

CHAPTER 12

Employee Training and Development

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- List the goals of an orientation program.
- Compare and contrast behavior modeling and learner-controlled instruction.
- List guidelines for effective trainers.
- Describe characteristics of effective managers.
- Describe elements of an effective training program.



Courtesy of Red Lobster Restaurants

Experience has shown that the most practical and immediately beneficial way of training restaurant employees is the time-tested hands-on method (showing and telling the trainee, then having the trainee do the task). This method prompts immediate rewards and shows where further instruction is needed. The assumption, however, is that the trainer knows the skill being taught and at least some of the principles of learning. It also assumes that the trainer has laid out the steps needed in order to attain competence. From fast food to fine dining, restaurant training programs involve interactive processes to teach employees how to do tasks. But for training to be successful, managers and trainers must get inside the heads of their employees to understand what motivates them to learn.¹ This chapter gives an overview of employee training and the related subjects of employee orientation and development.

Orientation

A well-planned *orientation* program helps new employees become acquainted with the restaurant and feel a part of it. Because much of labor turnover occurs in the first few weeks of employment, it is important to establish a bond between the new employee and the restaurant. As with any other program, it is necessary to establish the goals to be accomplished. There are eight goals for an orientation program:

1. To explain the company history, philosophy, mission, goals, and objectives
2. To make employees feel welcome



Orientation allows new employees to get acquainted with the restaurant and to learn the procedures to be followed

Courtesy of The Prado, San Diego, California

3. To let employees know why they have been selected
4. To ensure that employees know what to do and who to ask when unsure
5. To explain and show what is expected of employees
6. To have employees explain and then demonstrate each task so that supervisors can be sure they understand their full job
7. To explain the various programs and social activities available
8. To show where everything is kept (tour of restaurant storerooms, refrigerators, etc.)

Help employees become familiar with the restaurant and the food. For example, at the Olive Garden, everyday training of new employees involves sampling the food. This makes servers better equipped to answer customers' questions and helps build employee confidence.

Training

Most training programs involve comprehensible step-by-step job learning that utilizes job checklists and differing styles of management control. Training programs also tend to emphasize varying types of sales incentives.

To train, the trainer needs to know what should be learned—the tasks that make up a job. Much restaurant training is accomplished by absorption—watching someone and somehow learning the job: “Follow George!” or “Watch Mary.” Training by observation has its place. It is much better and more efficient to approach training systematically by analyzing a job, breaking it down into the tasks performed, and teaching the tasks in the sequence in which they are normally performed.

Management decides how extensive written job instructions should be. Brevity is an asset, and if the job tasks can be printed on a pocket-size card, the employee has a handy reference. Guidelines for a job can be put together and given to the new employee to augment more comprehensive, detailed job instructions. Both can become part of a training manual. Here is T.G.I. Friday's training schedule for new employees:

Day 1

- Orientation
- Lunch
- Station tour and observation
- Study alcohol awareness
- Employee handbook review
- Study first third of recipe references
- Read training manual

Day 2

On-the-job training shift
 Alcohol awareness test (open book)
 Employee handbook review due
 Recipe review; study second third of recipe references
 Study for introduction to kitchen and sanitation tests

Day 3

On-the-job training shift
 Introduction to kitchen and sanitation tests
 Recipe review; study final third of recipe references

Day 4

On-the-job training shift
 Recipe review; study all recipe references

Day 5

On-the-job training shift
 Recipe review; study all recipe references

Day 6

On-the-job training shift
 Review with the manager
 Final test

Performance is evaluated on each shift. If necessary, additional training shifts can be scheduled to meet requirements successfully.²

Personnel training is the key to keeping satisfied, capable, confident, and competent employees. Training can give employees a feeling of confidence. At one restaurant in Deburne, Texas, the owner wanted to increase sales at his restaurants by 25 cents per guest. That goal was reached one week after the servers participated in a sales training program. An increase of \$1.10 was obtained at dinner and 91 cents at lunch. These increases were credited to a script that was developed for the servers to use. Sales prior to the training as well as after were monitored, and employees were able to share a percentage of the profit above their individual sales goals.³

Without enthusiasm in training, learning suffers. How many well-informed professors offer dull classes attended by only a handful of students? The best speakers are also entertainers who appeal to the emotions as well as the brain. Professional speakers use gimmicks to gain attention. Humor is carefully put into the presentation. Concepts are condensed into models and slogans. A catchy training slogan that appears on the blackboards in some kitchens reads: "We forgive all mistakes except what you serve to our customers."



Training for restaurant jobs and careers is offered in high schools, community colleges, and specialized culinary courses. The Culinary Institute of America is an example. It has campuses in Hyde Park, New York, and in the Napa Valley in California. Courses offered range from basic culinary skills to a four-year bachelor's degree program.



The Lettuce Entertainment training program lasts five days, for eight hours daily. Each new hire studies the company's training guides in the morning on-site and trails a server in the afternoon.



