Access Training and Logistics

SITHFAB027 Serve food and beverage (Release 1) - Resource

Hospitality

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This learner guide covers the following unit of competency

SITHFAB027 - Serve food and beverage

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to serve food and beverage to customers in a casual dining setting. It covers fundamental technical skills required to prepare the outlet for the service period, interact with customers to take orders, serve and clear food and beverage and to complete end of service tasks.

Higher order service techniques, required by senior food and beverage attendants, are covered by the unit SITHFAB027 Serve food and beverage.

This unit applies to hospitality organisations which operate food and beverage outlets including hotels, clubs, cafes, and coffee shops.

Beverages may include alcohol but it is not a requirement of this unit, as many casual dining settings do not serve alcohol.

The unit applies to operational food and beverage attendants who work with very little independence and under close supervision.

ABOUT ASSESSMENT

This guide contains a range of learning activities which support you in developing your competence. To apply this knowledge to your assessment you will be required to complete the assessment tools that are included in your program. The assessment is a competency based assessment, which has no pass or fail; you are either competent or not yet competent. This means that you still are in the process of understanding and acquiring the skills and knowledge required to be marked competent.

For valid and reliable assessment of this unit, a range of assessment methods will be used to assess practical skills and knowledge.

Your assessment may be conducted through a combination of the following methods:

- Third-party reports from a supervisor
- Practical demonstration of your skills
- Projects and assignments
- Portfolio of evidence
- Written or verbal questioning to assess knowledge and understanding of subject matter
- A combination of these methods

The assessment tool for this unit should be completed within the specified time period following the delivery of the unit. If you feel you are not yet ready for assessment, discuss this with your trainer.

To be successful in this unit you will need to be able to join you're learning to your work place, this should be achievable for those who are employed and for those who are not yet employed and you will be required to use observations of examples that can take place in a kitchen environment.

PERFORMANCE AND KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE

PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

Evidence of the ability to complete tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit in the context of the job role, and:

- Provide effective food and beverage service during five different service periods, including at least one peak period
- Demonstrate effective use of techniques for:
  - service style appropriate to organisation
  - carrying and placing plates containing meals
  - clearing and carrying multiple used plates and other service-ware
  - processing customer accounts
- Demonstrate procedures for:
  - table and room set-up
  - end of shift activities
- Interact with and positively respond to diverse demands and requests by multiple customers during above service periods
- Perform above service within realistic commercial timeframes.

KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE

Demonstrated knowledge required to complete the tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit:

- Specific organisation food and beverage features:
  - workflow structure for food and beverage service
  - electronic and non-electronic ordering systems and procedures
  - workflow between kitchen and front of house areas
  - service procedures
  - set up procedures
  - end of shift procedures for:
    - clearing, cleaning and dismantling furniture
    - cleaning equipment
    - participating in debriefing sessions and quality service reviews

    - placing equipment and furniture in allocated storage areas
    - preparing for next service period
- Common styles of food and beverage service:
    - bar
    - bistro
    - café
    - counter
    - espresso coffee bar
    - plate service
    - table
- Techniques for:
    - carrying and placing plates containing meals
    - clearing and carrying multiple used plates and other service-ware
- Key features of food and beverage items on the menu
- Common organisational procedures used when processing accounts:
    - cash
    - credit card
    - room charge
    - electronic systems
- Correct and environmentally sound disposal methods for food and beverage waste.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this learning program students should be able to:

- prepare for and provide effective food and beverage service for multiple service periods
- interact with and positively respond to the diverse demands and requests of multiple customers
- work with speed and efficiency to deal with numerous service and operational tasks simultaneously
- integrate knowledge of:
    - set up, service and end of shift procedures
    - ordering systems and procedures
    - key features of food and beverage items on menus.

Assessment must ensure use of:

- an operational food and beverage outlet with the fixtures, large and small equipment and workplace documentation defined in the Assessment Guidelines; this may be a:
    - real industry workplace
    - simulated industry environment such as a training food and beverage outlet servicing customers

- industry-realistic ratios of service staff to customers
- kitchen staff with whom the individual can interact
- commercial food and beverage menus currently used by the hospitality industry
- freshly prepared meals to be served

PRE-REQUISITE

This unit must be assessed **after** the following pre-requisite unit**:**

SITXFSA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety

TOPIC 1 - PREPARE FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE

DISCUSS AND CLARIFY TABLE AND ROOM SET-UP, MENU AND STYLE OF SERVICE

A restaurant is a commercial establishment committed to the sale of food and beverage. A restaurant may be a licensed part of a hotel operation, whereby the sales of the restaurant contribute to the sales performance of the hotel as a whole. Restaurants may also be independent business entities under individual ownership and management.

There are different types of restaurants:

- Café
  - A café is — at its simplest — a beverage-focused establishment. Offerings usually include coffee, tea, and a smaller menu of food or snacks. These types of restaurants typically offer counter service and prices are low to moderate.

- Casual dining
  - Casual dining establishments encompass a large segment of the restaurant industry. These types of restaurants range from local independent spots to larger franchises. Defining characteristics include table service and a sit-down meal. Seating is generally oversized and comfortable. There's generally a theme, specific decor, and ambiance that make the dining experience stand out. Depending on the cuisine, a customer dining at a casual establishment could find nearly anything: a salad bar, spaghetti and meatballs, Pad Thai, or even all-day breakfast staples, like pancakes and waffles.

- Fast casual restaurants
  - Fast casual restaurants are a hybrid of fast food and casual dining, a new category that experts predict to be poised for strong continued growth over time. They offer a more upscale and diverse (though still limited) menu selection with slightly higher price points than fast food establishments. But similar to fast food, these types of restaurants have a counter service model where customers place their orders at the cashier and bring them back to their own table. Think customized chopped salads, signature paninis, superfood-filled smoothie bowls, or higher-quality burgers and shakes.

- Contemporary casual restaurants
  - Contemporary casual, a relatively new type of restaurant, is a sit-down dining experience marked by an emphasis on the atmosphere and experience. These types of restaurants often balance a relaxed eating environment with culinary trends popular with today's consumers, like sustainability, farm-to-table, fusion cuisine, and craft beverages.

- Specialty Restaurant
  - The entire atmosphere and décor are geared to a particular type of food or theme. Thus restaurants, which offer Chinese, Japanese, Indian cuisine, would

be termed “speciality restaurants”. The service is based more or less on the style of the country from which the particular cuisine originates.

- Fast food outlets
  - The entire environment is characterised by high investment, high labour costs and vast customer throughput. The service is generally self - service or assisted service. The menu commonly includes the snacks, which can be made very quickly.

- Fine dining
  - Fine dining is a restaurant experience that is typically more sophisticated, unique, and expensive than one would find in the average restaurant. These are full service restaurants with finest menu, service and atmosphere. The menu includes exceptional food with high quality ingredients and prepared by a well-known and talented chef with years of industry experience. It combines the concept of both food and art in making delicious food.

RESTAURANT- FURNITURE, FIXTURES AND THEIR DIMENSIONS

When selecting furniture or fixtures for hospitality venues, the following are considered:

- Standard of restaurant
- Décor and theme of restaurant
- Durability
- Standardization
- Type of service
- Type of customer
- Ease of maintenance

Chairs:
The seating arrangements will depend on:

- The size and shape of the food service area
- The design of tables and chairs used
- The allowance made for clearing trolleys
- The type of establishment

The chairs used are usually of the stacking variety as this takes up less storage space when the areas need to be cleared. The standard height of chair from the ground is 45.72 centimetres. The standard height from the ground to top of the back is 99.06 centimetres. The depth from the front edge of the seat to the back of the chair is 45.72 centimetres.

Tables:
Tables come in three accepted shapes: round/oval, square and rectangular. An establishment or restaurant may have mixture of shapes to give variety, or tables of all one shape according to the shape of the room and the style of service being offered. The standard height of tabletop from ground is 76.2 centimetres. Besides that the tabletop area of various shapes of table is measured below.

Square Table:
76.2 centimetres x 76.2 centimetres: for seating two people
99.06 centimetres: for seating four people

Round Table:
91.44 centimetres diameter: for seating four people
152.4 centimetres diameter: for seating eight people

Rectangular table:
137.16 centimetres x 76.2 centimetres: for seating four people

Linen:
This is one of the more costly overheads and therefore its control is important. These are used to cover the table-top and to help the customer to keep themselves and the table neat and clean. The type of linen used would depend on the class of establishment, type of customer/customer, cost involved, and the style of menu and service to be offered. The main items of linen normally found are:

Tablecloths:

- 137.16 centimetres x 137.16 centimetres to fit a table of 76.2 centimetres square table or round table of 91.44 centimetres diameter.
- 182.88 centimetres x 182.88 centimetres to fit a table of 91.44 centimetres square
- 182.88 centimetres x 243.84 centimetres to fit rectangular shaped tables
- 182.88 centimetres x 137.16 centimetres to fit rectangular shaped tables

Slip cloths

- 91.44 centimetres x 91.44 centimetres, used to cover a grubby tablecloth.

Serviettes (Napkins)

- 45.72 - 50.8 centimetres square if linen 35.56 - 43.18 centimetre square if paper Buffet cloths 182.88 centimetres x 365.76 centimetres

PREPARE AND ADJUST EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE PLACEMENT TO MEET SERVICE REQUIREMENTS AND ALLOW SAFE AND EASY ACCESS FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL.

