

Working in the Food Service Industry

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BC Cook Articulation Committee

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Preface

Working in the Food Service Industry is one of a series of Culinary Arts books developed to support the training of students and apprentices in British Columbia's food service and hospitality industry. Although created with the Professional Cook, Baker, and Meat Cutter programs in mind, these have been designed as a modular series, and therefore can be used to support a wide variety of programs that offer training in food service skills.

Working in the Food Service Industry covers B.C. legislation and regulations for employment standards, as well as an overview of the "soft skills" of communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, and career planning.

Other books in the series include:

- Food Safety, Sanitation, and Personal Hygiene
- Basic Kitchen and Food Service Management
- Workplace Safety in the Food Service Industry
- Meat Cutting and Processing
- Human Resources in the Food Service and Hospitality Industry
- Nutrition and Labelling for the Canadian Baker
- Understanding Ingredients for the Canadian Baker
- Modern Pastry and Plated Dessert Techniques

The series has been developed collaboratively with participation from public and private post-secondary institutions.

Personal Attributes and Professionalism

Learning Objectives

- Describe personal attributes and professionalism in the workplace
- Describe roles and responsibilities in the workplace

Working in the hospitality industry takes a certain kind of individual. The industry itself can be very rewarding and a lot of fun, but it also requires people who like to work with other people, enjoy a fast-paced environment, and enjoy a lot of variety in their routine, as things often change from day to day and week to week. Not all jobs in the industry require the same skills, so it is important for those who are interested in a career, either in the front or back of the house, to understand their own skills and interests, and then use that information to find the right “fit” when it comes to a job. If you don’t enjoy talking to new people and being outgoing, then likely a career in the front of the house isn’t for you. However, if you are creative, enjoy working with your hands, and find working as a team rewarding, then you might be the perfect candidate for a position in the kitchen.

Industry Expectations

The hospitality and food service industry has a longstanding tradition of quality of service and dedication to putting customer needs first. Though extremely diverse, the industry has an expectation of workers to be professional, productive, respectful, and responsive to customer needs. No matter which style of operation you are working in, it is important to remember why you chose this career path in the first place and always to **respect** your job and the other people you work with. The main attributes that will make you successful are commitment, dedication, and passion for what you do.

Additionally, people working in the industry often collaborate outside of their workplaces to drive the industry forward by joining and participating in local or national trade and professional associations, local food movements and events, and other activities that maintain a strong presence and voice in the community for the industry. By joining the food service industry, you should realize that your work is more than a job — some would describe it as a lifestyle — and being supportive of all the aspects of industry mentioned above will only enhance your experience.

The hospitality industry is also very connected through social media and other channels, and therefore as someone working in the trade, you are expected to be respectful of your peers, and when you are out on your own time, to treat your colleagues as you would like your customers to treat you.

Employer Expectations

Your **employer** pays you to do a job. The job involves performing the work you have been hired to do, whether it is cleaning, serving food, baking bread, or cooking on the line for a customer. Your employer expects you to act professionally and exhibit certain behaviours. Your job depends on your ability to assist your employer to make money. If the business loses money, your job may disappear. At the top of their list of expectations, most employers would include commitment, enthusiasm, dependability, honesty, and a willingness to learn and accept feedback. Table 1 details what is meant by these characteristics, which together would be considered **professionalism**.

Expectation	Do's	Don'ts
Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to make the business look good • Work hard for the organization • Do your best • Dress appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticize the organization to outsiders • Be mostly concerned about what the organization can do for you
Enthusiasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be interested in your work • Share your ideas • Be cheerful • Give others help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do only enough to get by • Do not care about the quality of the work • Be uncooperative • Complain about your job
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive at work on time • Finish assigned work on schedule • Call when you miss work due to illness • Fulfill commitments • Use sick days only for legitimate illness or injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive at work late • Do not finish assigned work • Miss work without notifying the employer • Be absent from work often • Make excuses • Do not follow through on commitments
Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admit your mistakes • Express your opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take tools or materials for your own use • Try to get away with as much as you can
Willingness to Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully to instructions • Ask questions when you do not understand • Try new things • Learn from your own mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore instructions • Dislike taking advice
Accept Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open to suggestions made by others • Use constructive criticism to improve the quality of work • Learn from suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get angry or sulk when criticized • Reject suggestions • Be unreceptive to learning new things • Tend to repeat mistakes

Table 1 Employer expectations

Employee's Role

Doing your job well means doing it correctly, working neatly, handling equipment and materials properly, and working safely.

Do the Job Correctly

When a job is done correctly, your customers will be happy and satisfied. A job done correctly means no complaints or call-backs, and could mean a compliment or recommendation from the customer or your supervisor.

Here are a few examples from the industry of the implications of not doing the job correctly:

Cleaning: If a restaurant worker assigned to clean up only drags a damp mop over the floor in areas where there is obvious dirt, he or she has not cleaned the floor properly. If the health inspector makes a surprise visit and finds that the floor looks relatively clean but has not been properly sanitized, there could be consequences for everyone. In extreme cases, the whole restaurant may be shut down until the inspector is sure the operation meets basic cleanliness requirements.

Rotation of food supplies in the kitchen: The **employees** who start to use the freshest items before perfectly good older items are consumed can cost the business money if the older items have to be thrown out the next day.

Serving meals: If one customer senses that another customer has received better service, the business may have just lost the first customer and maybe even more if that person shares the bad experience with friends and others, such as through an online review site. In fact, most people are more likely to share a story of a bad dining experience than they are a good one. Always strive to give the customer the very best possible experience you can!

Work Neatly

Neatness pleases customers and employers. Many people think that the condition of a work area reflects a person's work habits. They figure that someone with a messy work area probably does messy work. Working neatly and in an organized way is also the key to working efficiently.

Neatness saves time and trouble. In a neat work area, you do not have to waste time looking for tools or equipment. Neatness is necessary for safety. A sloppy work area is usually a dangerous one as well. It is easy to trip over objects left on the floor, to slip on spilled liquids, or to get hurt on something sharp or hot that has been left lying around. Often, clutter hides other dangers, like a frayed electric cord or a broken container.

When you finish a task or leave for the day, clean the work area, replace tools in tool boxes, and stack materials in their designated location. It makes for a great start the next day.

Handle Equipment and Materials Properly

Employers supply their workers with equipment and materials needed to do the job. These supplies cost employers money, so they want to see that they are used properly. Abused equipment and wasted materials show an employer that you do not care about the job or the employer. Your employer has estimated the price for a menu item based on the amount of time and materials it should take to prepare the meal. If you take too long to prepare the item or waste expensive ingredients, you obviously do not share your employer's concern for costs.

Some employees think the employer is too big or rich to notice some waste here and there. Or they feel that taking care of the employer's property is not their responsibility. Knives and food go missing and these employees simply

assume that it's not their problem. Employees with this attitude do not realize that such waste hurts them as much as their employer.

Your job depends on the success of the business. Profits go down when the business must spend money replacing wasted, damaged, or stolen property. Lower profits can mean lower salaries or fewer pay raises. If the losses are too great and the restaurant closes, you could lose your job.

Work Safely

Part of any job is learning and following safety rules. All workers need to be concerned about careless or unsafe acts. When you start a job, learn the safety rules and special hazards (dangers) of the job. Find out where the fire extinguishers, fire exits, and first aid kit are located.

If you see an unsafe condition or a safety violation, you can prevent accidents by doing something about it immediately. If you find a safety hazard, take action in one or more of these ways:

- Try to correct the unsafe condition
- Warn others
- Inform your supervisor
- Inform those who caused the safety violation
- Inform the safety officer or repair staff
- Check to be sure the violation has been corrected

Time Management

Some workers think that a good attendance record is enough to satisfy the employer's expectations. However, they arrive on time but then interrupt their workday by doing personal tasks. It is so easy to waste work time that many employees do not realize they are doing it. For example, some people take long lunch breaks or too many coffee breaks; others spend time on the phone with friends or handling personal business. Some waste time by socializing with co-workers when they should be working. This wastes twice as much time, since the co-workers also stop working.

Wasting company time, like missing work, costs the employer money. Employers must give you an unpaid meal break of half an hour after five hours of work. They do not have to give you coffee breaks, although many do. (Contracts and collective agreements may increase unpaid break times and stipulate paid breaks.) However, when break time is over, employers have the right to expect you to work.

Some tasks have assigned deadlines whereas others do not. For tasks that do not have assigned deadlines, employers expect you to set goals for yourself. To get your work done on time, try to figure out how long it will take to finish a certain amount of work. Depending on your position, you may be given tasks with a broader focus. You may be put in charge of a certain event for example. This requires you to establish deadlines for the scope of work (e.g., when the order of food must be placed, when certain components of the menu must be prepared, and ultimately the day, time, setup, and service of the food all become part of your work). Whatever the amount of responsibility you have at the time, consider the points regarding getting your work done as important tools for success.

Getting your work done on time helps you to keep your job. You need to:

- Set priorities
- Begin the job right away
- Keep working until the job is done
- Keep deadlines in mind and stick to them
- Use resources efficiently

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is influenced by a number of factors, such as:

- Pay
- Benefits
- Working conditions
- Opportunities for advancement
- Job security

These factors also seem to be the first things considered when people decide whether or not to take or change jobs. In addition, there are other factors that contribute to job satisfaction on an everyday basis. Recognition, appreciation, respect, courtesy, and good management-worker relations often have greater everyday importance than do the rate of pay and job security.

The working relationships you develop with others will be extremely important to your success and the satisfaction that you derive from your job. Studies reveal that people more frequently resign from a job because of how they have been treated or valued rather than dissatisfaction with their pay. A personal sense of worth and identity is very important. Sometimes people find themselves in jobs that are less than satisfying for any one of the reasons identified above, or because they are not suited to that particular job. Often quitting is not an option, especially in tough economic times when other opportunities are limited. It is important to recognize that working in an environment where you feel constantly frustrated or unhappy may cause physical or mental problems, some of which may be severe. Studies indicate that people unhappy in their jobs have more accidents. In some cases, people who are unhappy at work but cannot leave or change their jobs learn to separate their self-esteem from their work and find their primary satisfaction in family or leisure activities, while for others it may have the opposite effect, and they bring their work frustrations home with them.

Attendance and Punctuality

Employers get frustrated when their employees are not at work when they are scheduled to be. There is a job to be done and when workers do not show up, the business loses valuable time and money. When you take a job, it is up to you to arrange how to get to work every day on time. If you miss work or arrive late too often, you may:

- Be warned by your supervisor
- Be resented by your co-workers
- Receive a poor rating on your performance review
- Miss a **promotion** or raise
- Lose pay
- Be subject to a suspension or even lose your job

It is extremely important that you communicate any attendance or punctuality issues with your supervisor as soon as you become aware of them. If you know that you might be slightly late on a particular day and your supervisor knows in advance, he or she can schedule accordingly. However, if you arrive late without telling anyone, it shows a lack of respect for the schedule, your job, the business, and your co-workers. Communication is key.

Warnings

The first time you come in late your supervisor will probably not do much more than speak to you about it. If it happens again, you may be reprimanded and given a warning that continual lateness may cost you your job. Sometimes you cannot help being late or absent; in that case, you should let your supervisor know why as soon as possible. You may

have a sudden sickness in your family or experience car trouble on the way to work, but even these reasons may not be acceptable if they happen too often.

Resentment

When you are late or absent, it usually makes things harder for your co-workers. They may have to do your share of the work until you arrive. If you are a part of a team, a whole crew may have to stand around waiting for you. Although most people do not mind helping in an emergency, they do not want to do your job or be delayed by you.

Ratings

Supervisors evaluate their workers on a regular basis, usually once or twice a year. If you are often late or absent, your attendance rating will be affected. A low rating affects not only your present job but also can impact you later when you apply for jobs with other businesses and they phone for a reference.

Promotions and raises

Your lateness and absence may cost you a raise or a chance for promotion. If you cannot be relied on to show up, you give your employer the impression that you do not take the job seriously.

Pay loss

If you are not putting in a full day's work, why should you be paid for one? Employers lose money when workers do not put in their full time. If you are absent, you may lose a full day's pay, and if you are late, your employer only has to pay you for the hours you worked.

Suspension or job loss

If you continue to be absent or late, you will lose your job. Most employers will give you a few warnings and then proceed to a suspension without pay. If your attendance does not improve, the employer has little choice but to let you go.

Employee evaluation

Employers want workers who have good work attitudes and who practise good work habits. They expect you to come to work on time, dress properly, follow rules and instructions, and get the job done correctly and on time.

Many employers use rating scales to evaluate workers' job performance and work attitudes. These ratings are placed in your personnel file. When your supervisor is considering promoting or firing you, these files are used to help in the decision. The list below is typical of an employee evaluation.

- Has a good attendance record (is seldom late or absent)
- Makes good use of time (starts work promptly; does not waste time)
- Meets deadlines (plans ahead and sees that work is finished on time)
- Shows initiative (works hard without being told to)
- Does not give up easily (tries and tries again)
- Shows honesty (can be trusted; accepts the blame for own mistakes)
- Is dependable (always finishes the job)
- Does not waste materials (plans and works carefully so no goods are damaged or wasted; takes good care of tools and equipment)
- Obeys safety rules (prevents accidents by following all safety instructions)
- Follows instructions (pays attention to directions and follows them carefully)
- Is willing to learn (shows interest in improving job performance; follows suggestions)
- Works accurately (takes care to do things right; does not make careless mistakes, keeps good records)
- Gets along well with others (supervisors, co-workers, and customers; works cooperatively and is thoughtful and respectful of others)
- Shows loyalty (speaks well of the employer and its products; does not give out confidential information)

Food Service Occupations

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe food service occupations

There are many careers in the food service industry for talented and well-trained individuals. Opportunities in this industry have been steadily increasing for the last several decades and the demand for skilled people, at times, has exceeded the number of suitable applicants. Currently, there is expected to be higher demand for jobs than there are available people to work, and shortages in the tourism and hospitality industry could be as high as 15,000 people by 2020 (go2HR, 2012).

Occupations in the industry generally fall into three categories: front of house; back of house, and administrative. Front of house occupations include those responsible for serving the food and the customers, such as waiters, hosts/hostesses, and bussers. Back of house occupations include those responsible for preparing the food, including cooks, **chefs**, and dishwashers. Administrative occupations are those which help grow the business or keep it running, including human resource and finance staff, and general managers and owners.

Skill Levels

Types of employment depend on skill levels. In the restaurant industry, employment opportunities can be sorted into three general categories based on training and experience. These job categories are entry level, skilled, and supervisory.

The first category of jobs is entry level. Entry-level employment usually requires no particular skills or experience. At this level, front of house employees will be working as hosts/hostesses or bussers, and back of house employees usually do routine jobs such as washing vegetables, preparing hamburgers or chicken orders in fast-food outlets, or even washing pots and pans. In the past, many chefs started working in the industry at this level. Even today, workers who have just completed **professional cooking** courses often find themselves in situations that do not require the training they have received and start in entry-level positions. However, these students probably will move on to more challenging industry jobs and advance quicker than their untrained co-workers.

The second category of jobs can be described as skilled and technical. Skilled workers in the hospitality industry are those who have taken professional cook training or apprenticeship programs and, for the front of house, hospitality training or bartending programs. These are the workers who actually carry out the tasks needed for a food service operation to be successful.

The third category of jobs is supervisory in nature. Individuals working in supervisory roles need to be experienced in the industry and can effectively organize and motivate other skilled workers. In addition to front line and skilled technical experience, the supervisor should be able to control costs, schedule production, manage budgets, and work well with other people even in the most pressure-packed situations.

Food Service Positions and Job Titles

Back of House

Efficient kitchens are well-organized kitchens. Most kitchens are organized into **stations** or sections, with each responsible for preparing different food or menu items. All the stations together form what is called the **line**. Usually, each station on the line has a separate name, but job titles often reflect the experience and the skills of the cook. This can be a bit confusing. For example, in larger establishments the positions of first cook, second cook, and third cook are common, but the skills and qualifications of people with these job titles can vary from restaurant to restaurant, and in some cases may be linked to salary structures within the **collective agreement** of a union. As well, many people call themselves a chef when they are in reality a cook in a restaurant or someone who has taken culinary training.

The traditional hierarchy of the kitchen is a system called the **brigade**, created in France in the 19th century by Auguste Escoffier. Although most modern restaurants do not follow the traditional brigade system to the letter, many of the positions in restaurants are still referred to using the French terminology. For a full listing of job titles in the traditional brigade, visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brigade_de_cuisine

Table 2 lists job titles from the brigade system that are still in common use and describes how they fit into the modern restaurant structure. Important titles to know are bolded.

Traditional Title	Modern Alternatives	Duties
Chef, Chef de Cuisine	Kitchen manager	In charge of the whole kitchen
Sous-Chef, Executive Sous Chef	none	Second in command of the kitchen; supervises when the chef is absent
Chef de Partie	Section cook	In charge of a section or station
Entremetier	Vegetable station	Preparation of vegetables, starches, and accompaniments
Saucier	Sauce or sauté station	Preparation of sauces, hot appetizers, and finishing most entrées
Garde Manger	Salad station, cold kitchen	Preparation of cold kitchen items such as salads and cold appetizers
Tournant	Swing cook	Rotates between stations in the kitchen
Pâtissier	Pastry cook/Pastry chef	Preparation of desserts
Poissonier	Fish station	Preparation of fish and seafood
Grillardin	Grill cook	Preparation of grilled or broiled items
Cuisineur	Cook, Line cook	Preparation of a wide variety of foods
Commis	Junior cook	Preparation of a wide variety of foods

Table 2 Kitchen positions

Front of House

A similar structure exists in the front of the house, with restaurant and dining room managers having their own teams of servers, hosts/hostesses, bussers, and bartenders to serve guests. The traditional brigade hierarchy also covered the front of house positions, and is still commonly used in France to this day, but only two have remained in common usage in Canada, namely maître d'hôtel (or maître d' for short) and sommelier. Typical front of house positions and responsibilities are listed in Table 3.