Training is a critical link to consistent service

Courtesy of The Prado, San Diego, California

Part-Time Employees

Part-time employees are both a benefit and a drawback. One of the benefits to the operator is in not having to pay benefits (which may be up to 28 percent of payroll). One of the drawbacks is the possible lack of continuity, which increases the need for training.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that well over half of all persons employed in foodservice occupations work part time. In the quick-service segment, the proportion of part-timers is higher. Part-time employees are good for the industry because they can be scheduled to fit the peaks and valleys in sales. Moreover, the overwhelming majority, reports the Bureau, want to or can only work part time. Using part-timers means giving more training; most part-timers do not think of foodservice as a permanent career. The result: more people to train, more people who are not particularly motivated to learn their job.

Training and Development

The objective in *training and developing* employees is to produce desired behavior—attitudes and skills appropriate for producing food and service that pleases the restaurant's clientele. Much learning can be programmed; employees are trained to follow a sequence of behavior. Behavior can be taught by role playing—smile, pour coffee, present the menu, ask about wine. The routine is critiqued by other employees and by managers.

Employee *development*, usually thought of as training for management, is partly programmed, but it is also based on knowledge that provides background for flexible responses to problem situations. What do I do when all the restaurant seats are filled, when I spill spaghetti, when a customer is angry, when the refrigeration or the ice machine cuts out?

Employee development promotes problem-solving ability and provides analytical skills, new perceptions, and methodologies. Development deals with principles; training, with procedure and process. Both types of learning are needed in any business. Learning for management and supervision emphasizes development; on-the-job training is closer to programming. One is more conceptual than the other.

Training can produce robotlike behavior: smile, say, “thank you,” and say, “good-bye, come again.” Training produces skills quickly by breaking them down into segments and piecing them together into sequences:

- Turn the hamburger when the juices rise to the top.
- Cut the steak $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick and weigh each piece on a portions scale.
- Make fresh coffee every hour.

In management development, we learn rules or follow models:

- When criticizing an employee, use the plus-minus-plus model: Start with praise, bring in the criticism, end with praise.
- Never criticize in public.
- Every day, everyone needs praise.

Though these rules of supervision are in the nature of principles and are on a conceptual level, they can be programmed and memorized for use as appropriate.

Training suggests doing something to others, teaching people skills they do not have today. “We will train new hires to serve food to and from the left, beverages to and from the right.” But what about the exceptions to the program—for example, guests sitting against the wall, where service from the left is awkward or impossible?

Employee development programs deal with perspectives, with attitudes, and with feelings about the restaurant, the job, the customers, and the boss. Can attitudes be programmed? Every coach tries to program the team to have a winning attitude. The restaurant owner also wants spirit and optimism. The old McDonald’s slogan, “food, folks, and fun,” sums it up neatly.

Here, leadership and training merge. Management works to help employees understand that their needs—for praise, for achievement, for dignity and approval—are congruent with the success of the restaurant. If managers believe it and live it, employees are likely to absorb some of the same spirit. The coach shows the players how to win; in a restaurant, that translates to how to keep dishes and stations clean, how to broil a steak to medium-done, filet a fish, stuff a pork chop, make a Mornay sauce, or set a table.

To a certain extent, problem-solving can be programmed. What should be done when something happens that is not taken care of by the system, when the unexpected happens or a crisis occurs? Just about every crisis that will happen in a restaurant can be considered beforehand and behavior suggested:

- A robbery
- A dishwasher breakdown
- A customer fainting
- An electricity outage
- A fistfight in the dining room
- A drunk spilling his food
- Coffee spilled on the customer
- Toilets backing up
- An argument over the check
- A customer without funds

Planning for contingencies is part of development. What should be done when there is a mistake in scheduling employees? What should be done when employees fail to show up for work? What about theft of tips? Definite solutions that cover all cases are probably not possible, but the steps to be taken in problem situations can be learned: Keep cool. Think. What are the alternatives? Figure 12.1 illustrates Red Lobster's development plan.

The broad solutions can be programmed; the exact solutions often cannot.

TRAINING AIDS

The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association (NRA) has developed informative videotapes and CD-ROMs. Five topic areas are currently available: Wait Staff, Back-of-the-House Training, Wine Training, Profits from Produce, and How to Implement Video Training. In addition, individual tapes focus on current foodservice concerns, such as tip reporting, the immigration law, the AIDS issue, and alcohol awareness training.

Several practical guides have been written to meet a variety of operational needs as well. Contact the NRA Educational Foundation, 175 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1500, Chicago, Illinois 60604, (800) 775-2122.

The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation has developed a Foodservice Management Professional Credential (FMP). This credential has minimum requirements and a certification examination with five sections that must be passed before the certification is awarded. The examination covers the five major areas of competence for foodservice managers: accounting and finance, administration, human resources, marketing, and operations.