READYING THE RESTAURANT

Show your customers and your neighbours you care by being out in front of the restaurant every day, sweeping the footpath, replanting and watering flowers and washing the windows.

Many fine dining establishments actually run a hose from the front of the building and wash the footpath as well — anyone can do this — and it shows a high level of care to cleaning the outside. A customer will think that the cleanliness and service inside is spectacular.

DINING-ROOM MISE EN PLACE

If customers are to enjoy a positive experience, dining areas must be kept clean and inviting. In addition, the dining tables in an operation must be properly prepared for the arrival of customers.

Mise en place is a French term that means “everything in its proper place.” The term is traditionally thought of as a back-of-the-house culinary term, in which it means having all ingredients prepared and ready to combine and cook. However, mise en place is also applicable to the operation of a professional dining room. Preparing tables requires the proper placement of condiments and the availability of menus. In most operations those employees responsible for mise en place related to dining tables address additional key areas:

- Linens and napkins
- Cutlery
- Crockery
- Glassware

LINENS AND NAPKINS

The laundering of cloth linens and napkins is not typically done on premises in most operations. Yet clean and soiled items must be carefully handled to minimize cleaning costs. Operations also seek to avoid any laundry vendor charges made as a result of damage to rented linens and napkins.

Napkins can be made of cloth or paper. Cloth napkins are usually set on the table folded in half, in quarters, or in a manager-approved shape or fold. Paper napkins may be placed on table tops or in dispensers. Both cloth and paper napkins may also be used for decorative purposes or for holding eating utensils.

When preparing dining areas for customers, linens are carefully and evenly placed on tables. A silence cloth or second tablecloth is often used to help reduce noise and clatter from plates and glasses being placed on customer tables. When setting tables, great care must be taken to ensure all linens and napkins are clean and wrinkle-free.

Tablecloths should be changed when they become soiled, but during service periods in fine-dining restaurants bare table tops should never be visible to customers. Some operations use a second tablecloth or paper under liner on tables to ensure bare table tops are not shown when tablecloths are changed.

When preparing a dining room for service, managers must ensure that tablecloths and napkins are properly used:

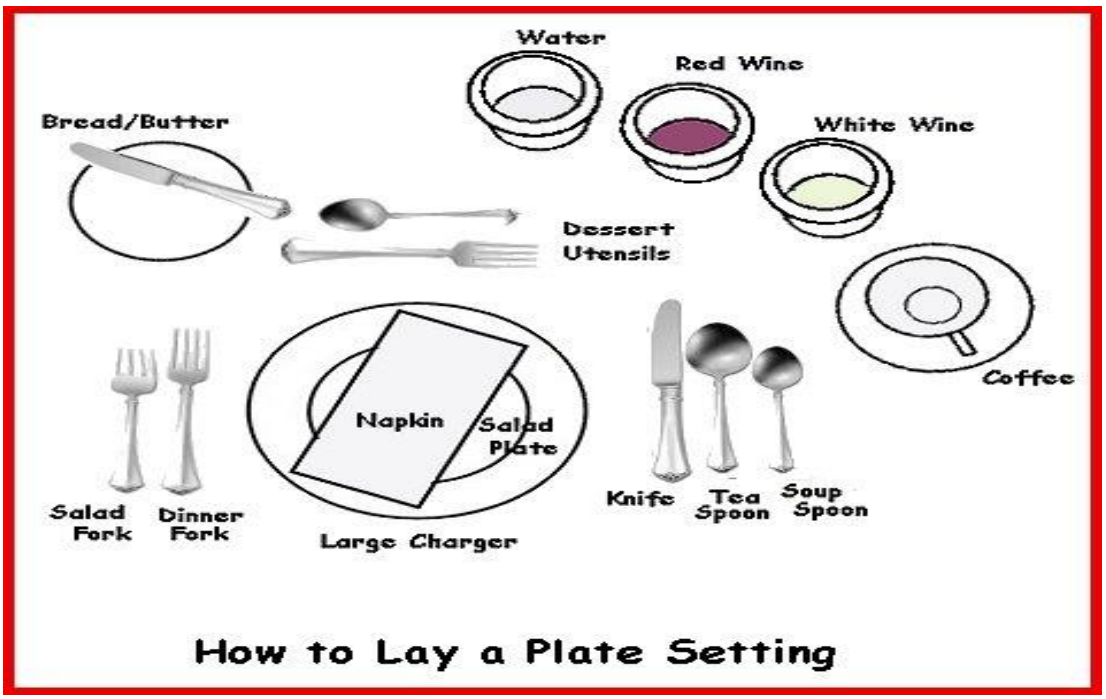
- All linen and cloth napkins are clean and wrinkle-free.
- Tablecloths are not ripped, frayed, or snagged.
- Tablecloths are centred or placed properly on tables.
- Chairs are pulled slightly away from tables so tablecloths drape naturally.
- At least one napkin is in place for each customer to be seated

CUTLERY

Cutlery consists of the eating utensils used by customers and is sometimes referred to as cutlery or silverware. While silver-plated cutlery is used in some very upscale operations, the cutlery used in most operations is made of stainless steel and is sold in three quality-related levels:

- Medium weight: This is the lightest cutlery typically sold for use in commercial restaurant or foodservice operations. It is also called economy cutlery because of its low cost. This type of cutlery is somewhat fragile because, while it will not readily break, it can be easily bent by the user

- Heavy weight: This cutlery is very durable, not easily bent, and makes for a nice presentation. It is used in a large number of casual and fine dining establishments
- Extra heavy weight: Extra heavy weight cutlery is used in finer establishments that seek to offer customers the highest levels of cutlery quality. This type is very durable and sturdy and is difficult to bend



The specific pieces of cutlery used in an operation will vary based on the menu items served and the manager's service standards. When pre-setting tables, or bringing cutlery to customers, all servers must ensure they hold it only by the handle. Servers should not touch the cutlery's food contact surfaces Food contact surfaces are those areas of an item that will come into direct contact with food.

All cutlery should be clean and spot-free when used. If a table is pre-set with tableware, servers may wrap or roll the cutlery used in each place setting in a napkin. A place setting refers to all of the cutlery, crockery, and glassware pre-set for use by one customer. If extra place settings are on a table when customers are escorted to it, the extra settings are typically removed when customers are seated.

If extra wrapped or unwrapped place settings are left on tables after customers have been seated, all of these pieces must be removed and washed properly after customers have left the table.

CROCKERY

Crockery in a restaurant or foodservice operation refers to the reusable plates, cups, and bowls used to serve menu items. Some managers use the term *china* when referring to crockery and some very upscale operations do in fact purchase this high-quality form of porcelain for their crockery. In most operations, however, crockery will be made from less expensive materials.

Crockery used in the restaurant and foodservice industry is commonly made from a variety of materials:

- Plastic
- Metal
- Ceramic
- Bone china
- Clay
- Porcelain
- Stoneware
- Glass

In some operations, coffee cups and saucers or other crockery items are pre-set on tables prior to customer arrival. If crockery is pre-set on tables, care must be taken that servers do not touch their food contact surfaces. Any pre-set, but unused, crockery items should be removed and washed properly after customers have left the table. Ensure that crockery that has been chipped or cracked is disposed of as it can harbour bacteria and food stuffs, remember if in doubt check with your supervisor.

GLASSWARE

Glassware is the restaurant and foodservice term for individual beverage containers. In many cases, glassware in an operation may be made from non-glass materials including paper, Styrofoam, plastic, and metal. Glass is such a popular material for making drinking vessels, yet the term *glass* is often used to refer to most of the drink containers in an operation. However, the term *glassware* is best applied only to reusable glasses.

Distinctive glassware can enhance the image of any restaurant or foodservice operation. Regardless of the materials, from which they are made, or the styles and shapes used in an operation, glassware must be handled carefully because it is breakable. If glassware is delivered to customers or pre-set on tables, the glasses should be free from chips and cracks. They must also be clean and spot-free.

PREPARE AND ADJUST THE ENVIRONMENT TO ENSURE COMFORT AND AMBIENCE FOR CUSTOMERS

Presentation is everything. From the moment you pass through the door until you're seated at your table. There's the welcome you're offered by the staff, the decor and what that mood conveys, and then even before you get to the food - there's the question of the menu.

Whether it's chalkboard or woven raffia, the menu should reflect the focus and the ambience of the restaurant by the design, the description of the food and of course the pricing. Are you seated at a "good" table verses one behind a column by the swinging kitchen door? This is what your customer is looking at you need to put yourself in their shoes, think about what they are experiencing as you are serving them.

It is also important that your restaurant not only pays attention on the music and lighting but also the temperature. The temperature should be comfortable without making it to warm or too cold for your customers. They should be able to sit at the table in comfort.

Is the restaurant seeking customers or repeat clients? Is there a personality that has been consciously conceived? All of these elements indicate a level of care and that care translates to the overall perception of the experience.

As you are serving the customer make note to ensure that they seem comfortable and relaxed, you should do everything within your power and scope of responsibility to cater for their needs.

PREPARE AND DISPLAY FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS ACCORDING TO ORGANISATIONAL STANDARDS

Food not only has to taste great, it should look great too. Preparing food for display is more of an art than a science, but a few simple tricks can make your display go from drab to dramatic.