Title	Alternatives	Duties
Maitre d'/Maitre d'Hotel	Dining room or restaurant manager	In charge of the front of the house
Sommelier	Wine steward	Responsible for maintaining wine lists and the ordering and service of wine
Server	Waiter/waitress	Takes orders, leads service
Busser		Sets and clears tables
Host/Hostess		Seats guests and often processes payment
Bartender		Prepares drinks and beverages
Expediter	Food runner	Brings food to the table from the kitchen

Table 3 Front of house positions

Training and Certification

The traditional way of advancing in the hospitality industry was to get an entry-level position and then work your way up to more skilled positions almost solely based on your work experience and learning from others. Today, formal training at a college or trade school is often needed if you are to advance in your chosen career, particularly if you wish to advance into supervisory or management positions. This training might be a post-secondary certificates, degree, or diploma; apprenticeship training; and industry certifications.

In any case, the industry still tends to promote people from within, and even with formal training, most people will start in entry-level positions and then work their way into positions with higher levels of responsibility over time. **Advancement** in the industry follows a logical series of progressive steps as you gain more experience, which is often referred to as the career ladder (Figure 1).

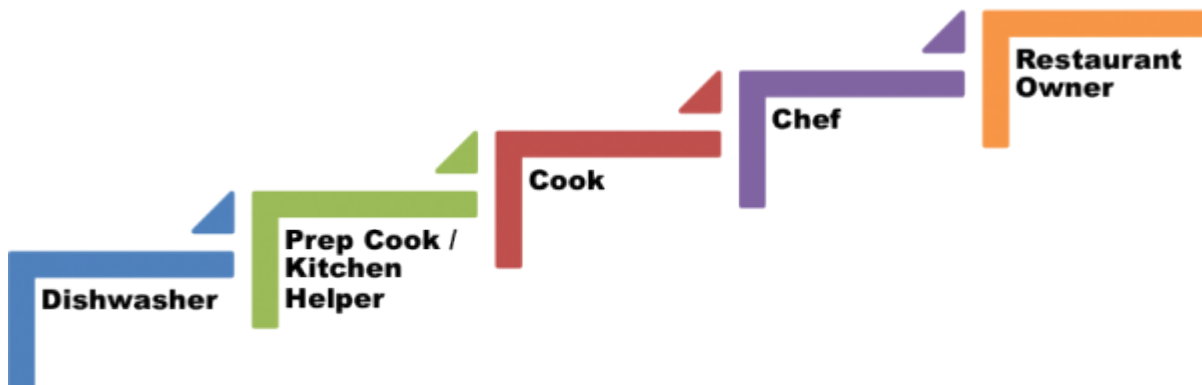


Figure 1 Typical career ladder for the kitchen. Image used with permission of go2HR.

Post-Secondary Training

Many public and private colleges and trade schools, and also some high schools, offer training in the industry for both the culinary professionals and those looking for training in front of house occupations like bartending or wine service and hospitality management. Most post-secondary programs group training into certificates, diplomas, and degrees, based on the number of courses and length of time it takes to complete. Many of these programs also ladder into other training such as apprenticeship or industry certifications.

Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship is a system of training that has been around for hundreds of years. Before there were trade schools and colleges, if someone wanted to learn a trade that person would seek out an experienced tradesperson (called a journeyman or master, depending on the level of experience) and learn the trade by working with the tradesperson until he or she had developed enough skill to perform the job alone. This system has evolved to include formal training at a college or trade school, but still has two main components: practical training (practising techniques and procedures while producing products) and technical training (learning new skills). Practical training is achieved on the job, supervised by a certified journeyman, and technical training is delivered by accredited institutions.

In British Columbia, all apprenticeship and trades training falls under the authority of the Industry Training Authority (ITA). For a full list of ITA programs and certifications, visit the ITA website at www.itabc.ca.

For trades that are offered in multiple provinces, the national Red Seal program is available, which is a national endorsement that is added to provincial qualifications upon the successful completion of the interprovincial Red Seal exam. There are 57 Red Seal trades in Canada, including Cook and Baker in the food service industry. For more information on the Red Seal programs, visit www.red-seal.ca.

In British Columbia, there are three levels of certification available through apprenticeship, as shown in Figure 2.

With the various certifications, there are a number of options for working in the industry, as outlined in Figure 3. For more information on the certification and career options at each level, visit <https://www.go2HR.ca/training/apprenticeships>.

Industry Certifications

emerit

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) offers training and certification in over 40 tourism occupations from front line to management level, under the *emerit* brand. For a full list of training options, visit *emerit*'s website at www.emerit.ca.

Canadian Culinary Federation certifications (Canadian Culinary Institute)

To progress beyond a provincial or Red Seal certification requires further training coupled with on-the-job experience. Much of the training is presently on an informal basis, but there are certifications offered by the Canadian Culinary Federation (CCFCC), Canada's national **occupational association** for cooks and chefs, designed to fill this gap.

The CCFCC has three programs designed to certify chefs: the [Certified Working Chef \(CWC\)](#), [Certified Chef de Cuisine \(CCC\)](#), and [Certified Master Chef \(CMC\)](#). Candidates must take theory courses followed by written and practical examinations. Course components include theoretical and practical seminars and self-paced learning packages. For more information see the Canadian Culinary Federation website: www.cfcc.ca.

In summary: There are many options, but the example below shows the different types of training and certification available in Canada for the culinary arts, and how they relate to each other. The interactive career map is available from the [Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council](#).

Wine training and certifications

Additional certifications for restaurant staff include internationally recognized wine service certifications such as the [Wine and Spirits Education Trust \(WSET\)](#) courses and those offered by the [International Sommelier Guild](#).



PROFESSIONAL COOK CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION AT A GLANCE

> PROFESSIONAL COOK 1 (PC1)

C of Q
PC1



Workplace Skills

- Professionalism: Personal hygiene, organization, teamwork & communication
- Workplace & food safety
- Use of tools & equipment
- Knife skills & common cuts
- Trimming & portioning meat, poultry & seafood
- Following & adjusting recipes
- Basic terminology & nutrition
- Applying basic cooking & baking techniques
- Receiving & storage procedures

Products You Can Make From Scratch

- Basic stocks, soups & sauces
- Common vegetables & fruits
- Basic potato, rice & pasta dishes
- Basic meat, poultry & seafood dishes
- Salads, salad dressings & sandwiches
- Eggs & breakfast items
- Basic pies, tarts & cookies
- Fruit desserts & custards
- Basic quick & yeast breads
- Coffee & tea products



> PROFESSIONAL COOK 2 (PC2)

C of Q
PC2



Workplace Skills

All PC1 skills plus:

- Preparing food for allergies & special diets
- Volume & banquet cooking
- Deboning meat, poultry & seafood
- Basic cost calculations
- Basic menu planning
- Taking inventory

Products You Can Make From Scratch

All PC1 skills plus:

- Specialty soups & secondary sauces
- Specialty vegetables & vegetarian dishes
- Specialty potato, pasta & grain dishes
- Meat, poultry & seafood dishes for volume functions
- Specialty salads & dressings
- Hors d'oeuvre & appetizers
- Presentation platters
- Pastries, cakes & cheesecakes
- Laminated & specialty breads



> PROFESSIONAL COOK 3 (PC3)

C of Q
PC3



Workplace Skills

All PC1 & PC2 skills plus:

- Specialty cooking methods
- Maintaining food safety systems
- Food & labour costing
- Basic teambuilding, leadership & supervision skills
- Buffet presentation & layout
- Basic wine knowledge & selection

Products You Can Make From Scratch

All PC1 & PC2 skills plus:

- Specialty & ethnic sauces
- Game & variety meats
- Specialty & classic meat, poultry & seafood dishes
- Pates, terrines, basic sausage making, curing & smoking
- Hot & specialty plated desserts
- Specialty cakes & tortes
- Frozen desserts, ice creams & sorbets
- Basic chocolate & sugar garnishes

Figure 2 Cook certifications in British Columbia. Image used with permission of go2HR.



Figure 3 Career options related to Cook (Professional Cook 3) Red Seal certification. Image used with permission of go2HR.

Employment Standards for B.C. Food Service Workers.

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe the B.C. Employment Standards Act
- Describe the B.C. Human Rights Code

This section offers a general introduction to the BC [Employment Standards Act](#). The Employment Standards Branch also has posters and a [Guide to the Employment Standards Act](#) available free of charge for employers to display in the workplace. This Act, like all provincial legislation, is subject to periodic review by government. It is your responsibility as an employee or employer to keep up to date with your **rights** and responsibilities. If you require specific advice about a dispute related to employment standards, you should contact the Employment Standards Branch.

About the Employment Standards Act

The Employment Standards Act sets the minimum standards for wages and **conditions of employment** that apply in most workplaces in British Columbia. For those employees who are covered by a union collective agreement, the agreement supersedes the Act. However, most employees in the restaurant and food service industry are not unionized, and therefore you must know about these minimum standards whether you are working in the industry as an employee or an employer.

Human rights legislation such as the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) and the [B.C. Human Rights Code](#) protect citizens of Canada from discrimination in their everyday lives and in employment. This legislation has an impact on the way food service employers recruit new employees and manage the workplace. Public services and facilities such as restaurants must also ensure that they do not discriminate through their practices or policies against their guests and customers.

The Employment Standards Act and its [Regulations](#) set the minimum standards for wages and conditions of employment in British Columbia. Employers are required to familiarize employees with their employment rights under the Act.

The Employment Standards Branch provides information to employers and employees about their responsibilities and rights under the Act through guides and brochures. It also handles inquiries by telephone, email, and through the Internet.

In larger organizations, the human resources department or payroll department may handle many of the issues related to employment standards. In smaller organizations, you may be responsible for some or all aspects of supervising and paying employees.

All supervisors, whether they work in large organizations or in small restaurants, need to know the implications of collective agreements and/or the Employment Standards Act for the scheduling of employees and the payment of overtime. Careful attention to these provisions can result in cost savings to the employer without jeopardizing the needs of the workplace or the rights of employees. This is a safer and more satisfactory approach than the “private deals” that are often worked out between supervisors and employees in the workplace.

Occupations Covered by the Act

The Employment Standards Act applies to most employees and employers in British Columbia. Federally legislated companies and their employees (e.g., federal government employees, employees of federal Crown corporations, banks, radio and television broadcasting companies, railways, and airlines) are covered by the federal Labour Code, which has similar provisions.

Some occupations are not covered under the Act. For example, doctors, lawyers, architects, insurance agents, chartered professional accountants, and realtors are not covered. Also excluded are babysitters working fewer than 15 hours a **week**, newspaper carriers attending school and working 15 hours a week or fewer, and persons receiving financial assistance from government while participating in certain government-sponsored employment programs.

Employees who belong to unions are covered by the collective agreements negotiated between their union and employer. Collective agreements must meet or exceed the minimum standards of the Act. If provisions of the collective agreement fall below those minimum standards, then the Act applies instead.

Agreements between employees and employers that do not meet the minimum standards set out in the Employment Standards Act are not enforceable. For example, a restaurateur cannot make an agreement with employees that they will not be paid overtime even when they **work** more than 40 hours per week. If the employee complained

to the Employment Standards Branch, the employer could be forced to pay the wages owing. However, under certain conditions, the Employment Standards Branch may grant approval for variances to a given standard.

Other laws such as the [B.C. Human Rights Code](#), the [Labour Relations Code](#), and the [Workers Compensation Act](#) affect employees' rights and employers' obligations regarding conditions of work.

Hiring Employees

The Employment Standards Act does not require employers to follow specific procedures when recruiting and selecting employees. However, the B.C. Human Rights Code requires employers to ensure that their procedures do not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religious belief, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, or criminal conviction unrelated to employment.

Employers may not misrepresent that a job is available, the type of work to be performed, or the terms of employment. They may not ask for or receive payment from a person in exchange for hiring that person. They also are prohibited from receiving payment from a third party to hire a person.

Employment Agencies

Employment agencies must be licensed under the Employment Standards Act. They may not charge a person for obtaining work for him or her or for providing information about employers seeking employees. Employment agencies are paid by the employer for their services.

Child Employment

An employer wishing to hire a child under the age of 15 must have prior approval from the Employment Standards Branch and must obtain the written permission from the child's parent or guardian. If the child is a student, the permission of the school he or she attends must generally also be obtained. On approval, the Branch will issue a permit which identifies the condition of the child's employment.

Variances

Employers and their employees may apply jointly to the Employment Standards Branch for a variance that changes or varies the application of the following provisions of the Act:

- The time period for a **temporary layoff**
- Paydays
- **Special clothing**
- Notice of a change of shift
- Minimum daily hours
- Maximum hours of work
- Hours free from work
- **Overtime wages** for employees not on a flexible work schedule
- Notice and **termination pay** requirements for group terminations

Variances may be granted if the Branch is satisfied that the requested change is consistent with the intent of the Act, and a majority of all affected employees are in favour. The Branch may attach conditions to the variance. All variances include an expiry date, but may be renewed. Employers must post a copy of the variance where all affected employees can read it.

Complaints and enforcement measures

If you feel that your employer has contravened the Act, you may file a complaint. The complaint must be in writing and must be submitted within six months of the alleged contravention. If you were terminated, you must deliver your complaint within six months of the last day you were employed. (*Alleged contravention* is a legal term for a violation of a law that has not been proved. All complaints are considered alleged until they have been investigated and proved.) Complaint forms are available from the Employment Standards Branch.

When you file a complaint, you can request that your identity be kept confidential. Your identity can be revealed only if it is necessary for a proceeding under the Act or if the Branch considers disclosure of your identity is in the public interest. An employer cannot fire or threaten to fire you for making a complaint. The employer cannot coerce, intimidate, or penalize you for an actual or potential complaint, investigation, or appeal under the Act.

Every complaint received by the Branch must be investigated unless the Act does not apply to the complaint, the complaint is trivial or frivolous, or there is not enough evidence to prove the complaint. The Branch is not required to investigate if a court, **tribunal**, or arbitrator is already hearing a complaint or has made a decision about the complaint. If the dispute that caused the complaint has been resolved, action is not required. Branch staff may conduct investigations without receiving a complaint and may assist parties in resolving a complaint. They may inspect company records and interview employers and employees in order to investigate a complaint.

Decisions of the Branch are called *determinations*. The determination must include the reasons for the decision, details of any amounts payable, and penalties imposed. Copies of the determination must be given to all parties named in it. The Branch can require:

- An employer to hire or reinstate a person or pay compensation in place of reinstatement
- The payment of wages lost by the contravention
- Payment of the person's expenses incurred as a result of contravention
- Employers to reduce hours considered to be excessive

Employers may be liable for any unpaid wages in the 24 months before the complaint was filed or employment was terminated, whichever came first. They may also be required to pay interest on any unpaid wages.

Orders of the Branch may be enforced through monetary penalties, liens (legal claims) for unpaid wages, demands to third parties owing money to someone who owes money to the Branch, and court orders. The Branch may also seize personal and business assets of a person required to pay under a determination order.

Officers or directors of a corporation can be held personally liable for up to two months' unpaid wages per employee if that person held office during the time the wages were earned. The Employment Standards Branch may compile and publish information about contraventions of the Act and Regulations that identifies the persons responsible.

The Branch may dismiss a complaint if it determines that the Act and Regulations have not been violated. It may also vary or cancel a determination that it has previously made.

A person served with a determination has the right to appeal the decision of the Branch to the Employment Standards Tribunal. Appeals must be filed in writing within eight days if the determination was personally served, and 23 days if it was served by registered mail. The appeal can request that the tribunal suspend a determination during the appeal period. The Tribunal may cancel, confirm, or vary a determination with or without a hearing.

Wages and Wage Statements

The minimum wage in British Columbia applies to all workers, no matter what their age. The minimum wage is changed from time to time to reflect changes in the cost of living.

Employees must be paid at least twice a month. All money earned in a **pay period** must be paid within eight days after the end of the pay period. This does not include annual vacation pay and **wages** credited to an employee's time bank. A pay period cannot exceed 16 days in length. For example, if a food server works the month of January, and the pay period is from January 6 to January 19, the server must be paid by January 27 (Figure 4). Wages can be paid by cash, cheque, direct bank deposit, bank draft, or money order. Payment by direct bank deposit must be authorized in writing by the employee or by a collective agreement.

January 20XX						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
					End of pay period 1	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
					Pay issued for period 1	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
					End of pay period 2	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
					Pay issued for period 2	
28	29	30	31			

Figure 4 Wages must be paid within eight days of the end of the pay period

Employers cannot make deductions from the employees' wages without the written consent of the employee unless the deductions are permitted or required under provincial or federal law. For example, employers are required by federal law to deduct employee contributions for income tax, Canada Pension, and Employment Insurance.

Employees may request that the employer pay part of his or her wages to a third party. This is called *assignment of wages*. An employer must pay assigned wages to:

- A **trade union** under the Labour Relations Act
- A charitable or other organization
- A pension or superannuation plan

- An insurance company for medical or dental coverage
- A person to whom the employee is required to pay maintenance under the [Family Maintenance Enforcement Act](#).

Employers must also honour an assignment of wages authorized by a collective agreement. For example, many collective agreements include a group life insurance plan as a benefit. If the collective agreement calls for this, employers must deduct the premium from the employees' wages. Employers may honour a written assignment by an employee to pay a debt, but they are not obliged to do so. Any wages assigned by an employee must be paid within one month of being deducted.

Employees wishing to cancel an assignment of wages or cancel the direct deposit of their wages must notify the employer and the person or organization receiving the money in writing.

Employers may not deduct wages as a result of damage, breakage, or loss. For example, a restaurant is not permitted to charge an employee for breakage of glassware or dishes.

An employee who has been fired or laid off must be paid in full within 48 hours. If an employee resigns or quits, he or she must be paid in full within six days. If the employee cannot be located, the employer must pay the wages to the Branch within 60 days. The funds are then held in trust for the former employee.

Wage Statements

On each payday, the employer must give employees a written wage statement (Figure 5) that includes:

- The employee's name and address
- The hours worked by the employee
- The employee's wage rate
- The overtime wage rate
- The hours worked at the overtime rate
- Any other payment to which the employee is entitled (e.g., a bonus)
- The amount and purpose of all deductions
- A statement of how the wages were calculated if the employee is paid other than by the hour or by salary
- A statement of the employee's net and gross wages
- Any amounts withdrawn from the employee's time bank and how much remains

Legend:

1. Employee information
2. Pay period information
3. Hours worked and rates of pay
4. Gross earnings
5. Statutory deductions
6. Net pay

Once an employer has been issued a wage statement, a new statement is not required if the information has not changed from the previous statement. For example, if a cook worked exactly the same number of hours as in the previous pay period, and the rates and deductions were unchanged, a statement is not required.