With restaurant budgets suffering from recession-related cutbacks, trainers and human resources managers are looking for inexpensive ways to keep employees trained and able to serve customers.⁴ Trainers say they are developing their own material, running smaller departments, devising formulas to determine the

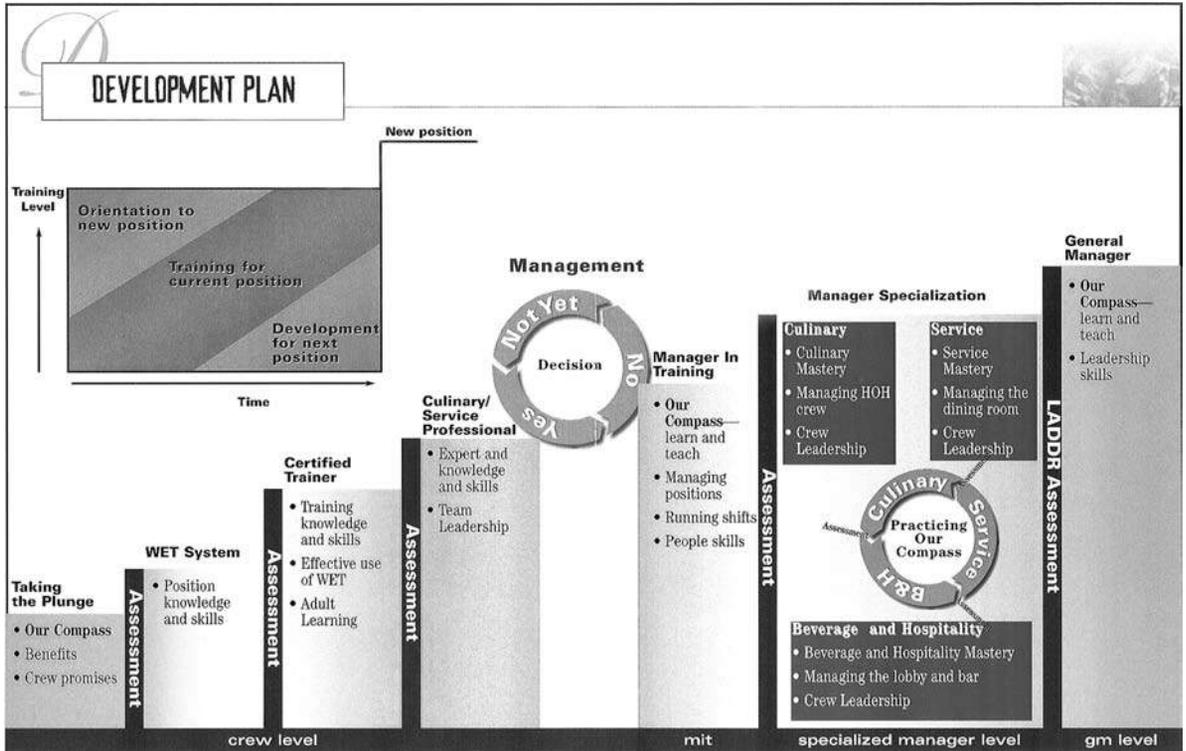


FIGURE 12.1: Red Lobster’s development plan
 Courtesy of Red Lobster Restaurants

return on investment for training dollars, and developing low- to no cost leadership programs.⁵ The Council of Hotel and Restaurant Trainers (CHART), in partnership with Maritz Research, announced the release of the 2009 State of Training and Development in the Hospitality Industry Report. This is the first report of its kind. It contains answers to budget related questions collected from 140 CHART hotel and restaurant trainer members. The CHART survey showed participants’ companies spending, on average, a total of \$2 million annually on training, including salaries, benefits, travel, and in-house development of training materials. The results mirror the economic state of the industry, with 53 percent of respondents reporting a decrease in their training budgets over the past 18 months.⁶

COMBINE TRAINING WITH DEVELOPMENT

Probably every job calls for some training and some development. Programming (training) servers provides the base. What should be said when approaching a customer? When do you hand the menu to the person? When is water served?

Each job also calls for adaptability—some jobs more than others. Cutting meat calls for little adaptability; supervision calls for a lot.

Should a server be encouraged to make small talk? Small talk is difficult to program. Guidelines would suggest avoiding subjects like politics and religion. Never argue with a guest. Never upstage a guest. What should a server do when propositioned? Be tactful. But where tact is difficult to program, principles can be suggested: Keep your cool. Quickly divert attention to another subject.

Should servers joke with customers? House policy may encourage it or prohibit it, depending on the character of the restaurant. If encouraged, some guidelines may help: stay impersonal. Stay away from touchy subjects. Keep conversations brief and friendly.

SLOGANS HELP

Most of us like “thought packages,” as put together in slogans:

Plan Your Work, Work Your Plan.
 Use Your Head to Save Your Feet.
 Be Firm, Fair, and Follow Through.
 KISS—Keep It Simple, Stupid!
 Protect Your Employees with Controls.