- Consider of the colour scheme and occasion for the food display. Choose serving plates which will match the occasion. Also think about the balance of colours on the table or plate. For example, don't serve white potatoes with cauliflower or white corn, or sweet potatoes with carrots

- Keep the food whole if possible until ready to carve (on a buffet), for example, a whole turkey, or turkey breast. Arrange the accompaniments close to the main dishes
- Decorate the plates for display purposes after the food has been plated
- Add fresh mint or basil leaves or a spring of parsley to liven up even the plainest platter of food. Arrange melon balls with the mint leaves to create an even more colourful garnish

- Cut a watermelon in half either length-wise, to use as a serving bowl, or width wise, to use as a punch bowl. Scoop out the flesh with a melon baller, and use as garnish, or the basis for a colourful fruit salad that will be served in the watermelon bowl
- Make edible flowers such as roses and tulips. Peel a lemon, lime, or tomato, keeping the peel in one long strip. Wind the strip tightly around itself, turn upside down, and arrange the peel like the petals of a rose. Or carve a rose right into a radish by creating petals with your knife. Cut out a radish tulip by slicing the bottom edges of a radish into four "petals," leaving the rest of the base of the radish as a point in the centre. This works equally well with a strawberry
- Make a strawberry fan by cutting a berry carefully into thin slices from the top down to the point of the berry. Fan the slices out on the plate by spreading them sideways. Make a citrus fan or swirl with thinly sliced lemons, limes or oranges cut and twisted into shape
- Cut a tomato in half to make a small cup to hold dip or other items. You can cut the edges if you want for a more fancy effect. Sprinkle grape tomatoes on a plate for extra colour. Cut out a triangle of zucchini to create a mock Christmas tree and then add grape tomatoes as the ornaments
- Place colourful toothpicks in finger foods, and liven up the plate with any of the suggested garnishes. Served vegetable-based garnishes with savoury appetizers and fruit garnishes with cheeses and desserts

TOPIC 2 - WELCOME AND ADVISE CUSTOMERS

GREET CUSTOMERS ON ARRIVAL, ACCORDING TO ORGANISATIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Be There For Your Customer - From before they arrive to after they leave.

In all restaurants, at all levels of service, paying attention to the customer's every need is of utmost importance to building the customer base and to keep them coming back. While high-end restaurants are normally the only operations to cater to a customer's every need, the current changes in the marketplace now demand that every restaurant provide the same level of service as that offered in the very best restaurants in the country.

GREET THE CUSTOMER

Every customer should be individually and personally greeted as soon as they enter the restaurant. The host or manager should not be running from the back of the restaurant to the front trying to say "hi" to each customer. Rather, the host should be at the front door waiting for the customer as though this is the most important item on their daily agenda — helping with the door, assisting with a coat or an umbrella and providing a warm welcome. The initial greeting to each customer should be that of a long-lost friend.

When seating customers, the host should escort them to the table and offer the table (pulling out a table next to a banquette to allow for easier access) and holding a chair for customers sitting in them. Menus should not be dropped on the table but rather, once customers are seated, the menu should be opened and handed to each customer. Before leaving the table, the host should inform the customers who their server will be and when they might arrive (e.g. "Rose will be serving you this evening and she will be with you in just a minute").

Finally, the host should let customers know who is in charge of the restaurant for the evening and if customers need anything or have any concerns, they can ask for the manager (and provide his/her name). Provide information to customers, giving clear explanations and descriptions.

MAKING SERVICE PERSONAL

'Personalised Service' in Food & Beverage service focuses on the interactions between the customer and the food & beverage service staff.

Why personalised service is required in hotels or restaurants?

- In hotels or restaurants, customer must be treated as royalty.
- We are here to provide a positive experience to the customer along with food.
- This help in getting repeated business and thus the revenue of restaurant increase.
- Customers will tell their friends about the experience they have had – so we want to ensure that it was a positive one.

How we can provide personalised service to customers:

- Always greet the customer in a polite and friendly way.
- Talk with the customer.
- Suggest to the customer the correct combination of food & beverage.
- Maintain proper spoken language and body language.
- Always smile.
- Try to solve any problems on the spot.

You should remember following points, while in conversation with customer:

- Don't talk to other staff without first excusing yourself from the customer.
- Don't interrupt the customer's conversation, but wait until there is a suitable moment to catch the attention of the customer.
- Don't serve the customer whilst they are carrying on a conversation
- Don't talk across the room either to other staff or to customers.

Always follow these simple rules, while doing personalised service:

- When showing customers to their table –Always walk with them at their pace.
- When seating customers - Ladies first descending in the age unless the host is a lady.
- Handling menus to customers - Offer the menu and wait for the customer to take it.
- Opening and placing napkins - Open carefully, do not shake it like duster, place it on the customer's lap after saying excuse me to the customer.
- Talking to customers - only when standing next to them.
- Serving and clearing - always say 'EXCUSE ME' before serving or clearing and "THANK YOU' after you have finished with each customer.
- Explaining food and beverage items - use terms the customer understands (i.e. no technical terms); use terms, which make the food sound attractive; do not use abbreviations.

How to address customers or customer:

- Always use 'SIR' or 'MADAM' for addressing a customer.
- If you know the name of the customer, then address him with his name
- Always greet the customer with 'GOOD MORNING' or 'GOOD EVENING', while meeting with the customer at the first time.
- Always say 'HAVE A NICE DAY' or 'GOOD DAY' or 'GOOD NIGHT' or 'THANK YOU', when the customer is leaving the restaurant.

The following is a step by step guide on how to greet and seat your customer.

GUIDING THE CUSTOMER THROUGH THE MEAL EXPERIENCE

Step 1:
Approach customers who are waiting to be seated or just arrived inside the restaurant.

- Smile and give a warm greeting, such as "Good Morning"
- Be positive when greeting customers. Your manner will affect customer satisfaction

Step 2:
Ask customer if you are holding a reservation for them

- If customer has a reservation, then ask the name of the customer and check in the reservation book. Refer the details and seat him at the reserved table
- If customers do not have a reservation, ask them if anyone else will be joining them Then check available seating to see if you can accommodate them

Step 3:
Accommodate any special customer needs

- Ask customers with visual impairments if they would like Braille menus, if available.
- Ask customers with disabilities if they have special seating needs
- Ask customers with small children if they would like a high chair or a booster seat Ask the responsible person to rearrange the table as per need of the customer and to set-up special equipment if required
- If necessary, ask customer to wait while you meet their needs

Step 4:
Take customers to their table.

- Pick up enough menus for each customer, plus a wine or alcoholic beverage list.
- Ask the party to follow you, and lead to the table at a reasonable pace.
- Hold the menus high on your arm, not down by your side.
- Stand up straight and give your full attention to the party you are seating. Do not stop along the way to talk to co - workers, unless it relates to seating the party you are leading.
- Move service equipment to one side to clear a path for the customers. Make sure the party is following
- As you walk, describe restaurant highlights, such as Buffet, or house special etc

Step5:
Help the customers with seating

- Help children get into booster seats. Pull high chairs away from tables so that customers can place small children into them
- Help customers with disabilities as appropriate. If you're not sure how to help, ask customers what you can do for them
- Pull out a chair for a customer and adjust the chair as the customer sits. Help others with seating as appropriate

Step 6:
Present the menus:

- Give closed menu, right side up, to each customer in the following order: children, women, and men

- Present the menu from the customer's right side, using you right hand
- Hand the wine menu or alcoholic menu to the host of the party if there is one. If not, place the wine list on the table
- Introduce yourself and tell customers who their server will be
- Serve water and items such as crackers, bread sticks or other snacks (as per house policy)

Step 7:
Remove the extra settings i.e. extra chairs, glasses, side plates etc

Step 8:
Serve water to the customer

- Find out if the customer wants plain water or mineral water chilled or not chilled.
- If the water is chilled, care should be taken to wipe out the frost from outside the jug/bottle
- If there is ice in the jug, be careful while pouring. See that the ice does not fall into the glass and splash the water
- Water glass should not be removed from the table, if it is very difficult to reach the glass, then you may slide it to the side of the table but do not lift it in your hand like a beer glass
- The water glass should be filled up to about 1.9 to 2 centimetres from the top. The jug should not be filled to the rim but 5 centimetres below
- The waiter should be always attentive and see that the water glass is always filled up
- The water glass is the last thing to be removed from the table. As long as the customer stays at the table, the glass should be there with water
- All beverages should be poured with the sprout pointing away from the customer to prevent accidental splash on the customer

ANSWER CUSTOMER QUESTIONS ON MENU ITEMS CORRECTLY AND COURTEOUSLY

As a waiter it is very important that when you are asked questions by customers about items on the menu that you can answer them not only correctly and with accuracy, but also answer them with courtesy. Remember that the customer is not there as an annoyance to you but you are there to assist and serve the customer, without the customer you would have no job.

So as a waiter it is a priority that you know your venues menu, if you have any questions that are asked of you and that you do not know the answer, let the customer know that you will find out don't make things up as you go along as it might be wrong.

COORDINATING WINE WITH MEALS

It is important for food and beverage staff to coordinate the timing of the service of wines so that they can be enjoyed with the appropriate course for which they were chosen.

Ways to ensure this occurs include:

- Food staff should advise beverage staff when they are ready to serve a course

- Beverage staff should monitor the service and clearing of plates for different tables where wine has been ordered

The intention should be to have the wine presented and served a minute or so before the relevant course arrives at the table. Remember the presentation, tasting and service ritual takes time so this must be factored in. Customers do not want the bottle of red they ordered to accompany their steak arriving just as they finish the meal – they want to be able to savour it as they enjoy their meal.