In practice, most employers will issue a wage statement with each and every payment. Often this includes

Pay Statement

<First Name> <Surname>
 Employee ID 97000054 Dept No: 0000
 Address 1
 Address 2
 City, Province
 Postal Code

Total Exemption Amount FED: 10,527 PROV: 9,1041
 Additional Withholding 0 0

EARNINGS	RATE	CURRENT HOURS	CURRENT PERIOD	YTD HOURS	YTD AMOUNT
REGULAR PAY	25.00	80	2,000.00	320	8,000.00
BONUS	0.00	0	0.00	0	679.09
VAC PAY	0.00	0	0.00	0	2,000.00
GROSS EARNINGS/ HOURS		80	2,000.00	320	10,679.09

TAXABLE BENEFITS	CURRENT PERIOD	YTD AMOUNT
BASIC LIFE	9.47	37.88
ER RRSP	60.92	243.68
TOTAL TAXABLE BENEFITS	70.39	281.56
TOTAL TAXABLE EARNINGS	2,070.39	10,960.65

Employer Name
 Address 1
 Address 2
 City, Province
 Postal Code

Pay Period No. 04 of 26
 Period Ending 18/02/2011
 Pay Date 18/02/2011
 Pay Period Type Bi-weekly

STATUTORY DEDUCTIONS	CURRENT PERIOD	YTD AMOUNT
C/QPP	95.82	515.90
EI	36.68	194.43
TAXES	350.90	2,148.08
TOTAL STATUTORY DEDUCTIONS	483.40	2,858.41

OTHER DEDUCTIONS	CURRENT PERIOD	YTD AMOUNT
LTD	22.35	89.40
EE RRSP	60.92	243.68
OTHER DEDUCTIONS TOTAL	83.27	333.08
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	566.67	3,191.49
NET PAY	1,433.33	7,487.60

CHEQUE / DEPOSIT NUMBER: 00002066
 PAY DATE: 18-02-2011

DEPOSITED TO THE ACCOUNT OF
 <FIRST NAME> <SURNAME>
 BANK DEPOSIT \$1,433.33

THIS IS NOT A CHEQUE

NON-NEGOTIABLE

Figure 5: Sample payroll statement. Image used with permission of the Canadian Payroll Association.

additional information such as the employee number, gross wages for the year to date, total deductions for the year to date, and the amount of any taxable benefits received.

You should keep the wage statements you have been issued. They are useful in case there is a dispute about the amount you have earned in a year. They can also be used to establish that you have been employed and the amount you have earned if you are not issued a T-4 statement of earnings for income tax purposes, or a record of employment for employment insurance purposes, or if you need proof of income for any reason, such as applying for a mortgage or loan.

Payroll Records

Employers are required to keep detailed **payroll records** at their principal place of business in the province. These records must be kept in English. The information in the payroll records must include:

- Employee's name, date of birth, occupation, telephone number, and residential address
- The date on which the employee began employment with that employer
- The employee's wage rate
- The hours worked on each day
- The benefits paid to the employee
- The employee's gross and net wages for each pay period
- The amount of and reason for each deduction from the employee's pay
- The dates of statutory holidays taken by the employee and the amounts paid
- The dates of annual vacation taken, the amounts paid, and the days and amounts owing
- The dates and amounts paid from the employee's time bank, and the balance remaining

As you can see, a considerable amount of information must be kept. This information must be collected at the workplace and entered into the payroll records. Some employers use an automated time clock which the employees use to "punch in" the time at which they began work. They also "punch out" to record the time at which they complete their work. The completed time cards are collected by the employer and used to calculate the hours of work. Other companies use a time sheet on which the employee records his or her hours. Typically, this sheet is signed by the supervisor before being used to calculate pay.

No matter what system is used in your workplace, you must ensure that you record the hours you work so that your pay records are complete and accurate. It is also useful to keep a brief log of your work hours on a daily basis in case there is an error in the time records or a dispute between you and your employer about the number of hours worked.

Payroll records must be kept for seven years after employment ends.

Working Conditions

Special Clothing (Uniforms)

Many employees in the restaurant and food service industry are required to wear uniforms when they are at work. If you must wear a uniform or a specific brand of clothing, the employer must provide, clean, and maintain it. For example, many cooks must wear white jackets and hats and checked trousers. Your employer must buy the uniform. You cannot be charged for the uniform or for damages to it. Your employer cannot require you to pay a deposit for the uniform or withhold your wages.

The majority of employees and the employer may agree that employees will clean and maintain the special clothing and be reimbursed by the employer for the expenses incurred. This agreement is binding on all employees in the workplace who are required to wear the special clothing.

If an employer and a majority of the employees have agreed that the employer will reimburse employees for the cost of cleaning and maintaining special clothing, the employer must keep records of the agreement and the amounts paid for two years.

Statutory Holidays

Restaurant and food service workers are often required to work when others are on holiday. Holidays such as Christmas and New Year's Day are frequently the times that people want to go out for dinner, and so restaurants may be especially busy during these times. These days are known as **statutory holidays**. In British Columbia, the following days are statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Family Day (second Monday in February)
- Good Friday (changes from year to year)
- Victoria Day (the third Monday in May)
- Canada Day (July 1)
- B.C. Day (the first Monday in August)
- Labour Day (the first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Day (the second Monday in October)
- Remembrance Day (November 11)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, and Boxing Day are not statutory holidays, although some employers may provide paid time off on these days.

Eligibility

You are not automatically eligible to statutory holidays with pay as soon as you have begun work. You must have worked for the employer for at least 30 calendar days.

Managers (that is, those whose primary employment duties consist of supervising and directing other employees)

or a person employed in an executive capacity are not entitled to statutory holidays. They may, however, have negotiated similar provisions in their terms of employment.

Calculating Statutory Holiday Pay

If you have a regular schedule of hours and if you have worked at least 15 days out of the last 30 calendar days prior to a statutory holiday, you are entitled to a regular day's pay for the holiday. If you have worked irregular hours on at least 15 out of the last 30 calendar days, you are entitled to an average day's pay for the holiday. This amount is calculated by dividing the employee's total wages, excluding overtime, by the number of days worked.

An employee who has worked fewer than 15 days in the 30 calendar days before the holiday is entitled to pro-rated holiday pay. This amount is calculated by dividing the total pay during the period, excluding overtime, by 15.

For example, Meilin, Ming, and Steve are all employed in a local restaurant. Meilin is a regular employee who worked 20 eight-hour shifts over the 30 days prior to the holiday. She is entitled to eight hours of pay on the statutory holiday. Ming started work just two weeks before the holiday. He is not entitled to be paid for the holiday. Steve is a part-time employee who has been working for the restaurant for six months. He worked only 12 shifts during the 30 calendar days before the holiday and earned \$480 during that time. He is entitled to a payment of $\$480/15 = \32.00 for the holiday.

But what would happen to an employee who is on paid vacation leave prior to the holiday? According to the Act, the vacation days and vacation pay are counted as days worked and wages earned when calculating statutory holiday pay.

Working on a Statutory Holiday

Cooks and other workers in the restaurant and food service industry often work on statutory holidays. It is no surprise that the legislation covers this situation. If you work on the holiday, you must be paid time-and-a-half for the first 12 hours you work and double time for hours beyond 12. You must also be given an alternate day off with pay. If you have a time bank, you may credit the wages for the alternate day.

The employer must schedule the alternate day of paid leave on the earliest of the following:

- Before the employee's annual vacation
- Before the date the employment terminates
- Within six months of the statutory holiday if the wages were credited to a time bank

Employees not eligible for the statutory holiday who work on the holiday may be paid as if it were a regular workday. They are not entitled to the day off. If a statutory holiday falls on a day on which you are not normally scheduled for work, you are entitled to an alternate day off with pay. This day must be scheduled as if you had worked on the statutory holiday.

By agreement between the employer and a majority of affected workers, the employer may substitute another day off for a statutory holiday. For example, the employer and staff may agree to substitute Easter Monday for Good Friday. The Act and the Regulations will then apply to Easter Monday as if it were a statutory holiday. If the employer and a majority of employees have agreed to substitute another day for a statutory holiday, the employer must keep records of this agreement for two years.

Leave from work

Employers must grant employees periods of unpaid absence from work for the following:

- Pregnancy leave

- Parental leave
- Family responsibility leave
- Bereavement leave
- Jury duty

Employees are eligible for unpaid leave as soon as they have commenced employment. Employers are not required to give employees paid leave for illness. If sick leave is paid or allowed, it may not be deducted at a later date from any other entitlement to a paid holiday, vacation pay, or other wages. Employees who are ill for extended periods of time may be eligible for Employment Insurance.

Pregnancy leave

A pregnant employee is entitled to up to 17 consecutive weeks of unpaid pregnancy leave. This leave may start no earlier than 11 weeks before the expected birth date and end no earlier than six weeks after the birth period unless the employee requests a shorter period. If the pregnancy leave is first requested after the birth of a child or after termination of the pregnancy, an employee is entitled to up to six consecutive weeks of leave beginning on the date of birth or termination date.

An initial period of leave may be extended up to six weeks if an employee is unable to return to work for reasons relating to the birth or the termination of the pregnancy.

The employee must apply, in writing, to take a pregnancy leave. The request must be made at least four weeks before the proposed start date. If the employee wishes to return to work earlier than six weeks from the birth date, she must make the request to return at least one week before the proposed start date. The employer may require the employee to provide a doctor's certificate in support of a request for leave or for a leave extension. Pregnancy and parental leaves are unpaid leaves, but you may be eligible for maternity and parental benefits under the Canada Employment Insurance Program.

Parental leave

Parental leave is available to a birth mother, a birth father, or an adopting parent.

A birth mother is entitled to up to 35 consecutive weeks of unpaid parental leave in addition to the pregnancy leave she has taken. If she has not taken pregnancy leave, the birth mother is eligible for up to 37 consecutive weeks of unpaid parental leave. A birth mother will commence her parental leave immediately after her pregnancy leave ends unless the employee and employer agree otherwise. A birth mother who is entitled to up to 37 weeks of leave will commence the leave after the child's birth and within 52 weeks of that event. A birth father is entitled to up to 37 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave beginning after the child's birth and within 52 weeks of the event. An adopting parent is entitled to up to 37 consecutive weeks of unpaid parental leave beginning within 52 weeks after the child is placed with the parent.

Parents must apply in writing for parental leave at least four weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave. An employer may require an employee to provide a doctor's certificate or other evidence that the employee is entitled to the leave or leave extension.

As soon as parental leave ends, the employer must place the employee into the position previously held by the employee or in a comparable position.

Family responsibility leave

An employee is entitled to up to five days of unpaid leave per employment year to meet responsibilities related to the care, health, or education of any member of the employee's immediate family. Under the legislation, *immediate family* means the spouse, child, parent, guardian, sibling, grandchild, or grandparent of an employee, and any person who lives with the employee as a member of the employee's family.

For example, Bart lives in a household with his mother-in-law and children. Bart's mother-in-law has broken her hip and requires surgery. Bart is entitled to family responsibility leave in order to care for her. Susan and Pat live together. In the event of an illness, Pat would be entitled to leave to care for her partner.

Bereavement leave

Employees are entitled to up to three days of unpaid leave on the death of a member of the employee's immediate family.

Jury duty

Jury duty is considered a responsibility of citizenship for all citizens of Canada. Individuals may be excused from jury duty only if a judge feels that the duty would impose undue hardship on the individual and his or her family. An employee who is required to attend court as a juror is considered to be on unpaid leave for the period of the jury duty.

Employment considered continuous

During the time an employee is on unpaid leave, employment is considered continuous for the purposes of calculating annual vacation and termination entitlements, as well as for pension, medical, or other plans of benefit for the employee. An employer must continue to make payments to any such plans unless the employee chooses not to continue with his or her share of the cost of the plan. The employee is also entitled to all increases in wages or benefits which he or she would have received if not on leave.

Conditions of employment

An employer cannot terminate an employee on leave or jury duty or change a condition of employment without the employee's written consent. As soon as the leave or jury duty ends, the worker must be returned to his or her former position or a comparable one.

Consideration for the employer

Whenever possible, it is only considerate to inform the employer as soon as possible when leave is required. For example, if you have been called for jury duty, you will have been given a date on which to appear at the courthouse. Let your employer know so that alternate arrangements can be made for your replacement. Of course, there are times, such as the sudden illness or death of a family member, when it is not possible to notify your supervisor ahead of time. However, you should do your best to call as soon as you can and give the supervisor an idea of when you will return.

Annual vacation

After you have been employed for 12 consecutive months, you are entitled to two weeks of paid vacation. After five consecutive years of employment with the same employer, you are entitled to three weeks. During the first 12 months of employment, the Employment Standards Act does not require that you be granted an annual vacation. However, the terms of employment or a collective agreement may provide additional vacation benefits.

An employer must schedule an employee's vacation in periods of one or more weeks, unless the employee requests otherwise. Vacation must be taken within 12 months of earning it. The employer may use a common date for calculating the annual vacation entitlement of all employees as long as no employee's right to an annual vacation or vacation pay is reduced.

If the company is sold, leased, or transferred during the year, your period of consecutive employment is not interrupted. For example, the restaurant in which Sally works was purchased by another chain and subsequently closed, but she was transferred to another location operated by the purchasing company without any loss of employment. Her period of employment was not interrupted, even though her pay cheques were now issued by another company.

Vacation Pay

In the first four years of consecutive employment, the employer must pay vacation pay of at least 4% of all earnings paid to the employee in the preceding year. In the fifth and subsequent years of employment, the employer must pay vacation pay of at least 6% of all wages paid in the preceding year. Any vacation pay received by an employee is counted as part of the total wages paid in a particular year. Employees who have worked five calendar days or less are not eligible for vacation pay.

If a statutory holiday falls during the period in which the employee is on annual vacation leave, the employee must be given an additional day of vacation leave in lieu of the statutory holiday. For example, Raj is on holiday for two weeks at the beginning of September. This period includes one statutory holiday, Labour Day. He must be given an additional day of holiday at another time or may have a day in lieu of the statutory holiday added to the beginning or end of his vacation period.

Vacation pay is payable at least seven days before the start of the annual vacation, or on regular pay days as agreed to by the employer and employee, or by a collective agreement.

An employer cannot reduce annual vacation or vacation pay because the worker was paid a bonus or sick pay, or was previously given a vacation more than the minimum. However, these vacation entitlements may be reduced if an employee took annual vacation in advance at the employee's written request.

If your employment is terminated before you have taken your annual vacation or if you quit your job, you are entitled to be paid any vacation pay that has accrued since you started work or last took annual vacation. This payment must be made within 48 hours if your employment was terminated or within six days if you quit your job.

Hours of Work

The employer must post notices saying when work starts and ends, when each shift starts and ends, and when meal breaks will occur (Figure 6). For example, a restaurant may have a morning shift that begins at 6:00 a.m. and ends at 2:00 pm. The workers on that shift get a meal break at 9:30 am. These notices must be posted where they can be read by all employees.

Shift changes

In the food service industry, work schedules are often developed with different start and end times for different employees. In addition, the industry is sometimes subject to changes in the demand for service. A restaurant may be unexpectedly busy on a day that is normally quiet. Employees must be given 24 hours' notice of a change in shift unless the employee is paid overtime for the time worked or the shift is extended before it ends. If the employee has not been given the required notice, he or she cannot be penalized for failing to show up for work.

This means, for example, that if a restaurant is extremely busy, you may ask Genevieve, the bus person, to stay for an additional two hours an hour before she finishes her five-hour shift without paying overtime. This assumes that she is not entitled to overtime because of the number of hours she has worked in this pay period or because of a collective agreement.

Meal breaks

After working for five hours in a row, employees are entitled to a half-hour meal break. An employee who is required to work or be available for work during a meal break must be paid for the break. In the food service industry, breaks are often taken between a rush of customers, and a cook may have to cut a break short to cope with new orders. If the cook must be prepared to cut a break short, she or he must be paid for the break, even if on that day the break was not interrupted.

Coffee breaks are not required by the legislation. Employers have the discretion to give coffee breaks. Some collective agreements may specify coffee breaks as part of the conditions of employment.

Split shifts

A split shift is a work pattern in which an employee works for several hours, is off for several hours, and then is asked to work for another period during the same day. When an employee is scheduled for a split shift, the employee must finish for the day within 12 hours of the time he or she began the shift. For example, you could not schedule a dishwasher to come in from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and then again from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on the same day. You could, however, have the dishwasher work from 11:00 to 3:00 and then again from 6:00 to 10:00 for the same number of total hours.

Excessive hours

Employers must not require or allow an employee to work excessive hours or hours harmful to the employee's health or safety. At present, what constitutes excessive hours is not specified in the Act or Regulations.

Minimum daily pay

An employee who starts work must be paid for at least two hours, even if the employee works for a fewer number of hours. If the work is suspended for reasons beyond the employer's control, for example, a power failure due to a storm that cannot be repaired that evening, the employee must be paid for two hours of work or the actual number of hours worked, whichever is greater.

For example, a restaurant is experiencing a very slow night. Normally, this evening would be busy, but perhaps

KITCHEN SCHEDULE								
WEEK OF								
POSITION	NAME	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Baker	Ngomi		6:30-3	7-3	6:30-3	7-3	6:30-3	
Grill cook	Sandra	7-3	7-3	7-3			7-3	7-3
Grill cook	Alphonse	5-12pm	5-12pm	5-12pm	4-12pm			12-9pm
Grill/veg prep	Harry			6:30-3 (vp)	7-4 (G)	7-3(G)	6-3 (call)	6-3 (call)
Veg prep	Vinh	7-3	7-3			7-3	7-3	7-3
Salad prep	Candice			7-3	7-3	7-3	7-3	7-3
Saucier	Peter	7-3	6:30-3	7-3	6:30-3			7-3
Lounge cook	Lupe			10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6
Lounge cook	Fred	10-6	10-6	6-12pm	6-12pm	6-12pm		
Lounge cook	Sylvia	6-12pm	6-12pm			6-12pm	6-12pm	6-12pm
Appetizers	Sally	5-12pm				5-12pm		
Appetizers	Meredith			5-12pm			5-12pm	
Appetizers	Walter		5-12pm		5-12pm			
Salads/ Appetizers	Alexis	3-11pm (S)	3-11pm (S)			3-11pm (A)	3-11pm (A)	3-11pm (S)
Salads	Marcus	5-12pm	5-12pm	3-11pm	3-11pm			5-12pm
Dishwasher	Meilin	6-12pm	6-12pm	6-12pm	6-12pm			6-12pm
Dishwasher	Susan					6-12pm	6-12pm	
Dishwasher	Andrei					6-12pm	6-12pm	
Dishwasher	Lynn	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6	10-6		
Dishwasher	James						10-6	10-6

Figure 6 Sample shift schedule

because of the cooler temperatures, people are staying home. You could be sent home early, but your employer would have to pay you for at least two hours.