STEP-BY-STEP TRAINING

It is essential to explain not only how to do something but why it is important. Server training can be broken down and taught step by step. It can also be summarized on a card small enough to be carried around in a pocket for easy reference. T.G.I. Friday’s new employees must be validated (checked off) by a back- or front-of-house trainer. There may be up to 30 trainers in a T.G.I. Friday’s restaurant. The trainer who is certified gives small-group and individual training in the mornings. New employees must pass a written test and demonstrate competence in both the health card and alcohol awareness test. In addition, they must pass an individual department test.

For hosts, T.G.I. Friday’s has developed a checklist that represents a typical day and is used as a guideline for training.

A typical day for a host working at T.G.I. Friday’s is similar to hosting your own party. Think of guests as friends of yours, and treat them in the same manner you would treat honored guests visiting your home.

You are the host of a party on each shift. Greet guests on their arrival, ensure that their dining experience is better than expected, and bid them farewell as they leave.

1. Be in proper uniform.
2. Obtain your time card and clock in at scheduled time.
3. The manager will sign your time card and check your uniform.

4. Review the cleanliness and organization of the station. Check for restocking of necessary supplies. Bring all areas up to standard. Discuss problems with your manager.
5. Ensure that all menus are clean.
6. Fill out requisition (if applicable).
7. Check rest rooms to ensure cleanliness standards (continue to check every 15 minutes).
8. Shift responsibilities:
 - a. Open the door for each guest.
 - b. Greet guests upon entering.
 - c. Properly check identification after 8:00 P.M.
 - d. Maintain a cheerful, courteous disposition (*smile*).
 - e. Maintain a neat, clean, professional image.
 - f. “Read” guests and seat them as soon as possible at an appropriate table. Be alert for:
 - Elderly guests
 - Guests with children
 - Handicapped guests
 - Smoking/nonsmoking guests
 - g. Present only *clean* menus to guests. Open each menu to the appetizer page and offer assistance if necessary.
 - h. Inform guest of your name.
 - i. Notify a manager if you perceive that *any* guest is the least bit unhappy.
 - j. Properly assist guests when on a waiting list.
 - k. Work with busers to ensure that tables are bused and reseated within one minute.
 1. Bid farewell to each departing guest. Ensure that everything was satisfactory and invite them to return.
 - m. Answer the telephone within two rings.
 - n. Assist in properly setting and aligning tables.
 - o. Perform shift change and/or closing duties.
9. Meet with the manager on duty to check out your station and sign your time card.⁷

TRAINING THEORY

Dozens of books have been written on theories of learning and their application to training. Here are proven guidelines for a trainer:

- All of us react to discipline and punishment. Examples of discipline: absence of approval, reprimands, lack of apparent progress. Reward might include praise, smile, and recognition.
- Reward (reinforce) desired learning; allow undesired behavior to extinguish itself by not rewarding it.
- Reward or punish immediately after the observed behavior.



The first impression a restaurant makes is with the greeting from the host

Courtesy of the Cohn Restaurant Group

- Spaced training is more effective than a long period of training. Spacing allows the learning to be absorbed and avoids fatigue.
- Expect learning to proceed irregularly. There may be periods when no apparent learning is seen but changes are taking place.
- Expect wide differences in the ability to learn. Many restaurant employees are not rapid learners, but once they have learned, they do excellent work. Slower learners are often not bored as quickly as rapid learners.

Much of the theory of learning is incorporated in the following trainer test. Try it out and see how your answers compare with the discussion that follows.

Test Yourself as a Trainer

Answer true or false.

General

1. The restaurant has an obligation to provide employees with the skills necessary to perform the job.
2. Employee turnover is often related to training or the lack of it.
3. Learning by on-the-job training is not the only way to provide necessary learning for new employees.
4. Training low-skilled employees may be just as important as training highly skilled workers.

5. Prior to training, explain the rules and regulations of the company to the new employee.
6. Prior to training, answer the unspoken question in every trainee's mind: "What's in it for me?"
7. Popular persons are certain to make good trainers.
8. Before actual training begins, explain the position as it relates to the total restaurant.
9. A person who performs well on the job is qualified to teach others the skills needed for the job.
10. The ability to train can be developed, to a large extent.
11. A trainer should always be available for social activities with trainees.
12. A trainer should spend as much or more time in preparation to train as in actual instruction.
13. The trainer should have written task instructions before beginning to teach and should list the key points around which instructions are built.
14. The trainer should learn what the employee already knows about the job before starting to train.
15. The trainer should have a timetable with a schedule of instruction for each day and the amount of learning that is expected daily.

Points to Remember while Training

16. In setting instructional goals, give trainees more work than they can accomplish so that they will work toward high standards.
17. When a trainee performs correctly, reward the person with praise, something like "That's good" or "You're doing fine."
18. A trainer must never admit past or present errors or not knowing an answer to a question.
19. The best way to handle a cocky trainee is to embarrass the person in front of others.
20. In training new employees, concentrate on speed rather than form.
21. A trainer must continuously be aware of the attitudes and feelings of the trainees.
22. Surprise quizzes and examinations are good ways to ensure performance at a high level.
23. Expect that there will be periods during the training when no observable progress is made.
24. Expect some employees to learn two or three times as fast as others.
25. Both tell and show the trainee how to do the skill involved.
26. When an employee performs incorrectly, say, "No, not that way!"
27. After a task is learned, ask trainees for suggestions on how to improve the task.

