

MODULE 3

UNIT 3: BASIC TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION: The food and beverage sector is a peculiar area where basic technical skills play significant roles in profitability and customers' patronage. Such skills deal with how staff can utilize service equipments, carry plates, use a service salver, service plates , glasses and use large trays. This unit x-rays the basic skills needed for food and beverage. Such skills are needed for improved customer patronage and overall profitability.

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

- i. determine the technical skills needed to enhance sales in food and beverage
- ii. Identify the examples of the applications of the skills

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Basic Technical skills

There are six basic technical food and beverage service skills. There are identified below together with examples of their application.

	Technical Skill	Examples of Application
1	Holding and using a service spoon and fork and other service equipment	For the service of food at a customer's table, especially for silver service and for serving at a buffet
2	Carrying plates	When placing and clearing plate from a customer's table
3.	Using a service salver (round tray)	For carrying glasses, carrying tea and coffee services, as an under liner for entrée dishes and for potato and vegetable dishes.
4.	Using a service plate	For carrying items to and from a table, including clean cutlery, clearing side plates and knives. Crumbing down, clearing accompaniments.
5.	Carrying glasses	Carrying clean glasses by brand or on a salver and for cleaning dirty glasses from a service area.
6.	Carrying and using large trays	For bringing equipment or food and beverage items to the service area and for cleaning used equipment from the service area.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE: Define technical skills and give examples of the application

3.1.1 Holding and using a service spoon and fork

Expertise in this technique can only be delivered with practice. The purpose of the service spoon and fork is to enable the waiter to serve food from a flat or dish on to the customer's plate quickly and to present the food on the plate well.

The service fork should be positioned above, or on top of the service spoon

The key to developing this skill is the locking of the ends of the service spoon and fork with the small finger and the third finger, as illustrated.

The spoon and fork are maneuvered with the thumb and the index and second fingers. Using this method food items may be picked up from the serving dish in between the service spoon and service fork.

Alternatively, the service fork may be turned to mould with the shape of the items being served, for example, when serving bread rolls.

There are occasions where two service forks may be used, for example when serving fillets of fish, as this makes the service of this food items easier.

When using a serving spoon and fork for serving at a sweet or cheese trolley or at a buffet or guerdon, the spoons, scoops, small sauce ladles and larger soup ladles.

3.1.2 Carrying plates

Clean plates can be carried in a stack, using both hands, or using a tray. When carrying clean plates which are to be placed on the customer's table, a single hand is used to hold the plates (usually the left hand) and the right hand is used to place the plates at each cover on the customer's table. If the plates are not then the plates are held with a service cloth placed on the palm of the left hand. A separate service cloth is then used on the right hand to hold the hot plates when placing them in front of the customer.

When carrying plates of pre-plates foods and when cleaning plates, from a customer's table, a single hand is used to hold the plates (usually the left hand) and the right hand is used to place and remove plates from the customer's table. Special hand positions are used as follows:

The initial hand position for the first plate. Care must be taken to ensure that the first plate is held firmly as succeeding plates are building up from here. The second plate will rest firmly on the fore arm and the third and fourth finger.

The second plate positioned on the left (holding) hand. To be able to clear properly ensures efficiency, avoid the possibility of accident and creates the minimum of inconvenience to customers. Well-developed cleaning techniques enable more to be cleared, in less time and in fewer journeys between sideboard or workstation and the customers table. In addition clearing properly allow for the stacking of dirties neatly and safely at the sideboard or workstation.

3.1.3 Using a service salver

A service salver is a round, normally silver or stainless steel tray (but now also sometimes of wood or plastic). A napkin (folded flat) is placed on the tray to help prevent items shipping on the tray as they are being carried. There are also special non-slip mats that are now used instead of napkins. The service salver may be used to:

Carry clean glasses to and from dirty glasses from a customer's table.

Carry clean cutlery to and from a customer's table

Place clean cutlery on the table

Place clean cups and saucers on the table

Provide an under flat when silver serving vegetables.

3.1.4 Carrying glasses

When carrying clean glasses on the service salver they should be placed the right way up to reduce risk of them topping over. When being placed on the table, the waiter should hold the salver in the left hand behind the customer and then place the glass at the top right – hand corner of the cover and the right way up the waiter should only hold glasses by the stem to ensure that the bowl of the wine glass is not touched, otherwise: finger marks will be left on the glass bowl.

3.1.5 Carrying clean cutlery

When placing clean cutlery on a table or removing it, the items can be carried on a service salver.

This is more efficient, hygienic and safer, and generally more professional, than carrying these items in bunches in the hands. The blades of the knives should be placed under the arch in the middle of the forks, and if carrying sweet spoons and forks, the prongs of the fork should go under the arch in the middle of the spoon. The reason for this is to help hold the items steady on the service salver. Bearing in mind that the handles of the cutlery are generally the heaviest parts, this method prevents them sliding about too much.