If an employee has reported for work but has not actually started work, he or she must be paid for at least two hours if there is insufficient work. The exception is if the employee is unfit for work or does not comply with the health and safety provisions of WorkSafeBC regulations. For example, an employee who shows up for work under the influence of alcohol could be sent home without being paid for a minimum of two hours.

Hours Free from Work

Employees must have at least 32 hours in a row free from work each week. If an employee works during this period, the

employer must pay one-and-a-half times the **regular wage** for the hours worked. An employee is also entitled to have eight hours off between shifts unless the employee is required to work because of an emergency.

For example, a cook has been working from 5:00 p.m. to midnight on a Thursday evening. The cook is due for a break of at least 32 hours. The earliest he or she could be scheduled after the break would be at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning.

Overtime

The standard work day is eight hours and the standard work week is 40 hours. If employees work over eight hours in a day or over 40 hours in a week, they must be paid overtime. The exception is when the employer has implemented a flexible work schedule or if the Employment Standards Branch has granted a variance. Depending on the schedule worked, an employee could be eligible for overtime on the basis of the hours worked in a day, the hours worked in the week, or both. Daily and weekly overtime are calculated separately.

An employer can require you to work overtime as long as the applicable overtime wage rates are paid. In addition, the hours worked should not be excessive or detrimental to the employee's health or safety. *Excessive* is not defined in the Act or Regulations. In the case of a dispute, the Director of the Employment Standards Branch would be required to adjudicate what excessive hours are.

Daily and weekly overtime

After working eight hours in a day, an employee is entitled to time and a half for the next four hours worked, and double time for all hours worked in excess of 12 hours.

After working 40 hours in a week, employees must be paid time and a half for the next eight hours and double time for hours in excess of 48. In calculating the total hours worked for weekly overtime purposes, only the first eight hours worked on each day are counted.

For example, if Mohinder works 10 hours on Sunday, seven hours on Monday, seven hours on Tuesday, eight hours on Thursday, and eight hours on Friday, he has worked a total of 40 hours over the five days. He was also asked to work on Saturday. His employer gave the required 24 hours' notice. For the purposes of calculating weekly overtime, only the first eight hours of each day would be counted. The first eight hours on Sunday would be counted as would all of his shifts on the Tuesday through Friday for a total of 38 hours. He would be paid regular time for the first two hours he worked on Saturday, and after that would receive time and a half. Of course, he would also receive one and a half time (daily overtime) for the extra hours he worked on the Sunday.

In a week with a statutory holiday, an employee who qualifies for the holiday must be paid weekly overtime and time and a half after 32 hours and double time after 40 hours. Any time worked by the employee on the holiday is not included in calculating weekly overtime.

Banking overtime

Employees may request in writing that the employer establish a time bank and credit the employee's overtime wages to the bank instead of paying the wages as they are earned. An employee may at any time request the employer to pay out all or part of the wages in the time bank. The employee may also request time off with pay for some mutually agreed period.

An employee may request that the time bank be closed. If the employee quits, is laid off, is fired, or has requested that the time bank be closed, the employer must pay the full outstanding balance to the worker. All banked wages must be paid out within six months of being earned. If a number of employees have time banks, then the employer can set a common date for paying out the banked time as long as all wages are paid within six months of being earned.

Training

If the employer requires the employee to attend a training or orientation session or attend a meeting outside of the employee's normal working hours, the employee must be paid. The employee may be eligible for overtime, minimum daily pay, or other provisions under the Act. For example, George was required by his employer to attend a one-hour training session on a day he was not scheduled for work. He must be paid for at least two hours (minimum daily pay). If he had already worked 40 hours in that week, then he must also be paid overtime.

Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible work schedules are schedules in which the employees may work more than eight hours on a given day or 40 hours in a given week without being paid overtime. For example, an employer may agree to a four-day work week in which employees work 10 hours each **day**.

This may be beneficial to both employers and employees. Employers may find that scheduling for their opening hours is easier and requires less overtime when a flexible work schedule is used. Employees may enjoy the extra day on which they do not work. Another example is the employer whose employees work nine 8.75 hours days in a two-week period. In one week, employees may work five days for a total of 43.75 hours, but the following week they work only four days (35 hours). The average number of hours per week over two weeks is just over 39 hours.

Workers not covered by a collective agreement

If the workers are not unionized, flexible work schedules must:

- Fit the models permitted by the Regulation
- Run at least 26 weeks
- Be approved by at least 65% of the affected employees
- Be submitted to the Employment Standards Branch within seven days of approval by the employees

Workers must be given an opportunity to hear about the proposed schedule and think about its implications. An information bulletin outlining the proposed schedule must be posted for at least 10 days prior to the approval by employees. Employers may cancel a flexible work schedule at any time. The Branch can also cancel a schedule if it is satisfied that the employer did not follow the procedures in the Regulation or that the employer forced any employees to approve the schedule. The Branch will act only after receiving a written complaint from one of the employees affected by the schedule. A schedule expires two years after it is approved, but may be renewed with the approval of 65% of the affected employees.

Where workers on a flexible work schedule work more than an average of eight hours a day or 40 hours a week over the shift cycle, overtime wages must be paid. For example, James normally works four 10-hour shifts per week. If on one of those days he is asked to work an additional three hours, he would be entitled to overtime for those hours. If he is brought in on a day he does not normally work, he would also be entitled to overtime wages.

Unionized employees

Where workers are covered by a collective agreement, the flexible work schedule must:

- Run for at least 26 weeks
- Consist of a shift cycle of days at work and days off work that repeats over a period of up to eight consecutive weeks
- Allow each affected employee to work an average of at least 35 hours and not more than 40 hours during the shift cycle at the regular rate of pay
- Be approved by the trade union representing the workers affected.

Overtime wages, as required by the collective agreement, must be paid when the employee works more than an average of eight hours per day or 40 hours a week over the shift cycle.

If your employer has a flexible work schedule, records relating to its approval must be kept for seven years.

Averaging Agreements

As opposed to a flexible or alternative work schedule, which is permanent, an employer may decide to use an averaging agreement for a short period of time when the employee's schedule might vary. This could be used in the case of a business trip or an event that might require a few longer days one week and allowing extra time off the following week.

As long as the total number of hours per week do not average more than 40, no overtime pay is required unless the employee works more than 12 hours in any one day, in which case regular daily overtime rates (double the usual hourly rate) will apply.

Averaging agreements can be for a term of one to four weeks and must be agreed to and signed by both the employee and employer in advance. They also must be accompanied by a schedule of anticipated hours over the entire period of the agreement and state the start and end dates of the agreement.

Layoff

Notice is also not required if an employee is laid off temporarily. A temporary layoff becomes a termination when a layoff exceeds 13 weeks in any period of 20 weeks, or a recall period covered by a collective agreement has been exceeded by more than 24 hours. A week of layoff is one in which the employee earns less than 50% of the regular weekly wages averaged over the previous eight weeks. If a temporary layoff becomes a termination, then the date of layoff becomes the termination date. The employee is entitled to the compensation for termination. Any layoff other than a temporary layoff is considered a termination.

Notice of termination

An employee who is terminated by an employer is eligible for compensation based on the length of her or his employment with the employer. The amount of compensation is as follows:

- After three months' consecutive employment, one week's pay
- After one year, two weeks' pay
- After three years, three weeks' pay, plus one week for each additional year of employment up to a maximum of eight years

If an employer substantially alters a condition of employment, the Employment Standards Branch may determine that the employee's employment has been terminated. If the Branch decides that the employment was terminated, the employee is eligible for compensation.

A week's pay is calculated by totalling the employee's wages excluding overtime, earned in the last eight weeks of which the employee worked normal hours, and dividing by eight. As with calculations of annual vacation, the sale, transfer, or lease of the business does not interrupt an employee's period of continuous employment.

Termination pay is required even if the employee has obtained other employment.

Compensation is not required if the employee is given advance written notice of the termination equal in number of weeks to the number of week's pay for which the employee is eligible. An employee cannot be on vacation, leave, strike, or lockout, or be unavailable for work for medical reasons during the notice period. If employment continues after the notice period has ended, the notice is of no effect. Once notice has been given, the employer may not alter any condition of employment, including the wage rate, without the employee's written consent.

An employer may give an employee a combination of notice and compensation equal to the number of weeks' pay for which the employee is eligible.

For example, a hotel has just been sold to a developer who will turn the building into condominium units. The hotel owner employs 37 people including a number of cooks. The cooks have worked for the hotel for varying periods of time, ranging from five months to seven years. The owner has the option of giving the cooks notice of termination seven weeks before the closure of the hotel. One of the cooks was on three weeks' holiday when the deal was signed. This employee, who had five years of continuous employment, could not be given notice. When the employee returned to work, four weeks before the closure, he was given four weeks' notice and 1 week's pay to compensate for the **termination of employment**. Alternatively, the employer could have provided compensation in lieu of notice for all of the employees.

Some examples of the appropriate compensation are as follows:

- Steve, five months of consecutive employment received one week's pay

- Geoff, 13 months of consecutive employment received two weeks' pay
- Anya, three years of consecutive employment received three weeks' pay
- Lupe, seven years of consecutive employment received seven weeks' pay

Notice of termination or pay compensation is not required if:

- The employee quits or retires
- The employee was dismissed for just cause
- The employee works on an on-call basis doing temporary assignments that may be accepted or rejected
- The employee was employed for a definite term provided that the employment was not extended for at least three months after the term was ended
- The employee was hired for specific work to be completed in 12 months or less
- Events or circumstances beyond the employer's control (except bankruptcy, receivership, or insolvency) made it impossible to perform the work
- The employee refused reasonable alternative employment

Some employers in specific industries (e.g., construction) or those hiring persons in some occupations (e.g., teacher) may not be required to give notice or pay compensation on termination of employment.

An employer operating a seasonal resort would not have to give notice or pay compensation at the close of the regular season. The employees would be hired for a specific term ending on the closure date of the resort. If a fire destroyed the resort mid-way through the season, the employer would not be required to give notice or pay compensation because the fire is an event beyond the employer's control. If, on the other hand, the resort was bankrupted during the regular season, while employees were still at work, notice or compensation would be required.

Temporary layoff

Notice is also not required if an employee is laid off temporarily. A temporary layoff becomes a termination when a layoff exceeds 13 weeks in any period of 20 weeks, or a recall period covered by a collective agreement has been exceeded by more than 24 hours. A week of layoff is one in which the employee earns less than 50% of the regular weekly wages averaged over the previous eight weeks. If a temporary layoff becomes a termination, then the date of layoff becomes the termination date. The employee is entitled to the compensation for termination. Any layoff other than a temporary layoff is considered a termination.

Group terminations

When an employer intends to terminate 50 or more employees at a single location within a period of two months, the employer must provide written notice of group termination to each employee affected. The employer must also notify the Employment Standards Branch and any trade union that represents the employees. The length of notice depends on the number of employees to be laid off:

- 50 to 100 employees, at least eight weeks before the effective date of the first termination
- 101 to 300 employees, at least 12 weeks before the effective date of the first termination
- 301 or more, at least 16 weeks before the effective date of the first termination

Employers must give termination pay or a combination of termination pay and notice if the employees are not given the notice by the group termination requirements. If an employee is not covered by a collective agreement, the notice and termination pay requirements are in addition to the requirements based on length of employment.

If the employer is in receivership, bankruptcy, or insolvency, the provisions for group termination do not apply. However, the employee is still entitled to the amount which is payable as a result of length of employment, or the amount payable for an individual termination under the collective agreement, whichever is greater.

Employees covered by collective agreements

If an employee covered by a collective agreement that includes individual termination and **right of recall** provisions is laid off, the employee must choose to be paid the amount of compensation required by the collective agreement or to maintain his or her right of recall under the collective agreement. If the employee chooses to be paid, then the employer must pay that amount within 48 hours. If the employee chooses to maintain the right of recall or does not make a choice after 13 weeks of layoff, the employer must pay the amount required by the collective agreement to the Employment Standards Branch, in trust. Amounts received in trust receive interest and are paid to the employer if the employee is recalled.

If the employee renounces the right of recall or is not recalled to employment during the period required in the collective agreement, the amount held in trust is paid to the employee. Employees who accept employment under the right of recall do not have the right to payment of the money held in trust.

Other laws

Even in cases where no compensation or notice is required under the Employment Standards Act, other laws such as the Human Rights Code and common law regarding termination and wrongful dismissal may apply to a particular termination. Employers are required by federal government legislation to provide employees with a [Record of Employment](#) when they quit or are terminated. They must also issue a [T-4](#) to employees who have income tax, Canada Pension, and Employment Insurance premiums deducted from their pay cheques whether or not they were working for the employer at the end of the year. The T-4 must be issued by February 28 of the following year.

The B.C. Human Rights Code

Discrimination

Canada has signed international agreements that protect human rights. Within Canada, human rights are enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Section 15 of the Charter states that “every individual is equal before and under the laws and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination...” The Charter is supplemented by other legislation at the federal level, such as the Canadian Labour Code.

A few food services may be regulated federally (e.g., catering for railway work crews, cafeterias on military bases, or food services within federal penitentiaries). The provisions of the federal legislation are similar to provincial codes. Complaints related to federally registered organizations are handled by the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

In British Columbia, the Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination:

- In published notices, signs, symbols, and emblems
- In access to public services or facilities
- In purchase of property
- In lease or rental of premises
- In employment advertisements
- In wages
- In employment
- By unions or associations

The legislation also establishes the [British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal](#), which receives and handles complaints. The Tribunal has the authority to mediate agreements between the parties without going through a formal complaint process, investigate complaints, hold a hearing, and make a decision.

Types of discrimination covered

Discrimination based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age, and criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment is prohibited.

For example, you cannot refuse to hire a person who is qualified for the job because he or she comes from a particular ethnic group. Nor can you give preferential treatment to someone because she or he belongs to the same religion as you do.

Exemptions

Non-profit groups formed to promote the interests and welfare of an identifiable group or class of persons may be exempted from the provisions of the B.C. Human Rights Code. These groups may grant a preference to members of the identifiable group or class of persons. For example, an immigrant services society promoting the interests of Vietnamese immigrants to Canada could give preference to a member of that group when hiring staff.

In addition, the B.C. Human Rights Council may approve any program or activity that improves the conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups. Affirmative action or employment equity programs are examples of special programs that improve the employment of disadvantaged individuals or groups. These approved programs and activities will not be considered in contravention of the Code (that is, a violation of the law).

Some examples of exemptions might include:

- An Aboriginal housing society giving preference to First Nations applicants

- An employment equity program developed by a restaurant chain and approved by the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal that improves the employment rates of persons with mental disabilities

Implications for food service establishments

Food service establishments are affected by the legislation in two ways. First, employers must ensure that the terms and conditions of employment are not discriminatory. The terms and conditions of employment include policies and procedures for recruitment and selection, dismissals, layoffs, promotions, and transfers.

Second, food service establishments that are open to the public may not deny service to an individual or a group of persons without a genuine and reasonable justification. For example, an openly affectionate gay or lesbian couple may not be denied service because other guests are offended. An individual who is abusive to other patrons or to the staff, however, may be ejected from the premises because there is a genuine and reasonable concern that the safety and well-being of others is endangered.

A reasonable effort must be made to ensure that premises are accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition to the goodwill generated, improved accessibility will make it easier for all patrons to dine at your restaurant. If the business can show that it would cause undue hardship to renovate a building to make it accessible to wheelchairs, it may be exempted from this requirement.

Employers' Rights

The B.C. Human Rights Code supports the principle that the best person should get the job. Employers have the right to hire, dismiss, promote, and establish conditions of employment that best serve their company's goals. They have the right to:

- Identify specific employment needs and priorities
- Choose the most qualified person for a position
- Set standards for work
- Evaluate workers based on defined job descriptions and performance criteria
- Discipline, demote, or fire incompetent, negligent, or insubordinate employees
- Set employment terms and conditions
- Establish salary and wage scales

Should an employee or customer make a complaint to the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal, employers also have the right to a full and impartial investigation of the complaint.

Employees' Rights

The Human Rights Code protects employees by ensuring that decisions affecting their employment are made based on valid job-related criteria. They have the right to:

- Be considered for any job for which they are qualified
- Be given a clear statement of the skills, experience, and education required for a job
- Be informed of all job duties and performance expectations
- Be given feedback regarding their shortcomings and an opportunity to improve job performance
- Work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment from supervisors, co-workers, or customers
- File a complaint without fear of reprisal

Complaint procedure

If you feel you have been discriminated against or harassed, you can take several forms of action. If you have been

harassed, make it clear to the harasser that his or her actions are unwelcome. You may do this directly or in writing. Advise your employer, if possible. If you confront the harasser in person, take someone with you as a witness and for support.

If the harassment does not stop, or if you feel too threatened to confront the individual:

- Keep a record
- Talk to your fellow employees
- Get more information
- Lay a complaint within your company
- File a complaint with the appropriate Human Rights Tribunal or Commission

More information on bullying and harassment is found below.

Fair Recruitment Practices

Fair recruitment practices attract the widest selection of applicants to the position. If the recruitment practices are unfair or discriminatory, qualified candidates may be discouraged from applying for the job. By relying only on job-related considerations when recruiting and selecting staff, you have the best chance of finding the best person for the job.

Job analysis

Job analysis is a business procedure that companies use to present a clear picture of the nature of a job and the skills and qualifications required. An effective job analysis allows you to determine the skill, effort, and responsibility required of each job. This in turn assists you in recruiting the best person for the job and paying that individual a fair wage.