Extra attention needs to be paid to this where a table has, for example, ordered a bottle of white to accompany their fish entrée, a bottle of red with their main course steak and a bottle of dessert wine with their sweets. Glasses also need to be removed and changed, where applicable.

Many servers make a common mistake when serving drinks from a tray – as their right hand holding the drink goes down to the table to place the drink on the table, their left hand (supporting the tray), goes up and tilts – like a set of balance scales. Result? The drinks tip over and there is a huge mess.

- To help avoid this costly and embarrassing situation – bend your knees when serving from a tray
- Work anti-clockwise around the table, repeating the above procedures until the last drink is served
- Drink waiters should work anti-clockwise around the table, and food waiters should work in a clockwise direction – this means that they will only cross paths once at the table, saving service time and reducing the potential for accidents between staff. Use coasters or napkins under drinks when and where required

UP-SELLING PRODUCTS

Upselling is a sales technique whereby a waiter induces the customer to purchase more expensive items, upgrades, other add-ons or extra dinks or desserts in an attempt to make a more profitable sale. Upselling usually involves marketing more profitable services or products but can be simply exposing the customer to other options that were perhaps not considered, on top or in addition to, the original sale.

Whenever an attempt to up-sell is made it is important that the offer is accompanied by truthful reasons why the suggestion would benefit the diner/purchaser – examples of benefits may include:

- Unique opportunity – the product may be rare, or the offer may not be available elsewhere
- Unique taste
- Larger size/serve

CROSS-SELLING PRODUCTS

Cross-selling is selling associated items to accompany what the customer has already ordered. The idea is to encourage the customer to buy something that will enhance their enjoyment of the experience and increase the 'take' from that table/room/person.

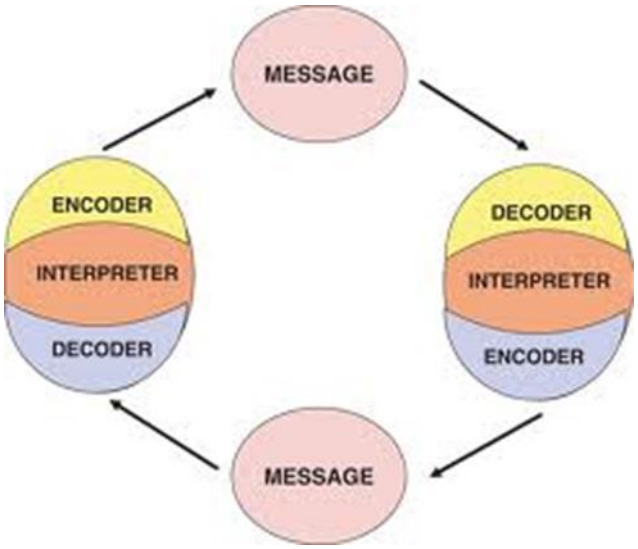
In a dining room you might suggest the garlic bread as a brilliant accompaniment for the Minestrone Soup or recommend a crisp, fresh Garden Salad to accompany the Lasagne.

TOPIC 3 - TAKE AND PROCESS ORDERS

TAKE AND RECORD ORDERS ACCURATELY AND LEGIBLY USING THE FORMAT REQUIRED BY THE ORGANISATION, AND CONVEY THEM PROMPTLY TO THE KITCHEN

After customers have been properly greeted in quick-service restaurant (QSR) or fast-casual operations, or greeted and seated in casual or fine-dining operations, service staff members take their menu orders. Taking orders properly requires servers to use excellent communication skills. In a restaurant or foodservice operation, communication mistakes can lead to errors in customer service, from misunderstanding a request to delivering the wrong menu item to the wrong customer.

Communication is an extremely complex process. The sender–receiver model shows the communication process.



The sender is the person who has a message to communicate, whereas the receiver is the person who gets the sender's message. The sender needs to send the message and get feedback that it was received accurately.

Here are some examples of miscommunication in a restaurant or foodservice operation:

- A customer asks a server who is unfamiliar with American slang, "What's hot on your menu tonight?" The server responds by listing the menu items that are served at a hot temperature, while the customer wanted to know what items were popular.
- A server recognizes a customer from past visits and assumes that the customer knows the menu items. Therefore, the server does not highlight items that the establishment wants to promote. As a result, the customer does not consider these items when ordering.

- A server states, “What will we be having tonight?” and thus offends a customer who finds the server’s comment offensive because of its too casual familiarity.

Clear communication is the solution for these situations. Managers should familiarize employees with common customer questions. In addition, servers should be trained to avoid making any assumptions about a customer, even if the customer is a frequent visitor.

TAKING THE CUSTOMER ORDER

The professional and accurate taking of customer orders is essential to high-quality service in every restaurant and foodservice segment and in every food and beverage operation. All customers expect their orders to be taken by qualified servers.

They also expect those taking their orders will be knowledgeable:

- Servers should know what is on the menu, including basic item ingredients and preparation methods
- Servers should know descriptive words used to explain the menu items offered
- Servers should know the time required to prepare menu items
- Servers should know what accompaniments are served with each menu item.
- Servers should know which menu items complement each other. For example, lighter wines with milder food and more robust wines with more intensely flavoured food
- Servers should know the prices charged for each menu item offered

While all customers expect order takers to be well-trained, knowledgeable, and professional, the most critical factors related to taking customer orders varies by industry segment. The requirements for QSR and fast-casual tend to be different than those for the casual and fine-dining segments.

QSR AND FAST CASUAL

Like those in all segments of the industry, staff taking customer orders in the QSR and fast-casual segments of the industry must be good communicators. In addition, they must emphasize the two traits most important to high-quality order taking in their specific segments: friendliness and accuracy.

FRIENDLINESS

Some managers believe high-quality customer service is dependent only on timing, efficiency, and the specific steps needed to record and accurately deliver customers’ menu item selections. These are important factors. However, a vending machine can deliver a sandwich efficiently, but only friendly people can provide hospitality.

Understanding the importance of hospitality to high-quality service delivery requires managers to focus on people as well as procedures. Unfriendly order takers may be able to perform their order-taking tasks efficiently.

These servers cannot, however, make a positive impact on a customer's feelings about an operation. Connecting with others can take many forms. In the hospitality industry it begins with servers who are genuinely caring and friendly.

ACCURACY

Because of their very nature, the processing of customers in the QSR and fast-casual segments of the industry moves quickly. In many cases, it is speed of service that draws customers to these operations. As a result, customer orders are most often taken and filled quite rapidly. Accuracy and attention to detail are of critical importance when order taking.

To illustrate why accuracy is especially important in the QSR and fast-casual segments, consider the server in a casual dining table-service operation who forgets if one of his customers ordered extra onions for her chef salad, or if she did not want any onions on the salad. In this case, the server can quickly return to the customer's table to clarify the order.

On the other hand, if a customer placed a takeout pizza order by telephone, the staff member actually making the pizza will be completely dependent on the ability of the order taker to have accurately recorded whether the customer preferred extra onion, or no onion, on the ordered pizza. Rapid customer processing and the difficulty of clarifying orders with drive-through and some customer types illustrate the need for accuracy of order taking in QSR and fast-casual operations.

CASUAL AND FINE DINING

In casual and fine-dining operations, professional order taking also addresses two key issues:

- Exhibiting an appropriate demeanour
- Optimizing the dining experience

EXHIBITING AN APPROPRIATE DEMEANOUR

The definition of ambience is a special atmosphere or mood created by a particular environment. Server demeanour is the way a server behaves when doing his or her work. In casual and fine-dining operations the demeanour of servers must be consistent with the ambience created in the operation's dining area.

The demeanour of servers consists of several behavioural characteristics:

- Appearance
- Attitude
- Mannerisms
- Image

TAKE AND SERVE BEVERAGE ORDERS

Step 1:
Offer beverages:

- Always know how much alcohol you customers are drinking
- Don't suggest alcohol if your customers are intoxicated or becoming intoxicated
- At lunch and dinner, suggest that customers start their meal with a cocktail and an appetizer
- Take the wine order after the food order, unless customers choose otherwise.
- During the breakfast period, offer coffee and orange juice immediately after seating the customer
- Know the drink available and the customary way of serving

Step 2:
Follow an order taking system:

- Take orders from women first and then from men
- Write orders on the order pad or customer check according to how the customers are seated
- Follow a clock-wise direction.
- Listen carefully to each customer's order. Repeat the order
- Note special requests on the order pad or customer check
- Find out the customer's preference for service such as "on the rocks" or "straight up"
- Suggest the most popular brands when a customer does not specify the brand
- Suggest a specialty drink if a customer is not sure what to order
- When offering cocktails, ask customers who don't want a cocktail if they would like a glass of wine or non-alcoholic drink
- Always suggest specific alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, such as a Beefeater gin and tonic, Sparkling water etc

Step 3:
Set-up glasses for drink orders

- Know which drinks go in which glasses
- If you follow a calling sequence when ordering drinks, set up the glasses in the order you will call the drinks
- You may need to fill glasses with ice for drinks that require it
- Always use a scoop when putting ice in glasses.