In this quiz, the first six statements, according to the experts, are true. To create learner interest, explain the benefits to the person and explain the rules

and regulations of the company. Answer such obvious questions as location of the employee dining area and the locker room, if there is one. All of the benefits and the requirements should be explained and gotten out of the way before skill training is started.

Number 7 is false. Popularity does not necessarily correlate highly with being a good trainer. The desire to train is needed, and the ability to train can be developed, to a large extent. Number 8 is true; it is important to see the particular job as a part of the whole. Number 9 is false and Number 10 is true.

Numbers 12, 13, 14, and 15 have to do with getting ready for instruction before actually doing it. All of these statements are true.

Number 16 is false. Training is an occasion when success at every step is important. Standards should be set that are achievable and avoid the experience of failure. Number 17 is true. Number 18 is false; no one expects a perfect trainer.

Number 19 is false. Even when a trainee is out of line, it does no good to embarrass the person. Rather, talk to the person privately.

Number 20 is false. Form comes first; speed comes later.

Number 21 is true; 22 is false. Surprises are not considered good in training.

Number 23 is true. There are times when consolidation of skills takes place and no observable progress is made.

Number 24 refers to a vast range of individual differences found in the general population. It and number 25 are true.

Number 26 represents a negative way of teaching; it is far better to emphasize the positive.

The last item is true. Every task can be improved by new techniques, new methods, new equipment, new skills—or it may be completely eliminated as unnecessary.

Methods for Training Employees

There are as many ways to train employees as there are learning styles. This chapter looks at three methods of training: behavior modeling, learner-controlled instruction, and manager as coach.

BEHAVIOR MODELING

Closely related to role playing, which has been around a long time, *behavior modeling* is a technique that depicts the right way to handle personnel problems, shows how to interview and evaluate applicants, and demonstrates decision-making. Emphasis on interpersonal skills—*people handling*—has always been of great importance in the restaurant or in any management position, but the move to deemphasize theory and emphasize “how to do” is new.

Everyone has had behavior models: parents, schoolteachers, athletic coaches, friends, and others. Which model should one follow?

Behavior modeling uses the innate inclination for people to observe others to discover how to do something new. It is more often used in combination with

some other techniques.⁸ Systematic exposure to models favored by an organization constitutes the training. Audiovisual materials in which an actor or company executive demonstrates the correct or approved techniques for dealing with problems are used by several foodservice companies. Feedback from peers and videotapes of trainee performance give trainees the advantage of seeing how they look to others and how well they are progressing.

Host International holds training sessions at one-week intervals and asks trainees to take each new skill back to the work situation, where it can be practiced. At the end of each session, the trainee is asked to explain how the skill is put to use.

LEARNER-CONTROLLED INSTRUCTION

Since the early 1970s, a concept called learner-controlled instruction (LCI) has been used by some hospitality organizations for management training with considerable success.⁹ *Learner-controlled instruction (LCI)* is a program in which employees are given job standards to achieve and asked to reach the standards at their own pace. Many believe the LCI method is less costly than classroom instruction and reflects employees' different levels of motivation, energy, and ability. The learner is self-motivated and can proceed from unit to unit at a speed with which he or she is comfortable.

To be effective, LCI presumes the availability of learning resources. These can be in the form of books, written practices and policies, and the availability of knowledgeable people willing to pass along their skills and information. A manager's resources manual, assembled by C&C Services of Cucamonga, California, sets up performance criteria for management trainees that lead them through nine modules of learning: bartender, cook, prep, meat cutting, cocktail, cashier, waiter, hostess, and assistant manager. Each learning module is completed when the trainee passes a module test at an 80 to 90 percent score and completes the work experience prescribed for the module. If the module is done satisfactorily, the supervisor signs off on it and the trainee can think about passing on to the next module.

The resources suggested for a section on attitude awareness include a book (with discussions of it with a trainer). In learning the bar operation, the trainee is scheduled to work the bar one day per week until competence in bartending is achieved. The bartender written test includes items on glasses used with each drink on the bar list, garnishes to use with various drinks, bar abbreviations used, and the ingredients for all of the drinks served. (Do you know what is in a sex on the beach or a Long Island iced tea?) The management trainees are urged to follow the 2¹/₂ times rule—2¹/₂ contacts with each patron or party in the restaurant during the course of a meal:

A hello when they come in equals 1/2 contact.

A contact during the meal to obtain feedback equals 1 contact.

A contact when the meal is over equals 1 contact.

The trainee checks a certain number of tables every 20 to 30 minutes. It takes only 5 minutes, says the manual, to check four to five tables. If this is done every 15 to 20 minutes, most tables can be covered in an hour.

