

MODULE 3

UNIT 4: INTERPERSONAL SKILLS NEEDED FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION: Apart from technical skills needed for profitability and good customers' patronage in a food and beverage sector, there are also certain interpersonal skills that play vital significant roles. Such skills are related to specific points of service, addressing customers and dealing with incidents. This unit focuses on certain interpersonal skills expected to be possessed by workers in a food and beverage centre.

1.1 OBJECTIVE: It is expected that at the end of this unit you should be able to:

- i. Explain the skills needed by the workers in food and beverage centres for interactions between themselves and customers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 WHAT ARE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS?

Interpersonal skills in food and beverage service centre on the interactions between the customer and the food and beverage service staff. All other interactions are secondary to, and the result of, the prime interaction of customers and staff. This has implications for the way customers are treated. Conversation between customers and staff override conversations between staff. When in conversation with customers, staff should not:

Talk to other members of staff without first excusing themselves from the customer

Interrupt interactions between customers and staff, but should wait until there is a suitable movement to catch the attention of the others member of staff so that they may excuse themselves from the customer firs.

Serve customers while carrying on a conversation between themselves

Talk across a room, either to each other or to customers. Customers should always be made to feel that they are being cared for and not that they are an intrusion into the operation.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE : Define the term ‘interpersonal skills’

3.2 INTERPERSONAL SKILLS RELATED TO SPECIFIC POINTS OF SERVICE

The list below shows the interpersonal skills needed at particular points during the service.

Showing customers to their table: always lead and walk with them at their pace.

Seating customers: ladies first, descending in age unless the host is a lady

Handling coats / wraps: handle with obvious care

Handling menus / wine lists to customers: offer the list the right way round for the customer and wait for the customer to take it.

Opening and placing a napkin: open carefully, do not shake it like a duster, place it on the customer’s lap after saying excuse me to the customer.

Offering water or rolls: say, for example, “Excuse me sir / madam, may I offer you a bread roll?

Offering accompaniments: only offer them if you have them at the table. Offering them when they are not at the table usually means “I will get them if you really want them!

Serving and cleaning: always say ‘Excuse me’ before serving or cleaning and ‘thank you’ after you have furnished with each customer.

Explaining food and beverage items: use terms the customer understands, not technical terms such as turned vegetable or pause. Use terms that make the item sound attractive such a, case role not stew, reamed or puree potatoes not mashed. Do not use abbreviations, for example, ‘veg’.

Talking to customers: only talk when standing next to them and looking at them.

3.3 ADDRESSING CUSTOMERS

‘Sir’ or ‘Madam’ should be used when the customer’s name is not known, then the customer should be referred to as ‘Mr. Smith’ or ‘Miss Jones’ etc. first names should

only be used in less former operation and where the customer has explicitly indicated that this is acceptable. If the customer has a title, then appropriate use should be made of the correct form of address.

Greetings such as 'good morning' and 'good evening' should be used upon receiving customers, or when the member of staff first comes into contact with the customer, for example, when lounge service staff attend people already seated in the lounge.

3.4 DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

When an unforeseen incident arises it must be coped with promptly and efficiently without causing any more disturbance than is necessary to any of the other customers. Quick action will very often soothe the irate customer and ensure a return receipt to establishment. It is worth remembering at this stage that complaints, of what ever nature, should be referred immediately to the supervisor. Delay will not cause confusion and very often the situation may be wrongly interpreted if it is not dealt with straight away. In the case of accidents, a report of the incident must be kept and signed by those involved.

4.0. CONCLUSION: This unit has been able to let you briefly what interpersonal skills means to food and beverage service operation. This has implications for the way customers are treated.

Conversation between customers and staff override conversations between staff. When in conversation with customers, staff should not:

Talk to other members of staff without first excusing themselves from the customer, Interrupt interactions between customers and staff, but should wait until there is a suitable movement to catch the attention of the other member of staff so that they may excuse themselves from the customer first. Serve customers while carrying on a conversation between themselves, Talk across a room, either to each other or to customers. Customers should always be made to feel that they are being cared for and not that they are an intrusion into the operation.

5.0 SUMMARY: Interpersonal skills in food and beverage service centre on the interactions between the customer and the food and beverage service staff. Explaining food and beverage items: use terms the customer understands, not technical terms such as turned vegetable or pause. Use terms that make the item sound attractive such a, case role not stew, reamed or puree potatoes not mashed. Do not use abbreviations, for example, 'veg'.

Talking to customers: only talk when standing next to them and looking at them.

6.0. TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

i. describe in details the certain interpersonal skills you know to make a food and beverage centre attractive to customers

7.0 REFERENCES

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