Step 4:

- Place drink orders
- If you need to call orders, say in a clear voice, "ordering" and then tell the bartender your drink orders, including any special instructions

- Call drink orders for all tables at the same time
- Make sure you've written each order clearly and correctly on a customer check or order pad
- Place written orders in the proper location so the bartender can refer to them

Step 5:
Garnish drinks

- Select garnishes according to the drink recipe or the customer's preference
- Make sure each garnish is fresh and attractive
- To prevent splatters, place garnishes after drinks have been poured

Step 6:
Set-up beverage napkins, stirrers, and straws

- Put one - beverage napkin on your tray for each drink
- Make sure napkins are clean and free from tears, fold, and wrinkles
- Put stirrers or straws in drinks if needed

Step 7:
Check your beverage order

- Is it the correct beverage?
- Is it in the correct glass?
- Is the garnish correct?
- Have special instructions been followed?
- Has anything spilled over the side?
- Should it have a chaser?

Step 8:
Place drink on the beverage tray

- Line the tray with linen napkin to improve the look of the tray and to absorb spills and moisture
- Keep an extra pen and an extra napkin on the tray
- Centre glasses so the tray will be well balanced. If possible, put heavy or tall glasses in the centre of the tray
- Keeping mind the order in which you will serve drinks so your tray will be balanced until the last drink is removed

Step 9:
Serve beverages to customers

- Always serve women first and the host of the group last
- In no-host situation, simply serve women first and men last
- Place the beverage napkin first, in the centre of the base plate or in the centre of the plate space, with the logo facing the customer
- Avoid reaching across customers. Move around the table and serve each customer from his or her right side with your right hand

- Handle glasses away rim their rim or lip: handle stemmed glasses by the stem or base
- Place the drink glass on the centre of the beverage napkin
- Follow your order pad or customer check to serve the correct drink to each customer
- As you serve each drink, repeat the name of the drink and any special requests to be sure that it is correct. Do not ask who ordered the drink

Step 10:
Suggest another drink when the customer's glass is one-half or three-quarters empty.

- Pay attention to how much alcohol your customers are drinking. Count the drinks each customer has had
- Only suggest another drink to customers who are no intoxicated or close to becoming intoxicated
- Only serve drinks to customers who want them. Do not simply bring "another round" for everyone if some customers do not want another drink

TAKE FOOD ORDERS

When taking food orders it is important to follow the below steps. The below steps will ensure you provide good and accurate customers service.

Step1:
Tell Customers about specials

- Know the daily specials. If appropriate at your restaurant, try to taste each one
- Always describe specials and chef's choice items, such as the soup of the day, before customers ask
- Describe the ingredients and the preparation of specials in an appealing way. Always give the price of specials

Step 2:
Ask for the food order

- Offer to help customers with menu selections. Answer any questions about the menu
- Ask if they are ready to order

Step 3:
Follow an order - taking system

- Know the numbering system for the chairs at each table. Chair #1 at each \table is typically the chair closest to the door or some other landmark in your restaurant
- When writing orders on your order pad or customer check, write the order for the customer in chair #1 on the first line of the order form
- Take the orders of children first, then women, and then men. Write their orders in the corresponding place on the order pad. For instance, if the customer in chair #2

is the only women at the table, take her order first and write it on line #2 on the order pad

- Continue to take food orders in a clockwise pattern around the table

Step 4:
Stand in the correct position to take orders.

- Always stand up straight as you take orders. Do not rest the order pad on the table
- Look at each customer when he or she is ordering. Watch for hesitation in making a decision. This provides you an opening to offer a suggestion

Step 5:
Ask the appropriate questions

- Pay attention to details and know your menu thoroughly
- Know what questions to ask for each item to determine the customer's choices. For instance, know if a customer must choose a salad or soup
- Know when you need to ask for more information, such as how the customer would like an item cooked. If you don't ask the right questions when taking the orders, you will have to interrupt your customers to find
- Out necessary preparation and service information. This is embarrassing to you and annoying to your customers
- Repeat each completed order to the customer, especially if there are special requests regarding preparation or service
- Try not to sound mechanical when describing choices. Make every item sound good

Step 6:
Suggest additional courses:

- Suggest additional courses such as appetizers, soups, and salads when you take the food order
- Think about what the customer has selected and suggest items that will go well with entrée (main dish)

Step 7:
Suggest a bottle of wine.

- Try to sell a bottle of wine after taking the food order
- Know which wines will go well with certain foods
- Always know how much alcohol your customers are drinking. Don't suggest wine or other alcoholic beverages if your customers are intoxicated or are close to becoming intoxicated

Step 8:
Try to meet special requests:

- Some customers may request an item to be prepared in a way not listed on the menu. You may need to check with the chef or your supervisor before making a promise to a customer
- Write all special requests on your order pad and tell kitchen about the requests when you place the order

Step 9:
Ask if customers would like another beverage

- Check on drink levels. Suggest another drink if a beverage is one half to three-fourths empty and customers are not nearing intoxication
- If customers are drinking alcoholic beverages but do not want another, suggest a non-alcoholic beverage
- Clear empty glasses before serving beverages

Step 10:
Collect the menus and wine list, if you haven't already done so

Step 11:
Tidy the table to keep it as fresh as possible

Step 12
Place food orders with Kitchen

CHECK BACK TO THE TABLE

Step 1:
Make sure the customers are satisfied with their meals.

- Approach the customers after they have taken a few bites
- Ask a few specific questions about the food, such as, "How is your sirloin" or "Are you enjoying your salad?"
- Ask if there's anything else you can bring at that time. If so, deliver the item right away

Step 2:

Replace unsatisfactory food or beverages.

- Apologise to the customer. Don't make excuse or blame others for the problem
- Take care of the problem immediately
- Tell your supervisor about the problem as soon as possible

OPERATE THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE ORDERING SYSTEM

RECORDING AND PLACING THE CUSTOMER ORDER

In casual and fine-dining operations, customers make their selections in dining areas. Trained wait staff take the orders and give them to production staff. In all of these cases, and in all segments, it is essential that servers complete two critical tasks well: recording the order and placing the order.

Recording customer orders means accurately communicating with customers to precisely determine their menu selections. The types of questions commonly asked by servers when properly recording orders vary based on the menu items offered.

There are many examples of order details that servers must record properly:

- Doneness: for steaks and burgers
- Cooking method: for eggs
- Size: for items such as beverages and pizzas
- Condiments: for sandwiches
- Toppings: for ice-cream dishes
- Side dishes/accompaniments: to identify customer choices of menu item alternatives included in an entrée or meal's selling price

After determining what customers want to order, service staff must properly place, or enter, the orders into the operation's production system so item preparation can begin. The methods used to record and place customer orders vary somewhat, but managers typically use one of four methods:

- Checklist
- Customer check
- Notepad–POS system
- Interfaced POS system

NOTEPAD–POS SYSTEM

When using the notepad–point-of-sale (POS) system method, the server writes down customer orders on a notepad. This typically occurs in the dining area, after customers have been seated and reviewed the menu. The server then uses an order entry terminal in the dining area or kitchen to place the customer's order into the operation's POS system. In this method, the facility's production staff members will monitor their operation's POS display terminals or order printers located in the production areas to receive incoming orders. These orders tell the production staff what menu items must be produced.

In most cases the display terminals or order printers used by production staff also display the name of the server placing the order. This information is especially helpful if production staff members have questions about the order or how the order should be prepared. The notepad–POS system method is the one most commonly used in casual and fine-dining operations where customer orders are taken, or recorded, at the customer's table.

INTERFACE D POS SYSTEM

The newest order recording and placement approach is the interfaced POS system method. To interface means to electronically connect two systems. In this case the two interconnected systems are customer order recording and customer order placement.

Today, wireless handheld order entry devices allow servers at customers' tables to take orders and automatically enter them in an operation's POS system. As a result, the notepad–POS system method traditionally used in casual and fine-dining operations is, in many operations, giving way to this more technologically advanced method of customer order recording and placement. Some handheld order systems can even recognise a server's handwriting, read it, and then place the server's orders directly into the operation's POS system.

COMMUNICATE SPECIAL REQUESTS OR DIETARY REQUIREMENTS TO KITCHEN.

It is important that you not only communicate with the customer but also with the kitchen staff about any customers who might have special requests or dietary needs. If you are taking meals orders for a customer who has special dietary needs such as, specific food allergies or intolerances or health condition which is managed by a special diet you will need to let the kitchen staff know.

If a customer notifies the host or restaurant manager about a food allergy, the host or restaurant manager should relay that information immediately to the designated staff member – ideally, the manager. The designated person should answer the customer's questions and assist with menu selection.

Before seating a customer who has a food allergy, the host or restaurant manager should make sure the seating area has been thoroughly cleaned to ensure that the diner will not come into contact with any leftover food from the previous party.

Special care should be taken to clean high chairs, too. In addition, the table should not be close to the kitchen entrance; splattering food or steam may spread allergens to the customer's table.

PROVIDE GLASSWARE, SERVICE WARE AND CUTLERY SUITABLE FOR MENU CHOICE

In restaurant s there are a number of items that you will or may require for table service these include- tableware, flatware, chinaware and glassware.