The proficiency test for the cook module is detailed enough to cover such points as:

- How do you tell when chicken is done?
- How do you put out a butter fire?
- How do you tell whether the ovens are at the correct temperatures?
- How often should you turn a steak?
- How many carrots go onto a plate?
- How do you cook swordfish?
- What should you do if you:
 - a. Drop an order of crab on the floor?
 - b. Drop half a pan of potatoes?
- How can you tell when zucchini is done?
- What is a sign of old mushrooms?
- How long do potatoes keep in a warmer?
- How many lemons do you serve on a side dish?

Standards are set up for nearly everything that is done by a manager, who is expected to know about and be able to perform every task in the restaurant. Putting together such a comprehensive LCI program is a large task that can take months. The material is best assembled in loose-leaf form to allow easy insertion and deletion.

Much of the success of an LCI program depends on the cooperation of all concerned. Trainees are scheduled into the various jobs and must learn from incumbent employees as well as from supervisors, who are the main resource to whom trainees turn for information and instruction.

MANAGER AS COACH

A professional training and development program creates a situation in which all concerned win; the customer and the employee enjoy better product, better service, and greater professional satisfaction. “Winning,” said Vince Lombardi, the famous football coach, “isn’t everything; it’s the only thing.” In the training experience, there should be no losers, only winners. The training effort is geared so that winning begins with day one. Everyone needs a series of successes; learning favors the success experience.

Just like a football team, a restaurant staff has a coach, a manager, and personnel to train and motivate (*manager as coach*). The operation calls for timing, coordination, signals, and a will to win. Deadlines must be met, morning, noon, and night. Hundreds of expectations must be met on time. Hundreds of variables are involved in the personalities, the food products, the equipment, and skills of the players. Any one or many of the variables can go wrong. When there is a

full house, action is at a fever pitch. Tension is high. The manager must be on the premises, calling the signals. The coach coaches. He or she shows people how to perform. Criticism is given if needed. More important, the right way is stressed. Everyone, including the pot-and-pan person, needs positive feedback, reinforcement of the right way, and information on how the game is going.

The goal is to please the customer at a profit. The coach is constantly motivating, triggering the will to win. The coach controls the game in a restaurant more so than in most businesses. Training regimens and systems of play pull the team together into an operating whole.

Like football teams, restaurants rise and fall. The talent changes as players come and go. There is always another restaurant down the street ready to move up in popularity. Coach X may be more knowledgeable than Coach Y, but may not be able to instill the winning spirit into his team. Teamwork is critical to the success of any restaurant.

Coach Y may have been a winning coach, but he has lost his enthusiasm and drive, or he has lost some of his key players and can't seem to get it together without them. He may have lost interest in the team and prefers concentrating on his evenings off. Or he may have made the big time too soon and cannot handle the prestige and the money that go with success. Coach Y, who formerly was out on the floor for every meal, now sits in his office and reads the *Wall Street Journal* during the heavy meal periods. Coach X is on the floor greeting the guests, speaking to the employees, instructing, checking details, and lending a life force to the restaurant.

The word *manage* implies purpose and the mobilization of resources for given goals. A restaurant manager has resources with which to accomplish the purpose of a restaurant: to satisfy patrons at a profit. The resources at the manager's disposal are the restaurant itself, its personnel, its supplies, and its operating capital. Managers have a variety of skills, such as knowing how to motivate, train, delegate, forecast business, plan the menu, and market what is produced. Systems or programs are set up and, once in place, administered by the manager.

Leadership

Leadership transforms problems into challenges, excites the imagination, calls on pride, develops a sense of accomplishment and achievement, and provides opportunities to overcome obstacles.

How the manager or supervisor looks at a problem determines, to a large extent, if it is seen as a roadblock or an avenue to achievement. The level of resistance to frustration, as well as ambition and energy, relate to whether a situation is seen as a challenge or a crisis. When a manager is confronted by two new servers who are obviously upset by what they think is poor scheduling, the manager can sympathize, jump in, and help. The situation can become a challenge if the servers feel they can handle the situation. The problem is transmuted to a game. Winning is seen in the form of extra tips as well as in meeting the personal challenge.



Teamwork is essential to success in the restaurant business
Courtesy of Red Lobster Restaurants

Putting problems into the form of challenges is part of leadership:

Can you correct the backed-up sewer?

Can you get by without electricity for the next hour?

Do you think we can get through the evening without calling an electrician?

Such problems can be viewed as challenges a few times. Constant crises breed resentment and frustration.

BETTER MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR

Theory aside, most management experts agree that certain types of management behavior beget superior results. Ask yourself whether you can answer yes to these statements. Do you:

- Discuss sales, cost control, and other goals with employees?
- Try to see merit in the ideas of employees, even if they conflict with your own?
- Expect superior performance and give credit for it?
- Take time to coach employees who need to know more about the job?
- Accept mistakes as long as the employees can learn from them?
- Help employees who seek to get ahead in the restaurant?
- Apply the same high standards consistently to all employees?
- Regularly tell employees how “we” are meeting goals and budget?
- Feel good when employees share their job or personal problems?
- Leave your personal problems at home?