A job analysis should include:

- A list of all of the job duties and responsibilities an individual is expected to perform
- How frequently each task is performed
- A description of the working conditions and physical environment
- Skills, knowledge, and experience needed to perform the job competently

Bona fide occupational requirements

The process of recruiting staff begins with establishing the job duties and qualifications. When you identify the responsibilities of the job and the qualifications required of the successful candidate, you must ensure that these are bona fide (genuine) *occupational requirements*, which means those requirements that persons should have to enable them to perform a job adequately and safely.

For example, cooks must often work early mornings, weekends, or evenings in order to cover the opening hours of the food services establishment. The minimum qualifications might also include completion of the FOODSAFE course, a professional cook training program, or a Cook Red Seal. These qualifications are acceptable because they do not discriminate against an individual or group of people.

On the other hand, if you excluded an individual because he or she was a member of a particular religious group and you believed that the person would be unwilling to work on Saturday, a day your restaurant is normally open, your actions could be considered discriminatory. Similarly, if you refused to hire a parent of an infant because you believed that the individual would miss work due to lack of child care, this too could be considered discrimination. Such actions could leave you and your employer open to a complaint to the Human Rights Tribunal.

If a requirement might be discriminatory, there should be objective proof (that is, statistics or medical evidence) that the requirement is necessary. Any requirement must be imposed in good faith. *In good faith* means that the requirement is imposed only to meet the demands of the job, not to exclude persons from applying. Sometimes a job may

have a requirement or qualification that prevents individuals or groups from participating. When the requirement or qualification meets certain strict guidelines, it is permitted by human rights law. If you believe that you have a bona fide occupational requirement that may be discriminatory, you should contact the Human Rights Tribunal for information on how best to proceed.

Guidelines for Employers: Applications and Interviews

When gathering information about an individual's ability to perform the job, you should take note of the following guidelines. These guidelines suggest questions that will collect the type of information you require to make informed selection decisions. They also identify the types of questions you should avoid. Asking certain questions could lead to a complaint of discrimination if persons protected by the legislation are denied employment opportunities.

You should note that certain questions that would be considered discriminatory before hiring may be permitted after hiring for the purposes of benefit and insurance plan entitlements.

Age

Before hiring, you may ask whether the individual has reached legal working age. In B.C., the legal working age is 15 years. After hiring, an applicant's age may be asked for benefit and insurance plans. Avoid asking about age in general, or requesting a copy of the person's birth certificate.

Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin

You may ask "Are you legally entitled to work in Canada?" Anyone who is legally entitled to work must be given equal employment opportunity unless there is a legal restriction stating otherwise. Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and individuals who have received a work permit from the federal government are entitled to work. You should avoid asking questions about a person's birthplace or nationality or that of his or her relatives or spouse. Once a person is hired, you may request the social insurance number for income tax, Employment Insurance, and benefit purposes.

Criminal or summary conviction

Inquiries about criminal or summary convictions are discouraged unless the question is directly related to the job duties of the position. If bonding is required, you may ask whether the person is eligible to be bonded.

Bonding means taking out an insurance policy to pay for any losses caused by an employee. In order to be bonded, an individual must have a reasonable record of financial stability and be able to provide at least three character references. A very high debt load on credit cards or an impending bankruptcy could jeopardize your application.

In some types of positions, particularly those where an individual may be working with children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, a criminal record check may be required. Permission must be received from the individual in order to conduct this check. However, if the responsibilities of the position require this, an applicant may be refused hiring if he or she does not consent to the check being made.

Education

Educational requirements should be directly related to the duties of the job.

Physical or mental disability

You may ask the applicant job-related questions concerning his or her ability to perform the essential components of the job. A disability is relevant to the job only if it prevents the person from effectively carrying out the essential job components. For example, you might ask applicants whether they are able to work standing for an entire shift if this is necessary. Do not ask the applicant for a general statement of disability, limitations, or health problems.

Political beliefs

Avoid asking for statements of political beliefs or philosophy.

Religious beliefs

You may ask job-related questions such as whether the individual is available to work for the required work time. For example, if your restaurant is open on Saturdays and Sundays, you may ask the applicant if he or she is able to work on those days. Employers must be reasonable in accommodating the religious needs of employees. Do not ask for statements concerning religious affiliations, religious belief, or church membership.

Sex, sexual orientation, marital/family status

If job mobility or travel is required for the job, you may ask whether the individual is willing to work under those conditions. For example, if you are hiring cooks for a job in a remote mining camp, where cooks typically work for three weeks in the camp and then are returned to their homes for time off, you could explain the arrangements and ask whether the applicant is willing to work in these conditions.

You should avoid questions about

- The applicant's sex or sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and child-bearing plans
- Child care arrangements
- Marital status (single, married, divorced, engaged, separated, widowed, or living common law)

Once you have hired an individual, you may request the information about the person's spouse, children, and dependants required for benefit and pension plans.

Handling Discriminatory Questions in Interviews

If an employer asks questions that are not directly related to bona fide occupational requirements and that relate to the prohibited grounds under the Human Rights Code, he or she may be open to complaints of discrimination by unsuccessful candidates. It should be noted that some questions that might be considered discriminatory before hiring may be asked afterward if there is a legitimate need for the information. For example, an employer may request information about marital status and dependants in order to enroll a person in employee benefit programs.

If you are asked questions that you believe are discriminatory during an interview, you may refuse to answer. Do not automatically assume that the question is threatening.

Consider the following when responding:

- Try to figure out why the question is being asked. Is the individual just being friendly or making conversation? Or has the employer made some assumption about you and your fitness for the job?
- If you are fairly certain you know why the question is being asked, you could say something like "If you are asking whether I can work on evenings and weekends, the answer is yes. In my past two jobs, I routinely worked till 10 at night and on weekends."
- If you are uncertain why the question was asked, you could paraphrase the question in an attempt to clarify it. For example, you could say, "Are you asking whether I am willing to relocate?" You could also take a direct approach: "Could you explain why you are asking this question?"
- Keep calm and be **assertive** in your responses. Losing your temper could cost you a job if the employer was merely trying to make conversation.

Wage Discrimination

Sections of the Act prevent discrimination in the wages paid to employees. Employers who are found to have discriminatory wages may be required to pay employees the difference between the amount the employee was paid and the amount to which he or she was rightly entitled over a 12-month period.

Employers have the responsibility to ensure that sex, race, and other prohibited grounds of discrimination are not a factor in determining wage scales. The best tool in determining wages is the job analysis. This will allow you to assess what skill, experience, effort, and responsibility is required for each job.

Methods of Creating a Discrimination-Free Workplace

Everyone has the right to work in an environment that is free of discrimination and conducive to job performance.

Workplaces in which workers are subject to harassment are unhappy places in which individuals do not perform to the best of their abilities.

Harassment creates a “poisoned” atmosphere that does not contribute to cooperation and productivity. The people targeted for harassment may become ill and over stressed. They may leave the department or workplace in order to escape the harassment. Co-workers may have reduced morale as a result of the lack of respect for others they witness. Ultimately, the effects of a less productive and cooperative workplace are felt by the customers and guests of the establishment. In addition, any mental illness that occurs as a result of workplace bullying or harassment may be considered a workplace injury and therefore subject to a WorkSafeBC claim.

Bullying and harassment

Any physical or verbal conduct by a co-worker, supervisor, or guest that is discriminatory in nature and that offends or humiliates you is bullying and harassment. Although people often think only of sexual harassment, bullying and harassment include any differential treatment of people on the basis of their gender, race, ethnic background, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

Bullying and harassment is a type of discrimination. It can take many forms, including:

- Threats, intimidation, or verbal abuse
- Unwelcome remarks or jokes about subjects like your race, religion, disability, or age
- Displaying sexist, racist, or other offensive pictures and posters
- Disparaging names or comments
- Badgering and constant teasing
- Offensive remarks
- Unwanted touching
- Making someone the constant target of practical jokes
- Sexually suggestive remarks or gestures
- Stereotyping on the basis of the group to which a person belongs
- Unfair sharing of responsibilities
- Physical assault, including sexual assault

Bullying and harassment can consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It is considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.

Inappropriate jokes are sometimes perceived as just having fun. However, even if the person about whom you are joking laughs, it does not mean that he or she enjoys the experience. Jokes of this type can be intimidating and make people ill at ease. They may make people less willing to talk to you because they expect that you will turn their communication with you into more intimidating jokes. Racist and sexist jokes exclude people from your group. They show a lack of respect. They are also harassment.

Constant use of racist or sexist expressions is also harassment. Comments like “he’s a male chauvinist pig” and “women should be kept at home” are unacceptable and may be considered harassment.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is harassment involving unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It can include a promise for reward in exchange for sexual favours. Or it might involve threats, either stated or unstated, that unfavourable consequences will result from not going along with the harassment. These consequences might include being demoted, losing a bonus, not getting the shifts you want, or being denied a promotion. Sexual harassment can also occur without promise of reward or threats. The harassment might make the workplace an intimidating, hostile, or offensive place where an employee cannot work comfortably.

You do not need to intend to harass a person for harassment to take place. Saying “it was just a joke” or “I just meant it as a compliment” are not excuses under the law.

Employers’ obligations

Employers are responsible for any harassment by supervisors, co-workers, or customers that occurs in the workplace. It is the employer's responsibility to:

- Make it clear that harassment will not be tolerated
- Establish a harassment policy
- Make sure that every employee understands the policy and the procedures for dealing with harassment
- Inform supervisors and managers of their responsibility to provide a harassment-free work environment
- Investigate and correct harassment problems as soon as they come to light, even if a formal complaint has not been received

In a food service establishment, supervisors, managers, and owners also have a responsibility to intervene if a guest harasses workers. For example, if a guest attempts to pinch or fondle a food server, and the manager is aware of the situation as a result of a complaint or observing the customer's behaviour, it is his or her responsibility to take action. Ignoring the behaviour or asking the server to ignore the behaviour is not acceptable and could leave the employer open to a complaint to the Human Rights Tribunal or to WorkSafeBC.

Company policies on harassment

A strong policy prohibiting harassment and decisive measures to deal with it are clearly in the corporate interest of the employer.

When a company has a strong policy on harassment and when it ensures that all employees know about the policy, employees get the message that the company means what it says. They also know exactly what to do if they are being harassed.

A typical harassment policy contains:

- A strong statement that the company will not tolerate harassment
- A definition of harassment
- Management responsibility
- Procedures for reporting harassment
- An explanation of the mediation and investigation procedures and the rights of all parties
- A discussion of the sanctions (discipline) that may be applied
- Time limits for complaints

Samples of policies on harassment which companies can use as models are available from the Human Rights Tribunal or from [WorkSafeBC](#).

Checking your own behaviour

Discrimination and harassment in the workplace are serious. They can cost you your reputation or even your job. To ensure that you treat your fellow employees fairly and equitably, you should:

- Monitor your own behaviour to check whether you are being fair or whether you are singling others out for different treatment
- Check for signs of nervousness or discomfort on the part of co-workers, especially subtle cues such as a nervous laugh, shifting eyes, or avoidance of contact
- Check out your observations in a non-threatening way (e.g., "I've noticed that you seem nervous around me. Am I doing something that you find uncomfortable?" said in a pleasant, non-confrontational way)
- Ask for honest feedback from your co-workers about your behaviour
- Be sensitive to the impact your authority or the environment can have on the impact of your words and actions (e.g., many women feel uncomfortable being alone with a man they do not know well)

- Never assume that you know what others think, feel, or how they will react

Physical or mental disability

People with physical or mental disabilities are protected under the Human Rights Code. This protection covers those individuals whose prospects of getting a job and advancing in that job are reduced or affected because of a disability. When hiring, you should evaluate all applicants on the basis of their ability to carry out the essential components of the job. You should:

- Concentrate on the person's capabilities, not disabilities
- Assess persons as individuals, not as members of a group
- Avoid making generalizations about disabilities
- Consider reasonable modifications that people with disabilities need to perform the essential job tasks

Job Accommodations

Modifications to the job or facility to employ persons with disabilities are called *job accommodations*. For example, persons who are hearing impaired may require just a simple light system to alert them to new orders. Often, the person with a disability can tell you exactly what simple job accommodations are needed. Some government funding may be available for more extensive accommodations.

There is also a toolkit available from go2HR (Figure 7) to assist food service employers in assigning modified duties for injured or disabled workers: <https://www.go2HR.ca/resource/go2HR-downloads/full-service-employers-guide-and-toolkit-workplace-injury-management-bc>.

If an employee is already employed when he or she becomes temporarily or permanently disabled, the employer cannot fire, lay off, or demote the person because of the disability unless the individual can no longer perform the essential components of the job. The employer is required to reasonably accommodate the disability. This responsibility is sometimes called the duty to accommodate

Accommodations may include:

- Reassigning non-essential work duties
- Flexible work schedules
- Physical alteration of facilities
- Training
- Technical aids

The B.C. Human Rights Tribunal would look at such factors as how much the accommodation will cost, the size of the workforce, the impact of a collective agreement, and safety considerations.

In addition to the legal requirements of the Human Rights Code, accommodating employees who have been disabled makes sound business sense. If you have to replace an experienced cook, you will have to recruit, select, and orient a new employee. In the meantime, you may be paying overtime to other cooks in order to cover the shift. By the time that the new cook is thoroughly familiar with your kitchen, your investment may be thousands of dollars. In contrast, making job accommodations may cost relatively little and may inspire greater loyalty from all of your employees.

Requirements for public services and facilities

Persons with disabilities have the right to access facilities and to receive services from restaurants, public washrooms, stores, and other places of business. This means that you cannot deny service to a person with a disability. For example, people with physical disabilities that make it difficult for them to feed themselves cannot be denied restaurant service. You should also be careful about jumping to conclusions about the condition of your guests. For

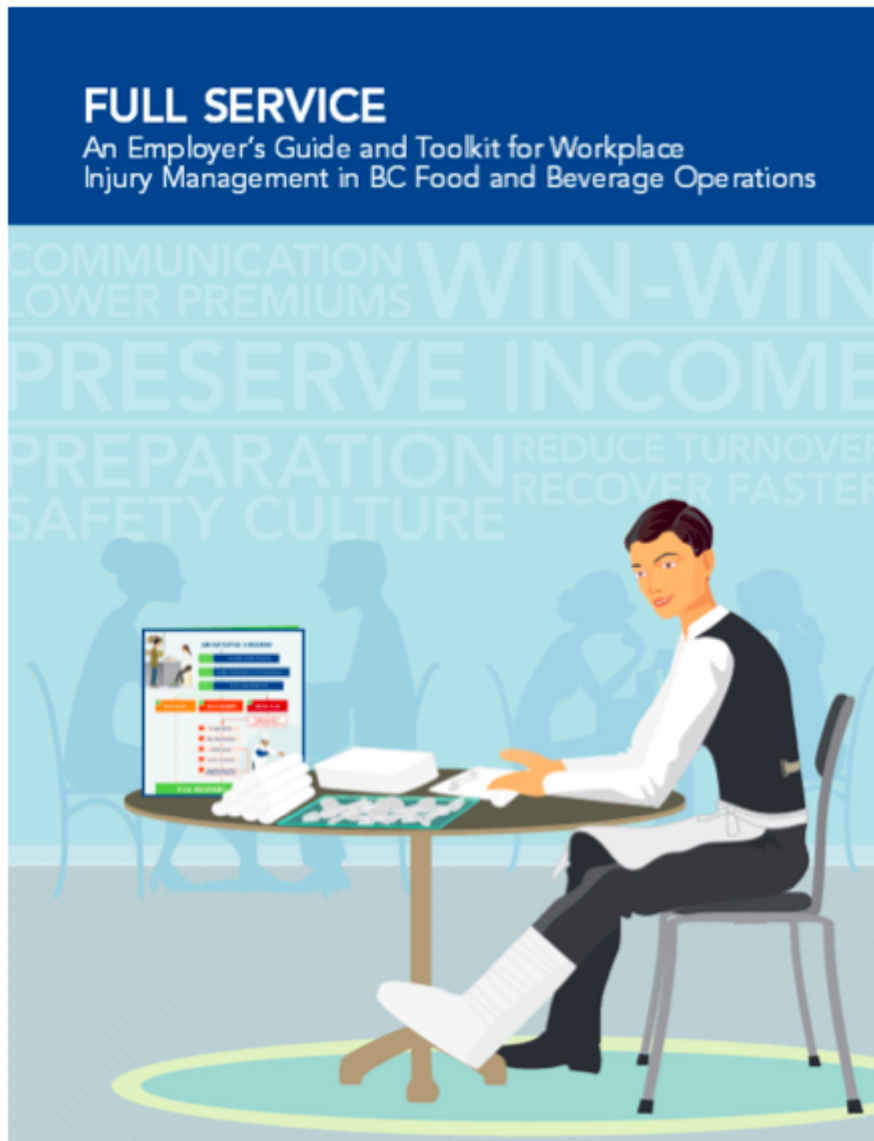


Figure 7 Simple job accommodations can assist a disabled worker and prevent injuries to other staff. Image used with permission of go2HR.

example, people with slurred speech or an unstable gait may not be drunk. They may have a disability that affects speech or balance. If you ask the person to leave thinking that he or she is drunk, you could be the subject of a complaint.

It is sound business practice, and may also be a requirement of your municipality and business licence, to ensure that your restaurant or food service establishment is accessible for persons with disabilities. When choosing a restaurant location or redesigning a facility, consider the following:

- Avoid stairs and unnecessary multi-level seating areas or provide ramps or elevators between areas.
- Space tables and seating far enough apart to allow persons with limited mobility or wheelchairs to pass.
- If the seating is largely fixed (e.g., banquettes), provide some tables with chairs that can be easily removed to accommodate wheelchairs.

- Provide accessible washrooms with lever-style door handles and faucets.
- Check the level of sinks, light switches, pay telephones, towel dispensers, elevator controls, and other items to ensure that they can be reached by a person in a wheelchair.

Advice on how to make your facility accessible and barrier-free is available from municipal engineering departments. If your restaurant is undergoing construction or renovations, you may also have to meet accessibility provisions of the British Columbia Building Code. The municipal engineering department can provide information about these requirements.