In a restaurant, we are using various types of plates, glasses, spoons, knifes etc. for serving food to customer and for customer to have the food. The selection of these items depends on following factors:

- The type of menu and service offered
- The maximum and average seating capacity
- The rush - hour turn over
- The washing - up facilities and its turn - over

For laying a cover on the table, we need following items:

- Flatware: these refer or denote all forms of spoons and forks

- Glassware: these refer to all type of glasses being used in restaurant for various purposes
- Cutlery: these refer to knives and other cutting implements
- Hollowware: these refer to any items made from Silver, or glass apart from flatware and cutlery egg. Teapots, milk jugs, sugar basins, oval flats etc
- Chinaware: these refer to all items made from China clay material

Flatware and cutleries:
There is an almost unlimited range of flatware, cutlery and hollowware in use in the catering industry today. These items are necessary to give with knife, fork, spoon, flats, and vegetable dishes and lids, entrée dishes and lids, soup tureens, teapot etc. Some of the important flatware and cutleries are as mentioned below:

- Soup spoon: used for eating soup.
- Fish knife: used for Poisson (Fish) courses
- Fish fork: used for Poisson (fish) courses
- Joint knife: used for main course dishes
- Joint fork: used for main course dishes
- Sweet fork: used for dessert courses
- Sweet spoon: used for dessert courses
- Side plate: used for cover layout and normally used for serving bread or any accompaniments.
- Side knife: kept over the side plate, generally used for applying butter on bread.
- Asparagus holder: used to hold asparagus spears when eating.
- Pastry slices: used in sweet trolley for serving portions of gateau.
- Oyster fork: used with dishes made of shellfish/oysters e.g. Shellfish cocktails
- Pastry fork: used for afternoon teatime for having snacks and pastries
- Corn-on-the-cob holders: used for holding the cobs, by piercing each end of the cob
- Lobster pick: used to extract the flesh from the claw of lobster
- Butter knife: used to spread butter on the bread
- Caviar knife: knife with a short broad blade used for spreading the caviar
- Fruit knife and fork: for serving grapefruits
- Ice - cream spoon: used for all ice creams served in coups
- Sundae spoon: used for ice cream sweet in a tall glass
- Snail tongs: used to hold snail shell
- Snail dish: the dish is round with two ears, having six indentations to hold a portion (6) of snails
- Snail fork: used to extract the snail from its shell

- Cheese knife: used for serving cheese from cheese board
- Sugar tongs: required for cube sugar

Glassware:
Glassware contributes to the appearance of the table and the overall attraction of the room. There are many standard patterns available to the caterer. Most manufacturers now supply hotel Glassware in standard sizes for convenience of ordering, availability and quick delivery. Glasses are measured in terms of capacity by 'millilitre (ml)' or 'fluid ounces (oz)'

China-ware:
The china must blend with the rest of the items on the table and also with the general décor of the establishment.

While selecting or purchasing Chinaware, following points should be considered: Every item of earthenware should have a complete cover of glaze to ensure a reasonable length of life. China should have a rolled edge, which will give added reinforcement at the edge. Thus, if well done, means that chipping will only occur on the under edge, which is not visible to the customer. One word of caution here is that hygiene is most important - chipped china could harbour germs.

The pattern should be under rather than on top of the glaze. This will increase the life of the chinaware. There is a wide range of items available and their exact sizes differ according to the manufacturer and the design produced or ordered.

As a guide, the common sizes/types are as below:

- Side plate: 15 cm (6 in) in diameter.
- Sweet plate: 18 cm (7 in) in diameter.
- Fish plate: 20 cm (8 in) in diameter.
- Soup plate: 20 cm (8 in) in diameter.
- Joint plate: 25 cm (10 in) in diameter.
- Cereal/sweet plate: 13 cm (5 in) in diameter.
- Teacup and saucer
- Coffee cup and saucer (demitasse)

Other items of china required include:

- Salad crescent
- Hot water jug
- Milk jugs
- Cream jugs
- Coffee pots
- Hot milk jugs
- Consommé cup and saucer

- Sugar basin
- Butter dishes
- Egg cups
- Soup bowl/cups
- Platter (oval plate)

PROCESS ACCOUNTS AND RECEIVE PAYMENT AT APPROPRIATE TIME

Processing customer account in a timely manner is extremely important as to lead to customer satisfaction and your establishment good name. Below is a step by step process of how to process and receive payment from your customer:

Step1:
Prepare customer check:

- Review the check (bill) carefully to be sure it is complete and accurate
- Make sure all drinks and desserts are included on the check

Step2:
Decide when to present customer checks as per house policy.

Step 3:
Present customer checks in a check folder with a pen.

Step 4:
Serve after - dinner mints with the check, if appropriate.

Step 5:
Sincerely thank customers and invite them to return. Use the customers' last names if you know them.

Step 6:
Settle customer checks paid by cash.

- Present change in the customer check folder. Do not claim a tip until customer leave.
- Always provide a receipt with the change.

Step 7:
Settle the customer checks, if the payment done by credit/debit card, traveller's cheque/ voucher/ gift certificates etc.: perform as per house policy.

Step 8:
Thank the customer when you return the change and receipt, and invite the customer to return.

Step 9:
Inform security and your manager immediately if a customer leaves without settling the bill

TOPIC 4 - SERVE FOOD AND DRINKS

COLLECT FOOD AND BEVERAGE SELECTIONS FROM KITCHEN AND CHECK FOR ACCURACY AND PRESENTATION

It is important to remember that when you collect meals from kitchen you should always check for accuracy and presentation, prior to service.

Serving of plates - Plates should be served all at once. The courses should be served simultaneously too, to allow the customers to start their meal at the same time. Utensils ought to be different in between courses. You can't expect your customer to use one fork for the salad and the dinner.

Serving the food and drinks - Food and drinks are customarily served from the left side of the customer. Wines are served from the right side. Always use tray in serving drinks. Holding the wine glasses looks untidy and gives an impression that the establishment lacks order and grace. Make sure that glasses are served with cocktail napkins. Water drops form on the glasses and look sloppy after a while.

Check the food before you take it out of the kitchen:

- Does the food look fresh and appealing
- Have all preparation instructions been followed?
- Is the presentation garnished?
- Have all special requests been met?
- Is the plate clean?
- Is hot food hot and cold food cold?
- Ask the chef to make any corrections necessary to meet the property's high standards.

Notify your supervisor immediately of any problem in the food preparation so that he or she can speak to the customers and correct the situation.

USE APPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES TO CARRY AND PLACE PLATES CONTAINING MEALS AND SERVE TO CORRECT PERSON.

Carrying dinner plates requires a considerable amount of practice to execute properly. The more plates you carry, the more likely you are to drop one. Carrying also becomes a challenge when the plates are hot. Fortunately, there are techniques that can be used to more efficiently deliver the plates to the table.

ONE HAND

This category can be broken down into three segments: first, you can carry the plate with your palm under it, providing a stable surface for the plate to rest on. This works well with salads

and other food that isn't hot. Second, you can support the plate with your fingertips for food that is slightly too warm for the palm of your hand. Third, you can grab the plate with your fingers from the plate's side. This technique works especially well if the plate is light or you have strong fingers.

TWO PLATES

Either you can carry one plate in each hand, which will give you the most stability, or (and this is a common technique used in restaurants) you can carry one plate from its side with one hand while the other plate rests on your forearm. This technique takes a bit of practice, but you will eventually be able to balance the plate on your arm without risk of having it fall. Carrying both plates with one arm frees up the other arm to perform other tasks. When arriving at the table, your free arm can place the plate on your forearm before you can place the final plate.

THREE PLATES

While some people prefer to use a tray than carry three plates' at once, this technique is not only stylish, but also efficient. By using the one-arm carrying technique described in Step 3, you can use your free arm to carry the third plate. When you arrive at the table, put the plate that is being carried by your single-plated arm onto the table. This frees up your hand to pick up the plate on your forearm and finally you can place the last plate

Instructions:

1. Grab the first plate with your thumb over its edge and your index finger on the bottom. Your index finger should be able to securely grip the rim on the bottom of the plate. Your remaining three fingers should be open and exposed.

2. Place the second plate on your exposed fingers so its edge is pressing against the bottom rim of the first plate. Hold the second plate securely with your middle, ring and pinkie fingers.

3. Place the third plate on your lower arm so it also balances against your wrist and the edge of the second plate.

If you require a fourth plate just add step 4

4. To carry a fourth plate, simply pick it up in your empty hand

PROMPTLY RECOGNISE AND FOLLOW UP ANY DELAYS OR DEFICIENCIES IN SERVICE. ADVISE AND REASSURE CUSTOMERS ABOUT ANY DELAYS OR PROBLEMS

No matter how hard you try, things are bound to go wrong once in a while. Food gets burned, orders get forgotten in the middle of a dinner rush, or new servers simply forget all their training. No matter the reason for the complaint, the important thing is to try and please the customer and send them home knowing that, yes there was a problem, but it is not typical of your establishment. Let them know that you, value their comments and their business.

How you handle customer complaints will determine if the customer comes back to your restaurant. Here are some tips to help you field your next complaint and send your customer home with a smile.

Listen- Listen to what the customer has to say. Even if you can't solve the problem, you still need to listen. For example, perhaps a customer is displeased because there is waiting line. Well, there isn't much you can do about it, except let them vent.

Body Language- The way you stand and look at a customer can speak more than words. Maintain eye contact and don't cross your arms over your chest, if you are feeling defensive.

Avoid the urge to roll your eyes, if you are feeling exasperated. Instead, nod and smile, no matter how irritated you may feel. This shows you value their opinion and their business.