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGERS

Management observers delineate characteristics of effective managers, the high performers. Stated in various ways, here are behavior characteristics of effective managers:

- They continuously try to better past performance and to compete with other restaurants.
- Rather than resting on past laurels, they never let themselves become too comfortable in their job.
- They are problem-solvers and enjoy challenge.
- They are flexible and adapt to change.
- They anticipate future problems, rehearsing coming events in their minds. As the U.S. Navy preaches to its officers, “Be forehanded.” They tend to be future oriented.
- They do not cry over spilled milk or hold trials to place blame for what went wrong.

- Contrary to behaving like a good bureaucrat and dodging responsibility, they seek responsibility.
- They handle rejection or temporary failure without becoming unduly discouraged.
- They are not perfectionists; however, they can act in the absence of complete information and allow others the latitude to reach common goals in their own way. In other words, good managers build others by delegating and team building.
- They perceive people as ends, not means.
- They take responsibility for employees.
- They build employee independence and initiative.
- They communicate confidence in themselves and the enterprise.
- They remember that they are the role models and that employees quickly pick up their habits, values, concern for others, and determination to get things done.
- They have concern and compassion for employee well-being.
- They lead by example, with consistency and fairness.
- They aim to motivate employees.

SUBTLETIES OF SUPERVISION

Management experts urge that employees be informed of what is important to the manager, the things the manager feels will make for the success of the department and, particularly, for the manager's and employee's success. The explanation of what the manager thinks is important is basic to the employee's motivation. The employee must know what must be done to spell out success in the manager's mind.

Similarly, what does the individual employee feel are the factors that will be important for his or her success? Congruence of the two lists of expectations sets the stage for working together.

Nearly all motivation theories stress reinforcing desirable behavior. Behavioral scientists urge that specific behavior be emphasized rather than general praise. The "great job you did" makes the employee feel good, but it is too general to reinforce the specific behavior that is expected. Better to say:

You did a great job in cleaning the floor and the dishwasher last night.
 Your report was letter perfect.
 Thanks for cleaning the carpet—it was spotless.
 I like the way you handled that customer.
 You did a nice job in keeping calm when things really got hectic this morning.

When praised for a specific behavior, an employee is likely to repeat that behavior. Design jobs with a sense of satisfaction built in. Managers should not underestimate the power of positive feedback. Never forget to acknowledge them

when employees do something right. Giving positive feedback can be a powerful tool for employee motivation.¹⁰

Undesirable behavior, say the experts, is treated in somewhat the same way: Name what is undesirable, tell the employee why it is undesirable, and, if possible, get the employee to face up to the fact that it is undesirable. The tardy employee is a good example:

1. “The fact that you were five minutes late made Mary and Carolyn set up part of your station.”
2. “You have been late three times running and you are throwing the dining room out of kilter. It makes things difficult for me and for the others here.”
3. Confrontation may be necessary: “We cannot go on this way. Do you still want to work here?”

Should the employee be told that the employer is irritated and unhappy about certain behavior? Experts say yes. Individuals vary widely in reacting to the displeasure of bosses. Some become rebellious, others passive, and others antagonistic. Some employees, figuratively, must be hit over the head to react. Others can be upset with a frown. It is up to the manager to sense the approach that will be most effective with the individual.

In developing a caring culture, a mission statement of long-term goals is essential. Each employee needs to read, understand, and believe in it. By using this type of method, if employees improve their performance, they can be rewarded in different ways. Some common types of rewards include financial incentives, bonuses, and selection as Employee of the Month.

There is much to be said for the reward-and-discipline approach to motivation. It works well in animal training and has reappeared in the guise of behavior modification theory. The punishment aspect can be played down or removed. Behavior modification theory urges an immediate reward for whatever behavior is desired. The person who is trying to break a chain-smoking habit rewards himself whenever the urge to smoke is resisted. The cook is rewarded with a “That is good” when the omelet comes out right; the busperson gets a nod of approval for clearing a table quickly and quietly; the hostess receives a “You handled that well” after calming down an irate customer.

Behavior modification is based on animal studies showing that behavior is modified when a particular act is reinforced. The behavior is gradually extinguished, or fades, if it is not rewarded or is punished. Punishment is used in the broad sense of anything perceived as being unpleasant or unrewarding. The manager saying “Good morning” to an employee is a reward. Saying nothing can be construed as a punishment. The notion is almost too simple, yet it is effective and has proved so in a number of business situations. When a waitress sets up a table quickly, efficiently, and in the right way, the supervisor says, “That’s good.” The “That’s good” reinforces correct behavior and is a form of reward. Look for the good things you want to happen. Then praise them.

When the utility worker cleans a floor, the supervisor notes it at once and says, for example, “That’s very clean”—again, a reinforcement. The key is to continue

reinforcement time after time until the individual does the correct procedure automatically. Critics may say that the technique is too obvious, too unsophisticated, but it works on all levels.