3.1.6. Carrying cups and saucers

Tea and coffee cups are carried using a service salver, by stacking the saucers, cups and teaspoons separately. Then before placing the cup, saucers and teaspoons on the table, the cup is put into a saucer, together with a teaspoon, and then the whole service is placed at front of the customer. This is a speedier and safer method (especially when larger numbers are involved) than carrying individual cups saucers, and teaspoons to the table one by one. Cups and saucers are placed on the table at the right hand side of the customer. The reason for this is that the beverage will most likely be serviced from the right. This avoids stretching across the front of the customers when laying the beverage service or when serving the beverage.

3.1.7 Silver serving vegetables

When silver serving vegetables and potatoes at the table, an under flat should be used to hold either one large vegetable dish or a number of smaller ones, depending on the customers orders. The purpose of the under flat is to:

Add to the presentation of the food being served

Give the waiter more control when using the service spoon and fork to serve the vegetables from the vegetable dish on to the customer's place.

Provide greater protection on case of spillage, therefore not detracting from the presentation of the food in the plate or the overall table presentation.

Give the waiter added protection against heat and possible spillage on the uniform.

3.1.8 Using a Service Plate

A service plate is a joint plate with a napkin upon it. It has a number of uses during the meal service:

For placing or removing clean cutlery from the table

For cleaning side plates and side knives

For crumbing down after the main course, or any other stage of the meal if necessary

For cleaning accompaniments from the table as and when necessary.

3.1.9. Carrying clean cutlery

When placing on, or removing, clean cutlery from a table, the items can be carried on a service plate. The reasons for these are the same as given under using a service salver above.

3.1.10 Cleaning side plates and knives

When cleaning dirty side plates and side knives from the customer's table, the use of a service plate means that the waiter was a larger area on which to stack the side knives and any debris using the wind positions, the side plates may be stacked above the service plate and all the debris in a separate pile, together with the side knives laid flat upon the service plate. This is a much safer and speedier method, especially when larger numbers are involved.

3.1.11 Crumbing down

To freshen up the appearance of a table after the main course had been consumed and all the dirty items of equipment cleaned from the table, a procedure known as "crumbing down" is used.

The waiter brushes any crumbs and other debris lying on the table cloth onto the service plate, with the aid of either the folded service cloth or a small brush designed for the purpose. There are also metal crumbs that can be used.

3.1.12 Cleaning accompaniment

The service plate is also used to clear such items as the cruet, cayenne pepper, pepper mill or other accompaniments, which may not already be set on an under plate.

3.1.13 Carrying glasses

There are two basic methods of carrying glasses in the food and beverage service areas by hand or on a service salver.

3.1.13.1 Carrying by hand

Wine goblets should be positioned between alternate fingers as far as is possible. The wine goblets should only be carried in one hand, allowing the other hand to remain free to steady oneself in case of emergencies.

Provides a close up of the wine goblets held in one hand and shows how the base of each glass overlaps the next hand. This method allows wine goblets that are already polished to be handled.

They can be carried about the room and set in their correct position on the table without the bowl of the glass being touched.

3.1.13.2. Carrying glasses on a service salver

The method of carrying clean wine goblets about the restaurant using the service salver.

A service cloth can be placed underneath the salver on the palm of the hand to allow the service salver to be rotated more easily in order to remove each wine goblet in turn by the base and to set it on the table.

Indicate the use of the service salver for cleaning dirty wine goblets from the table. The first dirty wine goblet cleaned should be placed on the service salver nearest to the server. As the dirty ones are cleared, they should be placed on the service salver to ensure a better and more even distribution of weight to lessen the likelihood of accidents occurring. Glass racks are often used to carry glasses during the setting up of functions. These racks enable the transportation of glasses in bulk once they have washed and polished at a central point.

3.1.14 Carrying trays

Trays are used for:

- Carrying food from the kitchen to the restaurant sideboard
- Service in rooms and lounges
- Clearing from sideboards
- Cleaning from tables (when the customer is not seated at the table)
- Carrying equipment

The correct method of holding and carrying an oblong tray is to position the tray lengthways onto the fore arm and to support it by holding the tray with the other hand.

4.0 CONCLUSION: The various technical skills that can boost the performance in food and beverage industry have been highlighted. The permanent service staff are usually

experienced staff who can turn their hand to any job concerning functions and banqueting. They generally do most of the wise-en-place before the function (the laying of tables).

5.0 SUMMARY: Technical skills include how to hold and use a service spoon and fork and other service equipment, Carrying plates, glasses, cups and saucers, etc in a food and beverage centre

6.0 TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

I. Enumerate any 6 technical skills you know and discuss extensively on each.

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