Apologise- Remember that customer who was so upset over the long waiting line? Offer an apology. "I understand that you are not happy about the wait, sir, but we are working as fast as we can to get you a table. We really appreciate your patience and willingness to wait. Perhaps you would like to have a drink at the bar until your table is ready." You demonstrate that you completely understand their frustration and are working diligently on a solution.

Freebies- If a customer has problem that could have been prevented, such as an overcooked steak or a snippy server, then the best route to take is to apologise and an offer them some sort of compensation. Here are some quick freebies that you can give customers that won't cost you much money, but will go a long way to assure future business:

- Free round of drinks
- Free dessert
- Gift certificate for a future visit
- Merchandise, such as a beer glass or tee-shirt
- Take a certain per cent off their meal

Occasionally you will have a truly angry customer (perhaps justified, perhaps not) who declares "I'm never coming back!" Well, if that is the case there probably aren't any freebies you can offer to change their mind.

Calmly assure the customer you understand their frustration, and offer an apology (again) and let them know if they change their mind you would love to see them again. By sending

them off on a courteous note, there is a very good chance, once their anger has cooled, they may try your restaurant again.

CHECK CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME

Customer satisfaction is one of the most essential elements of customer retention, customer loyalty, and product repurchase. The art and science of customer satisfaction involves strategically focusing on creating and reinforcing pleasurable experiences.

When it comes to the customer who is receiving the meal, she/he has his or her own ideas about food.

Satisfying the increasingly diverse food culture in the communities served and individual preferences or special dietary needs can be an intimidating task. Providing customers the opportunity to give input on the meal service and self-evaluating the service is key to promoting satisfaction. Survey questions should address experiences with food, the service, dining ambiance, and staff interaction. The two major sources of satisfaction, food and ambiance, must be measured independently. Researchers found that the best predictor of overall satisfaction was satisfaction with meal presentation, taste, and coldness of the food (cold foods that were cold enough). Besides regular surveys on food quality, customer satisfaction requires a watchful eye by a manager during the meal service.

TOPIC 5 - CLEAR FOOD AND DRINKS

USE APPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES TO CLEAR AND CARRY MULTIPLE USED PLATES AND OTHER SERVICEWARE

The ability to carry multiple plates to and from a table is a valuable skill for waiters. This skill will make your job more efficient and allow the customers at a table to be served at the same time. Carrying multiple plates can be challenging at times, but there are tips to help you succeed in doing it.

PLATE LOAD

Avoid carrying too much weight or stacking the plates too high. The more weight you add, the harder it will become to maintain control of your plate load. Use extra caution when carrying smaller plates on your forearm. Without good balance and control, you won't be able to lock small plates between the plates in your hand and forearm. Place a towel over your arm if the plates are really hot.

SPEED

Avoid hurrying in a busy, crowded restaurant. It could result in a collision with a customer or fellow waiter or you could trip and spill the plates. Use extra caution when entering swinging doors and moving around blind corners while holding multiple plates. You won't be able to shield yourself from the door or individual if you're carrying multiple plates in both arms.

POSTURE

Carry heavy loads at waist height where you have the most power and control. Maintain a straight back and keep your arm straight so the plates won't tilt, disturbing the food presentation. Don't carry the plates too high or else the plates will touch food. If you find the plates touching food, it's probably best to carry fewer plates.

PRACTICE

Practice carrying multiple plates so you will be confident of your abilities as a waiter. Prepare yourself for worst-case scenarios such as dropped plates or food spillage. That way, you will know how to react if you ever find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

REMOVE USED ITEMS IN A TIMELY MANNER AND SAFELY TRANSFER THEM TO THE APPROPRIATE LOCATION FOR CLEANING

Remove the plates, glasses, and other used items from the table as they are finished. Having to manoeuvre around used dishes doesn't contribute to a nice dining experience. Be careful not to swipe plates while customers are still eating though - always ask if they have finished if any food remains on the plate.

Clear all plates at the same time. Unless otherwise requested, clear all plates and empty glasses at the same time, and before presenting the check

In fine dining, you should not remove the plates until everyone at the table is finished eating as it causes the unfinished customers to feel rushed. Sometimes a customer will shove the plate to the end of the table or hand it to you when you check back and in this case it would be OK to remove!

Don't just assume when the diner is finished and wants the check. Ask if there is anything more you can get for them, and that will open the opportunity for them to ask for dessert or the check. If they state they need nothing else, then ask if they are ready for the check. Never wait for the diner to ask for the check; if they have to ask you, it generally means they are in a hurry, or you have waited an excessive amount of time since you last checked on the table.

CLEARING TABLES

When tables are cleared, do not dump everything on a single tray, but remove the different articles in this order.

1. Remove all unused food first. For e.g.: Butter, Bread rolls, platters of uneaten food etc
2. Remove the soiled glasses and napkins
3. Never allow linen to be soaked in oil or gravy
4. Remove all the condiments, sauce, salt, pepper etc
5. In a separate tray or plate remove all unused silver items
6. Never mix unused silver items with soiled one

You may have to make more than one trip for this. This side station may be used for clearance. However, it should also always look next and should not be cluttered up.

When the main course is finished, all the cutlery and salt and pepper sauce bottles etc., should be removed, except that cutlery which may be required for the next dessert course.

While removing the unused cutlery, it should not be mixed up with the dirty plates and soiled (used) cutlery. It should be removed separately, otherwise it may be un-necessarily required to be washed.

After the removal of everything except water glass, bud vase and any silver (cutlery) that is required for the next course, the table should be crumbed. The waiter's napkin should be folded and used to gather all the food particles on the table at one side. The side plate should be swiftly moved under the table and the crumbs gathered at one place should be carefully pushed on to the plate. This crumbing can be done from any side of the customer.

Care should be taken not to put the dirty plate in front of the customer for long time or more than is necessary. After the crumbing, the dessert spoon and fork should be brought on the side from the top position, and then the dessert should be served.

SAFELY DISPOSE OF FOOD WASTE, DISPOSABLES AND RECYCLABLE ITEMS TO MINIMISE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The hospitality industry is undergoing a quiet transformation. An increasing number of businesses are demonstrating that by taking a few simple steps, they can save money and resources by reducing their waste while also making a positive difference for the environment.

Waste management is an area within the hospitality industry which has the potential for improving resource efficiency. This can be achieved through several different means including:

- Accurate ordering, serving and stock rotation
- Correctly calculating food orders to reduce the amount of waste at the end of each service period
- Encouraging customers to engage in environmentally friendly practices such as recycling programs, the re-use of towels and energy saving practices such as switching off power when not in the room
- Minimising the two most common forms of waste in the hospitality industry - paper and organic waste
- Developing minimisation strategies for organic waste, such as donating any suitable leftover food from each service period to charitable organisations which help feed the homeless, and the composting of other unsuitable food scraps, to be used as organic fertiliser for landscaping
- Developing minimisation strategies for paper wastage such as Â recycling paper scraps, removing disposable cups, plates and serviettes/napkins from the establishment, and buying products with minimal packaging

There are several good reasons why minimising waste should be an important priority:

- To protect our environment and ease the pressure on our natural resources
- To significantly reduce purchasing and disposal costs
- To meet customers' expectations that the hotel is caring for the environment in practical manner
- To contribute to a cleaner and more pleasant environment for customers and staff

What are we throwing away?

- Reusable/Recyclable products 22%
- Paper 19%
- Other waste 17%
- Cardboard 12%
- Compostable (food) 11%
- Commingled (glass & plastic) containers 9%
- Plastic Bags 5%
- Take Away containers 5%

Some ways to effectively consider environmental issues within the restaurant are:

ENERGY USE AND EFFICIENCY

The reduction in the use of energy is another way the hospitality industry can practice sustainability. Simple tasks such as changing from traditional light bulbs to energy efficient light bulbs, turning off lights and computers at the end of the day and turning off appliances when not in use can all reduce the amount of electricity the industry uses. Switching to environmentally sustainable energy sources such as solar or wind-generated power will help reduce the amount of coal-fuelled energy the hospitality industry consumes.

RESOURCE USE AND EFFICIENCY

Resources such as plastic, paper and wood should be maximised to improve environmental sustainability. Here the hospitality industry can follow the four steps for improving environmental sustainability; reduce, re-use, recycle and treat waste that cannot be avoided, to make it less hazardous or to reduce the volume.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Water is a precious commodity in Australia which should be used appropriately. Employing water saving techniques such as installing low flow shower heads and/or taps, and dual flush toilet systems are becoming a more common practice within the hospitality industry.

RECYCLING AND RE-USE

Recycling has become a common practice in both Australian businesses and households. Recycling is the practice of collecting and sorting materials such as paper, plastic and glass and then the processing of these materials into new products. This preserves the raw materials that may have been used to make new products and thus helps with sustainability and resource management. Re-using involves the reuse of materials you would otherwise throw away, such as containers, boxes or bottles. The hospitality industry can contribute to recycling by being aware of the products they use and putting recycling and re-use policies into place.

TOPIC 6 - COMPLETE END OF SHIFT DUTIES

FOLLOW END OF SHIFT PROCEDURES

Following the end of shift (closing down) procedures is as important as the start of shift procedures. Closing down the venue or dining room at the end of the shift this is usually done at night time, s an important part of the customer service. Once the customer has gone you will need to clean and prepare for the next service period or the next day. Closing down procedure will vary from venue to venue but there are normally some similarities in tasks that need to be completed at the close of each day.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN COMPLETING END OF SERVICE PROCEDURES?