Nearly everyone wants praise, wants approval, and wants it now, not sometime in the future. Praise that immediately follows an act has an immediacy effect. The same technique is applicable in any situation. Develop the wanted behavior, explain it, and reinforce it time after time.

- Say this, don't say that.
- You put the knife on the right side of the plate—that's good.
- You put the tip of the wedge of the pie toward the guest. That's good.
- You use a deodorant every day before coming to work. That's good.
- Good morning. You look sharp today. You left those big earrings at home.
- Wow, what a bright smile you have.
- You loaded that tray just right—not too many dishes.



Psychologists tell us that inserting a constructive criticism between two favorable comments softens the criticism while at the same time working the criticism. The plus (or beginning statement) is favorable, such as “You deliver especially good service.” The next statement is the minus part: “but you seem not to be doing your part of the side work.” End with a plus, such as “I'm glad you show you care by giving such quick service.”

MOTIVATION THROUGH PART OWNERSHIP

A piece of the action is the term used by some restaurants in encouraging unit managers to acquire through purchase a percentage of the store they manage. The incentive of ownership probably attracts a different level of management talent, persons who want to see a direct relationship between their efforts and their personal income. Such a plan makes every unit manager a capitalist, a part owner, without the high risks of independent entrepreneurship. The plan allows persons with the enterprise spirit to enjoy it with a minimum of investment and a maximum of protection from failure.

A TIPPING POLICY

Restaurants must not only report an appropriate amount of tip income to the IRS, but they must also establish a tipping policy that is seen as equitable by employees. Tip income, who gets it, and its perception by the staff has a history dating from European experience. The word *tip*, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was used as early as 1755 to mean a gratuity given by a superior to an inferior. The implication bothers tippers and tippees. Social scientists report that the amount of a tip given relates to the tip giver's opinion of guests as much as it has to do with the self-esteem of the person tipped. The social class of the person being tipped figures into the amount of the tip. Seniors or favored servers get better table assignments, where larger tips are expected. Servers in fast-food restaurants are seldom tipped, one reason for quick-service popularity with customers.

Policies vary. Many restaurant owners decide that some tip income should be distributed among kitchen staff and host personnel following an established plan. In many restaurants, only buspersons share in the server's tip income.

The percentage of the bill left as tips varies among individuals. Tips are higher in large cities and in expensive restaurants. Tips are lower in small towns and in rural areas. Patrons in groups tend to tip less. Tipping in New York City is probably higher than in most American cities, close to 20 percent. Typically the tip percentage averages from 15 percent to 20 percent in other American cities.

In Europe, tip income is put into a pool and divided by management according to an established system—so much for the server, a percentage for bus personnel, host, and so on. The pool system is widely used in America also but the systems vary from establishment to establishment. The most popular system used in America holds the server responsible for appropriately “tipping out” other employees.

Summary

Restaurants often employ teenagers and young adults, many of them working part time and on their first job. Many or most do not expect to make a career in the restaurant field. Wages are low and employee turnover is high. For these and other reasons, training and management development is important.

Training can be broken down into orientation training and job training. The purpose of training is to teach specific ways of doing things.

Management development deals with principles and policies that managers use in relating to employees and customers. Behavior modeling assumes that employees will copy supervisors’ attitudes and job performance. Learner-controlled instruction provides learning material that can be studied and learned by individuals at their own pace.

The manager-as-coach model views restaurant managers as coaches. They are engaged in informal training much of the time—showing, telling, correcting, praising, and providing direction.

Key Terms and Concepts

Behavior modeling	Manager as coach
Development	Orientation
Leadership	Training and development
Learner-controlled instruction (LCI)	Training schedule
Management	

Review Questions

1. In programming first-day employee training, what kind of information should be given priority?
2. What is the difference between employee development and training?

3. Explain the plus-minus-plus model as it relates to criticizing an employee.
4. How are you, as an owner/manager, involved in behavior modeling?
5. What are some advantages of learner-controlled instruction? What is the big disadvantage?
6. Traditionally, employee training in restaurants has been unstructured—that is, there are no formal classes, formal instructional materials, or particular trainers. How will you set up your training program, if any?
7. What kind of orientation training will you give new employees?
8. Does it follow that your chef, who is highly experienced and skilled, will be effective in passing along knowledge and skills? If he or she is not motivated to do so, what can you do?
9. How will you get across your do's and don'ts—your policies about stealing, courtesy to patrons, parking rules, eating on the job, and so on?
10. Suppose you employ a number of people who do not speak English, a situation not uncommon in American restaurants. How will you communicate with them?
11. In what way is a restaurant manager like a football coach?

Internet Exercises

1. Surf the Web and see what training programs there are available for restaurant operators, and at what cost.
2. Go to the National Restaurant Association's Educational Foundation's Web site at www.nraef.org and check out the training programs available.

Endnotes

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