Workplace Communication and Teamwork

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe the principles of effective communication
- Use interpersonal communication skills
- Working as a part of a team

No matter what your job is, you need to communicate with other people. To be effective at doing your job, you need to communicate in an effective manner. How do you communicate? Talking is the obvious answer. Much of human communication is talking, but not all. In this chapter you will learn the principles of effective communication, how to best use interpersonal communication skills, and how to work as a team.

Strategies for Effective Communication

First Impressions

Any business that provides customer service relies on good first impressions. When a guest enters your restaurant or food service establishment, the guest makes judgments about the business based on the appearance, grooming, posture, and courtesy of the staff, and the appearance of the business. In other words, these factors communicate a message to the guests about the business and its attitude to guests. These first impressions can colour the guest's perception of the entire dining experience. Once the perception is formed, even if it is faulty, it is very hard to change. You only get one chance for a good first impression (Figure 8).



Figure 8 A friendly smile, spotless premises, and an attractive menu creates a good first impression. Image used with permission of go2HR.

If guests come into your restaurant and see you replacing the hot vegetables on the buffet while dressed in a stained or torn uniform, they may immediately jump to the conclusion that the restaurant staff is sloppy. If the host does not greet them politely when they first come in the door, they may feel that customer service is not a priority. The appearance of the business itself is also part of creating a good first impression. Dirty windows, a tattered menu, untidy service areas, spills on the buffet table, and less than pristine washrooms can create a negative impression.

To create a good first impression of your business, you should:

- Keep all work areas tidy

- Greet guests as soon as they enter, even if seating guests is not your responsibility
- Make eye contact and smile at guests when in the dining room
- Ensure that uniforms are spotless when you enter a public area
- Maintain an erect posture and alert manner

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is an important component of effective communication. Non-verbal communication includes such things as tone of voice, voice quality (nasal, whiny, musical), making eye contact with the person to whom you are talking, paying attention when somebody else talks, body position, distance from the person, and body movement. It is easy to say one thing but to communicate the opposite with your non-verbal communication. When the non-verbal part of your communication is in conflict with the verbal message, others tend to trust the non-verbal message.

For example, if somebody tells you that he or she wants to hear your opinion and at the same time is doing something else, what is being communicated?

Working in the hospitality industry, you will need to communicate with:

- People who supervise you; for example, the **executive chef**
- People who you supervise, such as apprentices, helpers, and dishwashers
- People who are your co-workers in the kitchen
- Other workers in the hotel or restaurant such as servers, hosts, and bartenders
- Guests in the restaurant
- Suppliers

You will probably communicate differently with each of these groups of people. However, effective communication is much the same no matter with whom you are communicating.

Communication is a two-way process. You can talk as much as you want, but if nobody is listening there is no communication. When you first meet others, they will not know how you communicate or anything about you. They will probably expect you to be a reasonable person until you prove otherwise.

To start your relationship off right, and to build understanding with that person, you need to treat them with respect.

Show Respect

If you do not respect the person to whom you are speaking, your language and your non-verbal communication will communicate that. Showing disrespect for somebody will remove their respect for you. People who do not respect one another cannot communicate effectively and may reach the point where they cannot communicate with each other at all. Whatever personal feelings you have about co-workers, you need to communicate effectively with them in order to do your job efficiently and safely. Do not start off on the wrong foot by showing a lack of respect.

This applies to anybody in the company, whether it is your supervisor, somebody who works under you, or somebody who works in another area of the company.

Showing respect for somebody is not difficult. If you treat people how you would like to be treated, respectful communication will come naturally. Here are some additional guidelines to maintain respectful relationships:

- Acknowledge other people's presence with a "hello" or a smile even when you do not need to speak with them
- Remember their names

- Listen when they speak
- Do not intimidate them or make them feel uncomfortable
- Show honesty and consistency
- Show agreement when possible
- Say thank you often
- Offer your help
- Ask advice
- Avoid status battles

A smile is powerful non-verbal communication. A smile welcomes people and makes them feel at ease. It suggests that you do not have bad feelings about them, and that you are willing to listen. A smile acknowledges the presence of others when you do not have time to ask how they are doing or if they are speaking to someone else while you pass by (Figure 9).



Figure 9 A smile is welcoming. Image used with permission of go2HR.

A person's name is central to her or his identity. Greet people by name whenever you can. This will show that you have made the effort to remember who they are, and that you acknowledge their existence. If you have trouble remembering people's names, get into the habit of repeating the name several times to yourself right after you first hear it. You can try to associate names with some aspect of appearance or with another person you know who has the same name. You can write the name down. You can concentrate only on the first name to make remembering it easier. If you know you have to go and see a person whose name you cannot remember, ask somebody what it is.

In Canada today, most people prefer to be called by their first name rather than by their last name or by a title. However, some people prefer more formality. If your boss wants to be called Ms. Lee or Mr. Johnson, then you should

use that name. In many kitchens, it is still the policy to call your supervisor by his or her title; for example, “Good morning, Chef.”

Most people like to laugh. Telling harmless jokes is a good way of having fun together and can help to build a team atmosphere in your workplace. However, jokes that are in poor taste or make fun of people will probably have the opposite effect. Even if the person you are joking about laughs, it does not mean that he or she enjoys the experience. The person may feel awkward about saying anything, but you should know that jokes of this nature can be intimidating and make people feel ill at ease.

Get into the habit of thanking people. Say thank you when they do something for you or bring something to your attention. Thanking people encourages them to do more of the same and makes them feel good about talking with you. Not thanking people when they deserve it will have the opposite effect.

Showing agreement is a good way of making people feel good about talking with you. You do not need to agree with a person’s argument in order to agree with some of his or her statements. You can encourage a person to keep speaking by nodding your head or by saying “yes” to show that you are paying attention.

You will need the help of other people to do your job. Even if it is their job to help you, the way you communicate and establish a working relationship with them will influence how willingly they help you. It pays to help those people from whom you need help. In that way, the help is not all one way.

As long as a statement is a sincere offer of help, the other person will feel less imposed upon. For example, you need the skills of the hotel’s maintenance engineer to repair a faulty ventilation fan in the kitchen. The engineer can do the job alone. You could describe the problem and go do something else. Or you could describe the problem and offer your assistance. The second option shows that you are willing to help, and that you value the work enough to offer your time. You can make people who work for you feel appreciated by asking their advice. Even if you do not act on the advice, you will make that person feel like part of a team. They will be more likely to ask your advice when they need it.

One of the obstacles to communication is believing that the actions of others are attempts to get the better of you. With this kind of attitude, it is easy to interpret all communication in terms of motives and status battles. Keep in mind that the other people are probably as preoccupied with their own situations as you are; they probably do not think about you very much at all. If you find it difficult to accept people’s communication at face value, try going through a few days without assigning any motives to anybody. You will find that communications are much easier as a result.

Listening Skills

A person who talks a lot is not necessarily a good communicator. People who talk a lot may actually be poor communicators because they never stop to listen to you.

If the talker constantly interrupts you, or finishes your sentences for you, the communication is only one way. If somebody constantly interrupts you and tries to finish your sentences for you, you need to keep speaking through the interruption. If he or she continues to interrupt, you need to say, “Please let me finish” in a calm voice, and continue talking.

A good communicator talks about things that are of importance to you, and says them in a way that you can understand. When good communicators are telling you important information, they stop often to ask you whether you have understood so far. Good communicators avoid annoying mannerisms of speech, such as “you know” or “like,” or annoying gestures like playing with a pencil or looking at the clock. A good communicator is someone who practices **active listening**.

Active listening

You can listen about four times as fast as you can speak. It is easy to listen to your own thoughts at the same time as listening to somebody else speak. It is also easy to listen to only your own thoughts while somebody else is speaking. To be an active listener, you must deliberately resist this tendency to let your mind wander. Not only will you remember more of what the speaker is saying, but the speaker will feel that you are listening.

Others will know you are listening through your non-verbal communication, such as your eye contact and posture. You have probably experienced a situation when someone asks, “How are you?” and you reply, “Not too well,” and then you hear “That’s good.” You know you were heard because the response came at the right time. But you also know that you were not listened to. The difference between hearing and listening boils down to choice. You have no choice but to hear, but you do have a choice to listen.

You must be totally involved in listening. You cannot be doing other tasks at the same time. You must block out or overcome all distractions, including those that you generate in your own mind. Active listeners show a sincere attitude. They show attention by not speaking, by facing their body toward you, by leaning forward and by making eye contact at least part of the time. Active listeners have an open posture; their arms and legs are not crossed, and their hands are open. They wait until you have finished. Active listeners let you explain your problem fully and do not rush in with solutions.

When it is time for them to speak, they speak more slowly and softer than usual to show that they are considering what you said. Active listeners will ask for more details on something that you said, which shows that they were paying attention. Active listeners will show understanding by expressing what you have said in different words.

Practise being an active listener by focusing on what the speaker is saying.

Show that you are listening by facing the person and looking at her or his eyes at least part of the time. Tell yourself that you are interested in what others are saying and try to understand their point of view. Do not interfere with your listening by forming your opinions while they are still speaking.

Let the speakers finish their own sentences; do not help slow speakers by finishing their sentences for them. When a speaker has finished speaking or asks if you have understood, repeat what you heard in another way. You can say for example, “In other words, you are saying that...”

Stay focused when you listen

You may be an active listener, but what if the speakers are not good communicators? They may repeat themselves or go on and on about insignificant things. They may have a poor grasp of English or fill their talk with meaningless words. They may be too shy to come out and say what their real problem is.

Some people will repeat themselves because they want to emphasize what they are saying. Others repeat themselves as a cue for you to start speaking. This is a characteristic of some cultures where interrupting others is regarded as normal and not impolite. As an active listener you should keep speakers focused on their subject. If they start to repeat themselves, you can say, for example, “Yes, I understand that,” and ask a question that moves the conversation forward. If they go on about insignificant things, you will need to find out whether they just want to talk, or if they are having difficulty in saying what they need to. You could ask, for example, “How does this relate to the problem in the company?” or, “Is this part of the same problem that we were discussing, or a separate problem?”

When it is clear that the speaker just wants to talk for the sake of talking, you will have to judge whether you have time to chat.

If you do not have time, you will have to let the speaker know. You could say, for example, “I have to get back to work now, but let’s talk again later.” If you do have time, such conversations are a good opportunity to get to know the speaker and establish a better understanding of his or her personality and background. You can respond with similar information about yourself, so that the other person gets to know you better.

People will appreciate if you remember details of their personal life, such as the names of their children, or what sports they enjoy. They will not appreciate hearing detailed accounts of your personal problems. If a speaker is inclined to tell you too much of a personal nature, you should politely make it clear that you are not a willing listener. You could say, for example, “I’d rather not hear about your operation.”

Some people who are poor communicators may rarely speak. When they do speak, they may appear angry or disrespectful to you. Keep your focus. Ask yourself why this person has decided to speak to you now. They may seem angry or disrespectful, but they may still have a message. Ignore the poor communication skills and ask questions that help determine what they really want to say.

Let’s take an example of a restaurant manager who rarely speaks to you. The manager grabs your arm as you pass

by and says, “What’s with the salad bar today; was there a special on wilted lettuce?” The communication is poor; you do not really know what the manager is talking about. You could take insult over this comment as a reflection on how you are doing your job. On the other hand, there may be valuable information to learn. Find out by asking, “Is there a problem with wilted lettuce in the salads?” It may be that the manager has noticed a problem that is reducing the quality of the lettuce in the salad bar.

By finding out what the comment is really about, you may be able to deal with a problem that you had not noticed. As you show your willingness to listen, the people you listen to will show a greater willingness to speak. They will tell you about problems that they notice sooner. On the other hand, if you take poor communications personally and respond by ignoring or insulting the person, those people are less likely to speak to you.

Other Languages and Cultures

Not all of the people who you work with will speak English well. They may be from other countries, or have little education, or both. Because a person does not speak English well, it does not mean that he or she is not intelligent. Think of situations where you did not understand the words being used, perhaps in school or while in another country.

When you speak with people who have a lower level of English than you, imagine trying to speak in their language if you were just learning it. Speak like you would want them to speak to you. Speak slowly. Choose simple words and pronounce them carefully. Watch the person’s non-verbal communication for signs of understanding. Ask simple questions that will give the person a chance to show understanding. Because expressions are usually based on cultural knowledge, avoid using them. Avoid using unnecessary jargon, but do use the jargon that is common in the company. Do not treat the person like a child but as a dignified adult whose knowledge of English is limited. Do not raise your voice. A lack of language is not a hearing problem.

When you adjust the way you speak so that people who do not speak English well can understand you, both they and you will benefit. Those people will be able to do their job better because they understood your instructions. They will work more safely because they understand the situation or procedure better. They will appreciate your effort to communicate with them and respond better to your demands.

The way that we communicate depends on our culture. Language is a big part of culture, and so is non-verbal communication. In some cultures, it is insulting to make eye contact or to stand in front of the person you are speaking to. In others, it is good manners to speak very loudly. Many cultures have different norms of communication for women, men, older people, and younger people. When speaking to people from different cultures (Figure 10), keep in mind that their norms of communication may be different from yours. What you think is a sign of disrespect may actually be the opposite — a sign of respect in that person’s culture. You may need to ask them what the meaning of certain non-verbal communication actions means to them, and explain the meaning in your culture.

Communicating in a Noisy Environment

A busy kitchen in the midst of meal service can be a noisy environment in which it is hard to understand speech.

You will need to speak more loudly, but avoid shouting because shouted words are more difficult to understand. Be sure to face in the direction of the person to whom you are speaking because the sounds you produce are loudest in front of you. Be sure that the person is looking at you so that the sound can easily reach both ears, and so your facial and body expressions can be read. Support what you are saying with appropriate gestures, such as pointing at the objects to which you are referring. Often there are specific gestures used in the company for certain actions: a kind of local sign language. Be sure to learn what these gestures mean and use them whenever you speak in a noisy location.

For longer conversations or when you must be sure that the listener has understood you, go to a place where there is less noise.

You may meet people who do not hear very well because of hearing damage. A person who is deaf in one ear may never tell you, but may always stand to one side during conversations. Be sure to give those people a chance to take their



Figure 10 Different cultures may communicate differently from you. Image courtesy go2HR

preferred position before speaking to them. Not all people who have hearing damage know that they do or want to be reminded of it. Be aware of how loudly they speak and adjust the volume of your voice to match theirs.

Making Oral Reports

You will need to make oral reports to other staff, such as the executive chef or restaurant manager (Figure 11). For example, you might have to report on the condition of some equipment or explain your actions regarding a problem with a restaurant supplier. You will also need to make oral reports to people who work under you, such as apprentices or salad preparation staff. For example, you might have to explain the preparation of a new menu item.

An effective oral report has the same parts as an effective written report, namely an introduction, a body (or explanation), and a conclusion.

In the introduction, you must get the listener's attention and introduce the subject. For example, "I am having a problem with the appearance of the Caesar salads, and I could use your help." The listener now knows what the conversation is going to be about, and that attention must be paid because he or she will need to get involved.

Compare the above with this opening line: "Why is there too much dressing on the Caesar salads?" The listener is being asked to find solutions for a situation that you have barely begun to describe. The listener does not know whether you are asking for help or just educating yourself on something that you have been wondering about.

In the body of your oral report, identify the key points or ideas of the subject matter. Put them in a sequence that makes sense, and join the key points in a logical manner that your listener can follow. The more points you try to make, the harder it is for the listener to follow you. In the case of an equipment breakdown, it would probably be most effective to describe the problem in the sequence that it came to your attention and what you have done about it so far. If the



Figure 11 You will need to make oral reports to other people who work in the restaurant. Image courtesy go2HR

listener interrupts you to start offering solutions before you have finished, you could say “Let me explain what I’ve done so far to give you the whole picture.”

In the conclusion, summarize your main points. This is a chance to re-emphasize those points, but do not repeat everything you have already said. For example, “I do not know enough about this convection oven to know how to prevent the vol-au-vents from being lop-sided. Can you help me with it?”

Using the Telephone

Communicating on the telephone can be more difficult than speaking in person because many of the non-verbal cues are missing. When dealing with guests and other outsiders, it is particularly important to create a good first impression of your business. This first impression is created almost solely by your voice. For example, if you pick up the phone and bark “Yo” into the receiver, the caller is likely to be put off by your offhand manner and tone of voice. The caller may wonder whether he or she has reached the right number.

To communicate effectively on the telephone, follow these tips:

- Answer the phone quickly, within three rings.
- Use a pleasant tone of voice when answering telephone calls. Avoid sounding harried, angry, or distracted.
- Greet the caller and identify the business and yourself. For example, you could say “Pleasant Stay Hotel kitchen. Carl speaking.”
- Keep a message pad and pen handy when you take calls.

- Do not carry on a conversation with someone else while you are on the phone. If it is necessary to speak to someone else, excuse yourself or offer to call back at a more appropriate time.
- If there is an uncomfortable pause on the other end of the phone, ask for clarification: “Is there anything else I can help you with?”
- Summarize the conversation at the end. For example, if you have taken a reservation for dinner, you might say, “I’ve made a reservation for February 12 at 7:00 p.m. for eight people under the name of Smith.”
- If you have to put someone on hold, ask the person to hold and wait for a response.
- Return to calls placed on hold quickly, and thank the person for waiting.
- If you have to transfer the call to someone else, explain that you are transferring the call to a person who can help and state the name of the person to whom you are transferring the call. Give the person to whom you are transferring the call a brief summary of the caller’s request so that the caller does not have to repeat the request.
- Be prepared when you make calls. Have a plan of what you will say. Have everything you need for the call at your fingertips. For example, if you are phoning in an order to a supplier, make sure that you have the restaurant account number, a list of the items you require, order numbers, the quantity needed, and other information beside you when you call.

Giving Directions and Feedback

A form of oral report that you will have to make if you supervise other people feedback on others’ performance. Feedback can be constructive or destructive. As these words imply, only constructive feedback serves any useful purpose. When you must give feedback on someone’s work, keep these tips in mind:

- Focus on the work performance, not on the person
- Be objective and descriptive rather than too personal
- Start by mentioning things that the person is doing well
- Keep the feedback to the point
- Focus feedback on two or three things that the participant might be able to change in a short period of time
- Give feedback as soon as possible after an event
- Focus feedback on something a person can do something about
- Never criticize a person in front of guests or other staff
- Give the person a chance to comment

If you are responsible for the work of others, you will be checking that they do it correctly. You may find fault with some of their work even if they perform most of their job well. If you mention only the faults, the message is that they are doing everything wrong. By mentioning the things that they are doing right, they will better accept some things could be improved.