The aims of end of service procedures are:

- To prepare the service area for the next session – as far as possible given the time of day
- To finalise certain administrative tasks

The exact natures of the closing down duties will depend on the department – the closing down activities in the kitchen will differ fundamentally to closing down activities behind reception.

Staff who are expected to perform closing duties should always be shown what to do by more experienced staff, and have their first attempts monitored by a supervisor.

Performing closing duties is a very responsible task and must be treated with the seriousness it merits. Despite this, some generic activities remain constant across departments – these include:

TURNING OFF EQUIPMENT

At the end of trade, most – but not all – electrical equipment will need to be turned off. This saves energy and costs, allows them to be safely cleaned and helps to extend the working life of the equipment.

You must ask to find out what equipment is not to be turned off – items that are commonly left switched on include refrigeration equipment and security lighting but can extend to air conditioning (which may need to be adjusted to suit the changed conditions) and music systems (which may need to have their volume adjusted or the music type changed).

Items that need to be shut off can include:

- Department-specific equipment – such as coffee machines, cooking equipment, office equipment etc.
- Air conditioning
- Music systems

- Televisions and monitors
- Communication systems
- Point of Sale (POS) systems – including cash registers and electronic ordering systems, hand-held devices may need to be placed on the charger

Points to note when turning off these items include:

- Turning them off at the appropriate location – many items are switched off at the item and other items are switched of at the power point
- Turning items off at the appropriate time – it is rarely acceptable, for example, to turn any item off while customers are still in the dining area. This is extremely rude and gives customers the impression we are trying to get rid of them
- Checking security aspects of the item – this may involve verifying that doors and drawers are closed or locked, that money has been removed, and that there is no evidence of unauthorised tampering
- Checking the operational status of the item – when turning an item off it is an opportunity to check that it is working correctly. Where an item is found to be not fully operational (or working below expectations) this must be reported to the appropriate person immediately. An establishment will always prefer to know they have a problem with an item on closing, as opposed to next day as this gives them more time to consider their options and to arrange for appropriate service, maintenance or repairs
- Using this time as an opportunity to identify other tasks/issues that need attention – such as cleaning, re-stocking, repairs to other pieces of equipment, items that may have been stolen, the presence of suspicious persons
- Performing spot cleaning – such as wiping over surface areas

STORAGE OF PRODUCTS, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

At the end of a shift there is a need to store away products, equipment and materials to:

- Protect them against theft
- Maintain their suitability for use in the next session
- Present a 'tidy' and 'professional' image to people who may see the closed area

Possible activities involved in this role are:

- Removing documents, files etc. from desktops and public view and appropriately filing them – this also helps meet privacy requirements
- Saving left-over foodstuffs – so that they can be re-used in the next session. This usually requires that foods are covered, and placed under refrigeration at 5ºC or below
- Putting away any items that have been used during trade – to maintain a tidy appearance and so that they are in their normal location if others need them

ORDERING STOCK

In service-specific areas (such as bars, kitchens, dining areas), there is usually a need to prepare orders for stock to replace items that have been used during the trading session.

In some cases, the department may:

- Phone orders through to suppliers for delivery next day
- Place electronic orders

SECURITY CHECKS

It is always wise to undertake a security check of the area at the end of trade. This check should:

- Double-check and verify that all things that need to be closed or locked have been closed or locked – this can be filing cabinets, doors, windows, cupboards, computers
- Ensure that there are no members of the public locked in the premises – many thieves prefer to be locked in the premises rather than having to break in.
- Verify that security equipment is operational – this may include closed circuit television (CCTV), and alarms

RESTOCKING

Where the department has access to stock at the end of trade/session, it is standard practice for staff to restock shelves, supplies, refrigeration units etc. This differs from the situations where stock has to be requisitioned.

Where stock is restocked and any stock 'outages' are identified (that is, situations where the department has run out of stock), there can be a need to either notify the supervisor of this, or to place an order with a supplier (within the limitations of applicable scopes of authority).

Restocking can apply to:

- Food and beverage items
- Stationery – including internal forms, audit rolls, pens and paper
- Chemicals
- Promotional materials – such as items that are given away by the business to advertise their activities
- Any disposable items – that have been used during the session (such as packaging and wrapping material

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT SERVICE PERIOD

You should leave any service area you work in at the end of a service session in the condition that you would expect to find it when you arrived for work at the next session. It is not the job of the next shift to complete the duties that were the responsibilities of the previous shift.

Preparation can include:

- Cleaning and tidying activities

- Replacing items in their designated locations – putting things away
- Finding out relevant information and leaving it ready for the next shift – this can include bookings, service issues from the previous session that will impact on the next session, known staff absences, notification of problems with equipment, notification of out-of-stock items
- remove and clean all dirty plates cutlery and glasses
- Place cleaned plates, cutlery and glassware back into storage location
- Re-stock beverages
- Empty rubbish bins
- Dress and re-set tables
- Polish cutlery
- Polish glasses
- Clean down all surfaces such as: waiter station and bars
- Clean and close down coffee machine
- Clean and empty coffee grinder
- Check the room and the toilets to ensure all customer have vacated the premises
- balance cash register and count the days takings
- Run the POS software reports (supervisor normally)
- Make days notes in diary (normally supervisor)

PROVIDE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK TO RELEVANT SUPERVISORS OR MANAGERS

There are several benefits of implementing a feedback process:

- It gives your customers, service users, and your team a way to resolve problems with your product, service, or organization
- If set up correctly, it allows continuous feedback. Collecting feedback should be a constant process, not an occasional event
- An effective feedback process gives you the data that you need to create real, lasting improvement. Team morale, product quality, and an organization's reputation may all improve as a result
- A good process helps organizations act on the feedback that they receive. This, in turn, can create a strong bond between the organization, and its employees and customers

Feedback on the quality of service and the products provided to customers is the backbone of an organisation's continuous improvement program. If you don't know what's wrong you can't fix it. Equally if you don't know where you are doing well, you can't take advantage of this and continue to improve.

So feedback—good and bad—is a valuable tool for your team and for management in looking at better ways of doing business and keeping the customers coming back. Feedback can be gathered by:

- Conducting surveys (pre-printed questionnaires or forums) - A customer satisfaction survey is a survey given to a customer by a business to measure the customer's happiness or satisfaction with the company. This survey typically includes questions about the product or service purchased and the sales representative who helped the customer. The survey can be short or long, with a few questions to a long list of detailed questions for the customer to answer
- General discussion with customers and colleagues
- Taking note of customer complaints and compliments

Valuable information is often forthcoming in feedback including questions such as:

- Are customers satisfied with the products and services you offer?
- What are you doing well?
- What could you be doing better?
- Are your processes and procedures efficient? If not, how can they be improved?
- Are your products and services competitive with other similar businesses?

It is imperative to communicate feedback on service or operational issues with people on your team and with your organisation's management. Sharing information on such issues as new product trends, customer satisfaction levels or competitor information increases the organisation's knowledge pool and allows it to make informed decisions about a range of business-related issues.

PROVIDE HANDOVER TO INCOMING COLLEAGUES AND SHARE RELEVANT INFORMATION

A handover is a situation where the department remains open but the staff working in that department change. While it is uncommon – and often inadvisable – for all the staff to change when there is a handover (it is best if there is some continuity of staff), this situation can sometimes occur especially where there is only one staff member running a department.

When handing over a department to other staff, it is important to ensure:

- The department is clean and in good order – this includes all areas, floors, counters, desks, equipment
- Available stock has already been put away – new, in-coming staff should not be responsible for this unless there has been an extremely busy session that has prevented out-going staff from doing this

- Where the department handles cash payments, there must be change in the register sufficient for the next shift to at least start there shift without experiencing a shortage of change – where necessary change should be obtained to supplement what is already there
- Information about particular customers is passed on – special attention must be paid to those who have already been spoken to, made complaints, experienced service difficulties, are deemed to be suspicious
- Information about customer complaints is passed on – with details covering who has complained, what the complaint was about and what action (if any) has been taken as a result
- Information about problems with equipment or utensils is passed on – this should name the equipment etc. involved, the type of problem being encountered and advice about whether service or repairs have been organised or not
- Information about any out-of-stock or 'need to order' items is passed on – there can often be situations where the department has run out of a stock item and there are no items in the store to re-supply. It is best if new staff know what stock items are out-of-stock so they can inform customers of this
- Information regarding any concerns relating to product or service quality issues – these should include any issues mentioned by customers and issues about which you have suspicions that there is a problem. Your information should include what action, if any, you have taken in relation to this situation and details of anyone you may have already contacted to resolve the problem
- Transition of staff members is done smoothly and with little or no disruption to the customers – this means that service delivery should not suffer as the handover is made. Customers shouldn't be kept waiting as the handover occurs

Before departing after making a handover, check that all is running smoothly and that your services are no longer needed. It is not acceptable practice to simply walk out of the department when the clock reaches your knock-off time.

Remember that hospitality venues are often open for long periods of time and have a range of staff that are rostered at various time. Quite often you will need to handover to the incoming staff members to take over your duties and customers. Communication and information is the key to a successful handover. A good handover will cause minimum disruption to the customers.

SUMMARY

Now that you have completed this unit, you should have the skills and knowledge required to serve food and beverage.

If you have any questions about this resource please ask your trainer. They will be only too happy to assist you when required