**The Case of …**

**That Sinking Feeling**

This was going to be easy, Debbie Mallery said to herself as she sat down to take her test, a midterm exam covering the basics of restaurant management. She had spent a few hours the previous night and an hour right before class studying key terms and concepts. She felt she knew the material. She felt ready.

Debbie was surprised to see, though, that the exam had two parts: a multiple-choice section and an essay section. Debbie hadn’t really thought about what she might say in an essay. But she figured working on the multiple-choice questions might help give her some ideas.

The first two multiple-choice questions Debbie answered easily, but she got stuck on the third one. She went back and forth over two possible answers and finally decided just to leave that question blank. The pattern was the same for the rest of the multiple-choice questions. A few questions Debbie would answer easily, then she’d get stuck on a hard one.

Finally, Debbie finished the multiple-choice questions and came to the essay. Only then did she notice the instructions that indicated the essay was worth 50 points, and the multiple-choice questions 25 points. Then Debbie got another shock: She realized she had only 10 minutes left to write her essay! Her mind froze—and Debbie had the horrible feeling that she didn’t have enough time to complete the test. Even though she had studied, Debbie now felt certain she would fail.

1. What mistakes did Debbie make in her test preparation that probably harmed her performance?

She crammed the night before. She wasn’t aware of what type of test she would be taking.

1. What mistakes did Debbie make during the test that hurt her?

She left the question blank when it's always better to guess an answer and not leave it blank.

1. What was right about Debbie’s initial approach to the test?

She did extra studying before the test.

1. What should Debbie have done differently in calculating the amount of time to devote to each portion of the test? Why?

Skimmed through the test and read the directions for each portion of the test. That way you will know what you should invest more time into or see what section will be the easiest for you to spend less time on.

1. What specific strategies would have helped Debbie with the multiple-choice questions? What strategies could she have used on the essay?

She could have used the process of elimination to rid obvious wrong answers. She could have outlines ideas before the test if she was aware of what the test was before.

1. If you were in Debbie’s shoes, what would you do with only 10 minutes left in the test?

Ideally write as much I could on the essay to receive some points.