Take an example where the apprentice under your supervision is making pastries. Destructive feedback would be, “Are you stupid or something? The oven needs to be preheated before you put the pastries in to bake!” Do not use blaming words or indulge in name calling (“You are so...”). When people feel blamed, they often tune out of the discussion and do not hear your positive suggestions for improvement.

Less destructive, but still not constructive, feedback would be, “You did not preheat the oven before you baked the pastry. You must make sure the oven has reached..”

Now compare this constructive feedback: “Phil, you’re doing a good job with the pastry. They have a neat, attractive

appearance and are well browned. I'm not sure you understand how critical the preheat time is. The quality of the finished product could be improved by..."

Tell people what they are doing right

Phil will feel good about your directions because he was told about the things he is doing right. It is a good idea to tell people about the things that they are doing right on a regular basis, not just when you are giving feedback. That way you encourage them to keep doing those things right. You also make such people feel good about speaking with you, so they will accept your directions easily when it is necessary. You do not need to say good things in private. Most people enjoy being praised in front of others.

Give feedback that is specific and descriptive

Give feedback that is concrete and specific. Your directions should tell the person exactly what she or he is doing well and what needs improvement. For example, saying, "You did a good job on the buffet tonight" may make the apprentices feel good, but it will not help them understand exactly what you feel was performed well. You could provide more information by saying, "You did a good job of serving the roast beef tonight. You sliced the beef thinly and evenly, and you always asked the guests for their preferences before serving."

Focus on the behaviour that needs changing

Keep the discussion focused on the behaviour that needs changing. Often when people are uncomfortable about giving or receiving criticism, they change the subject or bring up the past. If you are uncomfortable, you might share your feelings. This may help put them at ease, and let them know that you are honestly struggling with being direct.

Give suggestions for improvement

Provide specific suggestions on what you would like done in future. For example, you might say, "In future, I would like you to consult me before you make changes in the recipe." Or you might say, "Tomorrow, could you check that the vegetables are refilled promptly? Tonight, the line was slowed because there was no broccoli left in the steam trays."

Give criticism in private

Always give criticism in private. When people are criticized in public, they may feel belittled or humiliated. It is especially important not to criticize staff in front of guests. Guests may be very embarrassed for the staff member. Their embarrassment may ruin their enjoyment of an excellent meal.

Provide opportunities for the person to respond

Ask the person for her or his reaction or comments about the criticism. There may be an explanation for the problem. For example, an equipment malfunction may be responsible. Treat the criticism as a problem that you and the employee will work on together. Do not treat the employee as the problem. Blaming will not give results.

Handling Criticism

It is often difficult to receive criticism. When your behaviour is criticized, it is easy to take it very personally, especially if the person giving the criticism is angry, frustrated, or blaming. Constructive criticism can provide you with feedback that can help you improve your skills, so it is important to pay attention to the criticism you receive.

Sometimes lack of feedback can create difficult situations at work. If your supervisor is reluctant to provide direction, you may not know that you are doing something poorly. You think that everything is all right with your work. At the same time, your supervisor may be getting more and more upset about your performance. Finally, the supervisor blows up. You cannot understand why the supervisor is so angry. You feel justifiably upset that nothing has been said before.

If you are not getting constructive criticism about your work, it is helpful to ask your supervisor for specific feedback. You might say, "I'm not sure that I am completing the *mise en place* in the way you would like. What suggestions do you have for me to improve my work?" By asking for feedback, you are indicating to the supervisor that you want to do a good job and constantly improve your skills.

The following tips will help you make best use of the suggestions you receive for improving your work:

- **Relax and pay attention:** Relax and listen carefully to what the other person is saying. Taking a few deep breaths may help you overcome your anxiety.
- **Paraphrase the criticism:** Repeat what you have heard in slightly different words so that the other person knows that you have heard and understood what was said. For example, you might say, “You would like me to pay more attention to the levels of the vegetables on the steam tray, and refill them before they are empty.”
- **Decide whether the criticism is fair:** Decide whether the criticism is fair or unfair. If you feel the criticism is unfair, question the matter of unfairness rather than the criticism itself. For example, you might say, “I know it is important to keep the buffet line moving, but so many people want roast beef that I find it difficult to refill the vegetables when it is needed.” In other words, treat the complaint like a problem to be solved by you and your supervisor, not as a personal attack.
- **Ask for clarification:** If the criticism is vague or unclear, ask for an explanation or specific examples. For example, if a server tells you that the soup does not taste right, you could ask, “Can you explain what you mean by ‘does not taste right’? Is it too salty or too highly spiced?”
- **Ask for suggestions:** If the criticism is fair, ask for specific suggestions or alternatives for improving your performance. For example, you might ask, “Can you suggest a better way for me to handle orders that are shorted?”
- **Admit your mistakes:** Do not go into long, self-critical, or rationalizing excuses. Admit your mistakes. For example, you might say, “Yes, I did not notice that today. I will do my best to watch for it tomorrow.”
- **State your opinion if you disagree:** If you disagree with the criticism, respond with statements that begin with “I” rather than “you.” I statements give an opinion, which may differ from the other person’s. They are less likely to be perceived as blaming. For example, you might say, “I think that you misinterpreted what I said.” If you say “You misinterpreted what I said again. You’re always doing that,” you are likely to get into a shouting match with the person that will leave hard feelings on both sides and not resolve the problem.
- **Respond calmly:** When responding to someone who is speaking loudly, quickly, or angrily, keep your voice low and speak slowly. The other person is more likely to slow down and become more reasonable. If you respond angrily or loudly, the confrontation is likely to escalate. This does not mean that you have to act in a humble or submissive manner. You just need to stay calm and focused on the problem.
- **Share your feelings:** If you find yourself getting angry or upset, take a few deep breaths before you respond. It can be helpful to share your feelings about the criticism. You could say, “It is not easy for me to take criticism,” or “I am feeling annoyed that you are bringing up this issue again.”

Work Behaviours

Assertive Behaviour

When you are **assertive**, you express your feelings, thoughts, and wishes clearly and directly. You stand up for your own rights without infringing on the rights of other people. You disagree when you think it is necessary. You are willing to modify your own behaviour in order to allow others to meet their needs. When you are treated badly by others, you are willing to set limits on the behaviour you will permit. An assertive person is cooperative and believes that compromise and communication will help all to reach their goals. Being assertive does not mean being **aggressive**.

Assertive behaviour is based on a set of rights and responsibilities that is a little different from what you might have learned within your family. For example, many people believe that it is selfish to put your needs before someone else's. They may believe that it is shameful to make mistakes or admit to them. In contrast, assertive behaviour is based on a belief that you are an adult with these alternatives and legitimate rights:

- To act in your own interest
- To respect and stand up for yourself
- To express ideas, beliefs, and honest emotions
- To ask for what you want
- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To make mistakes

Of course, rights are also balanced with responsibilities. Assertive individuals:

- Respect and honour these rights for others
- Take responsibility for their own behaviour
- Take responsibility for their own mistakes

Components of Assertive Behaviour

Being assertive involves more than just what you say. It includes a set of non-verbal behaviours and a set of feelings about oneself.

Eye contact

Looking directly at a person when you are speaking shows that you are sincere, that you are interested in the conversation, and that you are sure of what you are saying. Looking away or down, or shifting your eyes constantly may convey the message that you lack confidence or are insincere. Staring or glaring at the person may indicate aggression.

Posture

An assertive individual stands or sits with an erect posture and maintains an appropriate distance from the person being addressed. Slumped posture, a hanging head, and moving away from the person being addressed may be interpreted as non-assertive. Moving in too close or leaning over the person may convey aggression.

Gestures

Threatening gestures such as a pointed finger or a clenched fist may intimidate the person being addressed. Conversely, gestures such as wringing hands, biting nails, or other nervous mannerisms may create the impression of passivity. When you are assertive, you either leave your hands by your sides or use appropriate gestures.

Facial expression and voice

A pleasant, steady, and strong speaking voice accompanied by facial expressions that are appropriate to the verbal message tells the other person that you mean what you say. A quivery, faltering voice that can barely be heard and an inappropriate expression may convey a message that will not be taken seriously even if the verbal part of the message is assertive.

“I” messages and observations

Assertive persons use “I” statements that indicate what they feel, think, and want. These statements begin with the word “I.” They include clear, direct observations about specific incidents and events. They do not make sweeping generalizations or vague, indirect statements that force the other person to guess the problem. They do not mislabel their inferences and conclusions about the behaviour of others as facts. They avoid laying blame or making judgments about the behaviour of others.

For example, James has come into work for three nights in a row and discovered that the kitchen was not thoroughly cleaned at the end of the previous shift. The next night, he makes a point of coming in a little early so that he can talk to the person who works on the previous shift.

Here are three possible approaches he could take:

- **Aggressive:** (shouting) “What an inconsiderate slob you are! The kitchen is always a pigsty when I come in to work.”
- **Assertive:** (calm) “I noticed the stove and countertops were not clean when I came in for work the last three nights. I felt very angry because I make a point of leaving the kitchen spotless each night.”
- **Passive:** (whining) “Is there some problem going on during the day that I should know about?”

Notice that the first approach is bound to lead to **conflict**, with someone winning the fight and the other person losing. It blames the other person for leaving the kitchen untidy, and assumes that the person is inconsiderate and a slob. It ignores the possibility that the restaurant was extraordinarily busy at lunch, that the kitchen was understaffed, or some other reasonable explanation. If there was a reasonable explanation (e.g., “My mother is dying and I’ve been rushing off to spend time with her”), James will likely feel like a heel for having been so judgmental.

The assertive approach is objective and informative. It allows James to express his feelings about what happened. It is more likely to get a positive response than the aggressive approach.

The passive approach (see below) forces the day staff to figure out what the problem is. James is not being clear and direct. By the time the problem is identified, everyone might be frustrated and angry.

One common approach that does not appear to fit into the above categories is to complain about the behaviour to others but not address the situation directly. For example, James might complain to the other staff working the evening shift. This may defuse some of his anger about the condition of the kitchen, but it does not solve the problem. It is also a passive approach. Over time, this approach leads to a build-up of hostility between the staff on the different shifts. Staff may indulge in various petty acts to get back at the other shift for their perceived shortcomings. In the end, the customer suffers. An active, assertive approach to solving conflict works best for everyone. It can be awkward to do but in the end it is the best approach for all parties involved.

Aggressive Behaviour

In contrast, some people behave aggressively. They pay little attention to the rights and needs of others. They achieve their goals at the expense of others. In communication, they may shout, threaten, and bluster to get their own way. They may humiliate other people by their communication and actions. They are highly competitive in their behaviour and believe that they can only win if others lose.

There are times when it is appropriate to be aggressive. For example, when your life is being threatened or when faced with an emergency, it is important to react swiftly and firmly. There is no time to think about consulting others and meeting their needs.

Passive or Non-Assertive Behaviour

Passive or non-assertive persons are not in control of their own destiny. They do not stand up for their own rights and may be taken advantage of by others. By allowing others to choose for them, they give up the opportunity to reach their own goals. In communication, non-assertive persons are often inhibited and indirect. They do not say what they feel or need, although they may try to express these needs indirectly. They often accommodate others or give in to others. They may feel frustrated, unhappy, or hurt in the process.

There may be times when it is appropriate to be passive. For example, if you have made a serious and costly error that could cost you your job, you should probably be prepared to hear out your supervisor without being assertive or aggressive.

No one is consistently assertive. You may be assertive with your co-workers, passive or non-assertive with your boss, and aggressive with your youngest brother or sister. Often people find it very difficult to be assertive when they are dealing with a stranger or someone in a position of authority. By learning and practising assertive behaviour, you can expand the number of situations in which you respond assertively. You can choose when to act assertively and when not to.

Working as a Part of a Team

The goal of restaurant and food service establishments is to provide high-quality meals and excellent service to customers while staying within food and labour costs so that the operation can make a profit. This goal can only be achieved with the cooperation and support of all of the staff. Just as a football franchise only succeeds when the players and staff form a cohesive team, so too does a restaurant succeed only when the staff forms a working team.

Teams invariably outperform individuals if they are working effectively. When groups come together to solve a problem, they come up with more creative and flexible solutions than could individuals. In a restaurant, excellent food and service is always a team effort. If the meal is not well prepared or if the service is poor, the customer may not enjoy the dining experience. All members of the team have a role in making the customers experience memorable.

Cooks often think only of the team in the kitchen. The kitchen staff members may think of themselves as a team ("us") allied against the front of house staff ("them"). The kitchen staff on other shifts, management, and other components of the operation may also be considered "them." This is not productive in a well-functioning restaurant. The staff may believe that if only "they" were more understanding, worked harder, or knew what it was really like, "we" could do the best job. Of course, this same thinking is prevalent in the other groups except in reverse.

The flaw with this thinking is that it pits one group against the other. It contributes to poor customer service. Petty jealousies and conflicts can lead to various schemes to get the better of the other group. This is an immature way of looking at your workplace and unfortunately the customer will suffer. Being part of a team means being respectful to all other members for their particular role and duties. When the entire group sees itself as having a common set of goals to achieve, and each member of the team understands his or her contribution to the overall team effort, the best results are achieved.

Characteristics of effective working groups

Groups that work effectively have the following characteristics:

- Group members share a sense of purpose or common goals that each member is willing to work toward. Members feel that they played a role in determining these goals and the methods used to achieve them. When a task is accomplished or the demands of the situation change, the group can change its focus or direction to meet the new goals.
- The group is concerned not only with the task, but also with its own processes and operating procedures. The group periodically evaluates its performance.
- The group members use one another as a resource. The group willingly accepts the influence and leadership of members whose resources are relevant to the immediate task. Roles are balanced and shared to ensure that the tasks are accomplished and that group cohesion and morale are enhanced.
- Communication is clear and direct. Group members continually try to listen to and clarify what is being said and show interest in what others say and feel. Differences of opinion are encouraged and freely expressed.
- The group focuses on problem solving rather than expending energy on competitive struggles or interpersonal issues. The group is willing to deal with conflict and focus on it until it is resolved or managed in a way that does not reduce the effectiveness of the group and its members. Confrontation is accepted as a challenge to examine one's behaviour or ideas. It is not viewed as an uncaring personal attack.

- Mistakes are seen as sources of learning rather than reasons for punishment. This encourages creativity and risk taking.
- The group has a clear set of expectations and standards for the behaviour of group members.
- Developing a climate of trust underlies all of these elements. In order to trust one another, individuals in a group must understand and get to know one another.

Stages of group development

Groups go through a set of predictable stages of development. In 1965, Bruce Tuckman, who carried out research on group dynamics, identified the four stages as forming (getting to know each other); storming (initial confrontation as group members identify their differences); norming (coming together to work for the benefit of the team); and performing (working well together with a process to deal with any differences of opinion and reassessing to look for opportunities for improvement). (Tuckman, 1965)

- **Forming:** When a group is first formed, individuals wait and see what is going on. They are unsure of their role and concerned about how they will fit in. They want to belong to the group, feel accepted, and find out what the task is. If you think for a moment, you will probably remember feeling like this on your first day of work. The supervisor or leader can help at this stage by providing a comfortable and structured environment. Ensure that each person is introduced and there is an opportunity to get to know one another. Be clear about goals and expectations.
- **Storming:** During the confrontation stage, individuals in a group begin to struggle to establish their place in the group. They may challenge the leadership of the group or the group boundaries. They may also, for the first time, express disagreement or impatience with the task or group process. At first, the leader may wonder why the group, which seemed to be working well, now seems to be in trouble. This stage is healthy because group members feel comfortable and trusting enough to air conflicts which previously had been kept hidden. The supervisor needs to provide time to deal with issues as they arise and avoid the temptation to “put the lid on” the conflict. Healthy dissent leads to better problem solving and better cooperation. If you prevent conflict from being expressed, it may continue to fester under the surface, causing greater problems later on.
- **Norming:** At the working stage, groups have developed methods of dealing with task and process and can work effectively together. People become more tolerant of differences in the group and encourage self-expression. The group can accept and build on one another’s strengths, sharing tasks in the most productive way.
- **Performing:** During maturity, the group continues to cooperate to resolve issues and accomplish objectives. The group can stagnate and become less effective if new challenges and opportunities do not arise. Perhaps you have worked in a restaurant where the entire working group has been together for a couple of years. The group works together well, but unless there are new challenges, such as a new menu or an expansion, the situation can become boring. When group members are bored and unchallenged, their performance may decline and conflicts between members may start to dominate the working of the group.

During reassessment, members examine their performance and working processes. They begin to provide honest feedback which is not always positive and begin to share ideas that might create conflict. As a result of this examination, the group can continue to develop its effectiveness.

Work groups are constantly being formed and reformed as new staff members join and others leave. New members of the team have the same needs as new groups. Because the team has a different membership, the whole group may

revert to an earlier stage of development. This is especially true if the new team member has a position of authority over other members. A good leader always watches for signs that the group needs more structure or a new challenge.

This sense of teamwork is not something that just happens; it is created through good communication, leadership, caring for individuals as people, and an understanding of group process.

Roles of group members

Members of a work group fall into two categories. Initiators are the people who speak up first and generate ideas. They contribute their knowledge of relevant information and experience and give opinions. Responders listen and respond to suggestions they have heard. They evaluate information, criticize proposals, and ask questions. They play an important role in developing the ideas put forward by initiators.

As the group process continues, members switch back and forth between the roles. Both roles are important for group function. Groups need a balance between these roles. If there is only idea generation, the result will be a contentious, unruly group that is too divided to make up its mind. If there is too much emphasis on **criticism** of contributions and evaluation of ideas, the group may not come up with any new and innovative ideas to try. Maintaining a balance is the role of the group leader.

Barriers to group performance

In an effective group, the purpose of the group takes precedence over the needs of individuals. When individuals place their needs ahead of those of the group, they act as a barrier to performance. These people can be classified as:

- Aggressors who want to win or exert power
- Defeatists who feel that the problem is insurmountable, and sometimes, demoralize the group and sabotage the group process
- Stars who have to be in the limelight all the time, even when not making a contribution
- Storytellers who keep lapsing into asides and irrelevant conversations
- Clowns who just want to get attention and laughs
- Dominators who want to run things more than they want to solve the problem
- Axe-grinders who relate everything to their pet peeve

Perhaps you can think of one or two people with whom you've worked who fit into these categories.

