or drinking in front of the house during operating hours. No gum chewing or smoking EVER.
- ▶ Never attempt to adjust the lights or thermostats in the Restaurant. If there is a problem, get a manager.
- ▶ A sales station can only be opened or closed by a manager. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- ▶ Serve food from customer's left.
- ▶ Serve beverage from customer's right.
- ▶ Clear everything from customer's right.
- ▶ Serve women and children first, then men.
- ▶ Whenever you serve a course, ask if there is anything else you can do for the table.
- ▶ Whenever serving a course, position the plate so that the "meat" of the course is closest to the customer.
- ▶ Remove soiled china and silver after each course.
- ▶ Top off with offer of additional beverages whenever anyone is getting low.
- ▶ Bring condiments to the table before they are needed.
- ▶ Offer fresh ground pepper with all salads.
- ▶ Never walk away from a table without acknowledging its requests.

- ▶ Never allow ashtrays to fill up. Cap them and change them often. One butt is enough, two butts are too many.
- ▶ Never assume that the change is your tip!

## Server Opening Procedures

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### At the beginning of each shift -

1. Attend to all essentials (restroom, uniform adjustments, grooming) before work.
2. Clock in no sooner than 5 minutes before the start of your shift unless told otherwise from a manager.
3. Check your station assignments.
4. Check the Daily Service Board for specials, soup of the day, "86'd" items, etc.
5. Conduct your station check points
  - Tables wiped
  - Clean window sills
  - Table base clean
  - Chairs wiped
  - Condiment containers clean and full
  - Salt and pepper shakers clean and full
  - Floor clean
6. Perform opening sidework - (wrapping silverware, making tea, cutting lemons)

## Server Closing Procedures

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### At the end of each shift -

1. When station closes, perform the following -
  - Wipe tables
  - Clean chairs - seats, backs and legs
  - Wipe window sills
  - Clean table bases
  - Condiment containers clean and full
  - Sales & pepper shakers clean and full
  - Clean floor
2. Complete assigned closing side work duties
3. Begin check-out procedures
4. Clock out