Good communication

Good communication always leads to better cooperation. Communication that is honest and assertive tells the listener what you need. It does not expect the listener to read between the lines. When appropriate, it also expresses feelings about the situation. When problems arise, honest communication allows them to be resolved in a mature way.

When you deal with problems in an aggressive manner, the situation may appear to be resolved in your favour initially, but the other person will likely have hard feelings and resentments. If you deal with problems by giving in to others even though you feel your position has some validity, or when you complain to others but not to the persons involved, you may also begin to feel resentments. Over time, hard feelings and resentments may continue to build over a series of small incidents.

Leadership

Leadership is important in a team. A good supervisor is a leader who can bring the group together and build an environment in which the team can work together effectively. A leader acts as a:

- Representative of management
- Role model
- Problem solver
- Motivator

- Manager of daily operations

A group leader does not have to perform all of these functions all of the time. Some of the most effective leaders lead from behind. They lead the group unobtrusively, sharing the responsibilities and rewards of leadership.

That does not mean that they do nothing. They work hard at “catching people doing it right” and acknowledging their efforts. They value the contributions of others and share decision making. They also recognize when it is important to step in and take charge.

A successful leader has the ability to influence employees by making suggestions and guiding discussion. Every supervisor has legitimate power, which is the authority associated with being a boss. In addition to this authority, effective leaders have a second type of power: the power to influence or persuade people. This power depends on the employee’s acceptance of the supervisor as a person who makes sound judgments and merits respect.

Influence is a very potent form of power (Figure 12). Employees may obey the requests of an authority, but they will go above and beyond the call of duty for someone with influence. Of course, a supervisor needs both authority and influence. If the supervisor has no authority to make decisions, he or she will be unable to create a climate in which work can be performed. In turn, he or she will not enjoy the respect and acceptance that creates influence.



Figure 12 Influence builds active participation and cooperation. Image used with permission of go2HR.

Successful leaders combine a focus on task (getting the job done) with a commitment to helping employees achieve their personal goals. If a supervisor concentrates only on accomplishing tasks, he or she will be perceived to be uncaring and unsupportive. Employees may feel that they are not appreciated for their unique skills and interests.

If, on the other hand, the supervisor concentrates only on making employees feel comfortable and fostering a pleasant work environment, the tasks for which the group is responsible may not be accomplished. The owner of the company will not get the necessary job performance. Profits and customer service will suffer. Although you might expect employees to be satisfied, they will not have a sense of accomplishment in their work. Morale will suffer.

Leadership styles

The style of leadership that supervisors use can be categorized into four types:

- Authoritarian
- Passive
- Bureaucratic
- Participative

Authoritarian leaders plan, organize, coordinate, control, and direct in a very commanding manner. They make the decisions and expect their subordinates to obey. Most military units function under this type of leadership. This does not mean that the leader is not concerned about the welfare of the staff. This type of leader may be a caring individual, but may feel that he or she is in the best position to judge what is best for the staff being supervised. He or she may be like the wise and caring father in a traditional family.

Passive leaders do not want to face conflict. They avoid situations where decisions have to be made or they have to interact with others. They have little concern for either people or production. This style of leadership is seldom appropriate in the type of situations encountered in the food service industry.

A bureaucratic leader expects employees to put in an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. He or she expects everyone to play by the rules. The results may be predictable, but this type of leadership does not foster creativity or initiative.

Participative leaders believe that participation in decision making is the key to achieving the company's goals. In today's world, where most people have a strong streak of individualism, this style may complement the personality and needs of employees well.

However, this does not mean it is appropriate in all situations. For example, an authoritarian style will likely be most effective in an emergency. If there is a fire in the restaurant and the customers and guests must be evacuated, someone needs to take charge quickly. There is no time to consult with staff and arrive at a consensus about what approach should be taken.

The style you choose should reflect the needs of a situation, taking into consideration your personality and the needs of your employees. When you have chosen a style (or one is imposed from above), do not attempt to disguise it. For example, authoritarian leaders sometimes wish to appear more participative. They make a pretense of consulting with others, when in fact a decision has already been made. This only angers and confuses their subordinates.

Here are some tips on being an effective leader:

- Be clear about your expectations of employees. Expect excellent performance and customer service. Let employees know that you have confidence in them.
- Share the responsibilities of the job and the credit for a job well done. Praise employees on work well done (Figure 13).
- Give honest feedback to help employees improve performance. See mistakes as an opportunity to grow and develop.
- Earn respect by modelling appropriate behaviour and exercising self-discipline.
- Be positive and encouraging about challenges the group faces. Introduce incentives to help your group achieve the desired level of productivity. Respond to your employees' **motivation** and efforts by showing enthusiasm.
- Enhance your knowledge and skills so that you can answer employee questions and provide detailed information about specific processes and techniques employed by your business.
- When challenges arise, pitch in and help where help is needed. Encourage others to do so as well.

- Stand up for your staff when they need support. Listen to your employee's side of the story before you make a decision.
- Do not be a gossip or a back stabber. Never say or repeat anything you are not prepared to acknowledge saying.
- Be consistent, firm, and fair.



Figure 13 Share the credit for achievements with your staff. Imaged used with permission of go2HR.

Delegation

Some supervisors believe that if you want a job done, do it yourself. These individuals often work themselves so hard that they burn out. They may work long, hard hours and be admired by others, but inevitably something slips. Perhaps the supervisor becomes ill due to overwork. Because the junior staff have never been given the opportunity to learn the work performed by that individual, the performance of the whole team suffers. Junior staff may feel unappreciated and unchallenged because they have not been given the opportunity to learn new skills.

Delegation of tasks provides you with time to meet your responsibilities. It recognizes the abilities of others and provides them with opportunities to develop their skills and talents. It divides the work to be done among the team members, increasing effectiveness and efficiency (Figure 14).

When you delegate a task to a junior staff member, it is not enough to simply ask the person to do the job. You must ensure that you:



Figure 14 Delegation increases the efficiency of the staff. Image used with permission of go2HR.

- Explain why the task is necessary and how it relates to the goals of the company

- Explain what is to be done
- Set performance standards
- Give a timeline for completion of the task
- Give the person the necessary resources, authority, and responsibility to carry out the task
- Provide adequate training
- Give support and guidance during the initial period
- Provide feedback on completion of the task

For example, you are planning changes to the menu. You need to test and cost the recipes for the new items. You decide that one of the apprentices you supervise could handle some of the breakfast items you are considering adding to the menu. You might proceed as follows:

“Kuldip, I would like your help in testing and costing the recipe for a new fruit waffle (what) that we are considering adding to our breakfast menu (why).

“You will need to prepare the recipe exactly as shown here. You will calculate the food cost and estimate a menu price based on a 35% food cost. You will prepare four portions that we will serve to some of the dining room staff to get their reactions. I want you to listen to their comments carefully and make notes regarding the flavour, presentation, and cost. I would also appreciate your suggestions on dealing with these comments (what, performance standards).

“Do you have any questions about what you will do?

“In order to test this item, I would like you to stay an extra half hour tomorrow. I will arrange the schedule with the restaurant manager. All the necessary supplies are available. The dining room staff knows that they will be working with you, but you will have to explain exactly what information you need (necessary resources, authority and responsibility).

“I would like your report by 2:30 tomorrow (timeline).

“Do you understand how to fill out the standard recipe costing form we use? This process was covered in your third-year apprentice technical training class. If you have any problems, review this material (handing apprentice an appropriate reading) or come to see me for help (provide training and offer support).”

On the following day, you would go over the report and provide feedback to Kuldip on what she did well and what she could improve.

Organization and Self-Management

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe stress management techniques
- Demonstrate the basic principles of organization and time management
- Describe conflict resolution techniques
- Describe effective problem solving and decision making

Food service and hospitality businesses can be stressful places to work. The pressure of producing high-quality meals in short periods of time can cause **stress**. Stress management techniques allow you to manage this stress. Part of managing stress is having an enjoyable job. An enjoyable job is one that fits into your personal goals. To feel in control of your life, you must be able to set personal goals and work toward them. For most people, work is an integral part of personal goals. In order to realize these goals, you must be able to conduct a job search, prepare resumés and cover letters, and participate in job interviews.

The success of food service and hospitality businesses depends on how effectively the entire staff of an operation can cooperate to create a well-prepared meal served in pleasant surroundings. The staff must work together as a team. A team does not just happen. It is created through the actions of supervisors who select the right staff, motivate them to do their best, build a sense of pride and common purpose, and resolve problems and conflicts that arise.

Stress Management Techniques

Working in the restaurant industry can be a hard, stressful job. The hours can be long and the work strenuous. During busy meal periods, you may feel a lot of pressure to prepare meals quickly without sacrificing quality. At times, your breaks may be postponed because of a rush of customers.

Stress is a normal part of life. It is defined as anything that puts pressure on a person. Everyone needs some stress in their lives. It is the force that encourages a person to develop and grow. Without any stress, you may become bored and dissatisfied with your life and your job.

Unhealthy Levels of Stress

Too much stress can damage your health and well-being. It affects a person emotionally, mentally, and physically. Too much stress can cause problems on the job.

Some signs of unhealthy levels of stress include the following:

- Emotional changes such as feeling sad, guilty, depressed, afraid, or tense or frequent swings in mood
- Behavioural changes such as crying often, withdrawing from others, becoming angry and aggressive, losing one's temper easily
- Fatigue or restlessness
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Misusing alcohol, drugs, or food
- Inability to concentrate or make decisions
- Digestive problems, such as ulcers, stomach cramps, heartburn, diarrhea
- Headaches
- Nervous habits such as nail biting or teeth grinding
- Loss of hair
- Skin rashes
- Increased perspiration, dizziness, cold hands and feet

People vary in the amount of stress they can tolerate. Some people thrive on living on the edge, taking large amounts of risk in both their work and personal lives. Others do best when their lives are more stable and less stressful. Identify your capacity for stress and try to adjust your life to the optimal amount of stress you can manage.

Whatever your optimal stress level is, you can learn some techniques for managing stress. Some of these techniques can be used at work. Others relate to the way you manage your personal life. When you are experiencing high amounts of stress at work, it is helpful to reduce your stress levels in other parts of your life.

Life events, such as a death in the family, a divorce, or an illness, are stressful. What few people realize is that happy events such as marriage, a new job, or the birth of a child are also stressful. When you experience a number of closely spaced changes in your life or family situation, you can anticipate that your stress levels will rise. At these times in particular, it makes sense to pay particular attention to living a low-stress life.

Low-Stress Living

Everyone needs balance in their lives. Although work takes up a major part of each day, finding time to relax, enjoy leisure activities, and take care of your body is important in managing stress.

Here are some tips for leading a low stress life:

- Learn techniques for relaxing such as meditation or deep breathing
- Build physical exercise into each day, including at least three periods of 30 minutes each week
- Keep your body weight normal for your height and build
- Adopt healthy, sensible eating habits and avoid junk food
- Do not abuse alcohol or drugs
- Minimize or eliminate the use of drugs such as tranquilizers, sleeping pills, painkillers, antacids, laxatives, and cold remedies
- Have a yearly physical checkup to keep track of your health
- Get regular and adequate amounts of sleep
- Find a way to keep on doing those things that you find really enjoyable
- Find some time each and every day to be alone and away from work and the demands of others
- Make decisions promptly and then stop yourself from worrying about whether the decision was correct
- Bring humour into your life by watching comedies, reading cartoons, sharing jokes, and funny stories, etc.
- Share your feelings about work and the problems you face with a friend or your spouse
- Find time to be involved in the community

Managing Stress at Work

When you work at a job you enjoy, you seldom find it stressful. Different people find different environments enjoyable. One person may like working in a very formal, haute cuisine restaurant (Figure 15). Another may prefer the informal, friendly atmosphere of a busy bistro. Yet another cook may prefer an institutional setting where busy periods are more predictable. Think about what setting you prefer when you look for work.

Take Responsibility for Making the Job Enjoyable

Think about what makes your job enjoyable or not enjoyable. Take some responsibility for making it a good place to work. Suggest changes to your supervisor or co-workers in a positive, constructive manner. Be friendly and take an interest in your co-workers. In turn, they are more likely to act in a friendly manner toward you. If company policy permits, organize some off-duty or after-duty social activities to build friendship and morale. Share a funny story with the other staff. When your duties permit, help others who are rushed.

If you are currently in a job you don't enjoy and you have tried to make it more enjoyable without success, consider looking for another job. If circumstances preclude an immediate change of job, give yourself a time limit to look for other work. If you know that you will only spend another six months in the job, you may find it easier to cope.



Figure 15 Formal settings suit some people. Image used with permission of go2HR.

Principles of Organization and Time Management

Strategies for Staying on Top of Things

Arrive early

Arrive for work a few minutes ahead of time so that you are not rushed and so that you can spend a few minutes in social conversation with your co-workers. If you are having problems outside of work and are friendly with your co-workers, it may be helpful to acknowledge your feelings about these problems so that you can put them aside during the workday.

Plan your day

Take a few minutes at the start of every workday to plan your activities. If you know there will be a hectic period, minimize distractions during that time. Get phone calls, orders, and other business out of the way before you are busy. Do as much preparation as possible before the rush.

Plan to get a quick breather (even 30 seconds) prior to a busy period. Use this time to “psych” yourself up. Help others to get prepared. Have a plan for how you will cope, and convince yourself that you will meet the challenge. At the end of each workday, take a few minutes to identify the things that need to be done the following day. Make a list and leave it in a conspicuous spot. You can then mentally put some of those duties off your mind knowing that it is already identified for the next time you are at work.

Focus on the tasks at hand

If you find yourself getting angry or upset during the day, take a few deep breaths and allow your body to relax as much as possible. Concentrate on the tasks you have at hand. When you are busy, do not permit yourself to worry about other issues or problems that do not have to be dealt with at that moment. For example, during a busy lunchtime when orders are coming in fast and furiously, do not plan tomorrow’s menus or the dairy order for next week. If necessary, write a brief reminder to yourself of tasks to be completed later.

Deal with issues of overwork

If you find yourself constantly working beyond your capacity, take a long hard look at your work. Consider whether:

- You are making the best use of your time
- You need additional training to do the job
- You could perform the tasks more efficiently
- Some tasks could be delegated to someone else
- The kitchen could be reorganized to reduce the amount of work required (e.g., by placing storage areas adjacent to the preparation area)
- Changes to the *mise en place* could reduce meal preparation time during busy periods
- More staff is needed during critical times
- Menu and purchasing decisions could reduce the overload

Depending on your work situation, you may be able to implement the changes suggested by the answers to these considerations. In many cases, you may have to consult your supervisor. Take time to plan your proposal to the supervisor. Define the problem, identify the options you have considered, and describe why your proposed solution is the most suitable.

Take a problem-solving approach

If you are feeling overstressed, the first thing to do is to become aware of the sources and effects of stress in your life. Identify what specific things at work and home you find stressful.

Next, decide the best way for you to handle this stress. In some cases, you may be able to remove the stress. For example, it may be possible to muffle the sound of a large and noisy fan. Finding another job is a more extreme example of removing the stress. In many cases, you can improve your ability to cope with stress through relaxation exercises, improved physical exercises, or through humour. Finally, you can change how you see a situation. Perhaps you are overreacting or taking offence when none was intended. Sometimes the mannerisms of a fellow worker can be irritating. If you accept that this is the way the person reacts to stress, you may find the mannerisms don't bother you as much.

Once you have decided what to do, you need to be responsible for managing your own stress. Implement the solutions you have identified.

Stress relief

When your stress levels become too high, the following activities can help provide **stress relief**, and help you regain some balance:

- Learn to say no
- Ask for help
- Learn to deal with negative people
- Lose yourself
- Treat yourself
- Get your life in order
- Make a wish list
- Help others
- Stop negative or stressful thoughts
- Use relaxation exercises
- Congratulate yourself on successfully meeting challenges

Learn to say no

When you are under stress, decide whether you really want or need to do what you are being asked to do. If the answer is no, do not be afraid to say no.

Ask for help

Problems can be lightened by sharing them. Talking to a friend, spouse, or sympathetic co-worker may bring a different perspective to the issue. You may find a solution to a problem you think cannot be solved. In the work situation, you should not expect others to anticipate how busy you are or how stressful a situation is. If you need help, ask for it.

Learn to deal with negative people

People who constantly make negative remarks or are overly pessimistic can make you experience negative feelings that add to stress. Counter negative remarks with positive ones of your own. Commend others on a positive approach.

Lose yourself

When you are under stress, engage in some activity that causes you to lose track of time. Choose an activity you find especially enjoyable. During that time, you can forget about your worries and experience happy, calm feelings.

Treat yourself

Treat yourself to a present, a dinner, or a movie. Invite a friend to go along. However, do not make the treat something outrageously expensive, especially if financial worries are part of the stresses in your life.

Get your life in order

If you are off schedule, if your house and life are a mess, stop everything else and get organized. Make a list and tackle the items one at a time. Do not worry if it takes some time to get organized again.

Make a wish list

Decide how you would complete the sentence: “If only I had time, I would...” Make a list of the items you think of. When you are feeling stressed, do one of your wish list items.

Help others

Helping others can take your mind off what is worrying you. Not only will you feel good about being of assistance to someone else, but you will also have a new outlook on your problems and concerns.

Stop negative or stressful thoughts

Practise interrupting stressful thoughts by imagining a stressful situation. Allow yourself to experience both helpful and anxious thoughts about the situation. When anxious thoughts come to mind, shout, “Stop,” or snap your fingers. Let your mind empty of all but the helpful thoughts. Set a goal of 30 seconds. If upsetting thoughts return during that time, stop yourself again.

When you succeed in interrupting the thought several times, start interrupting the thought with a stop said in a normal voice. Gradually reduce the volume of the stop to a whisper and then an imagined command. Finally, make up several positive, assertive thoughts that you can use in stressful situations.

For example, you might say to yourself, “I am a capable cook,” or “I can handle this volume of orders and do a good job.” Substitute one of these statements for the negative thoughts. Once you have learned this skill, you can use it when stressful situations arise.

Use relaxation exercises

Relaxation exercises can either be short self-control techniques to deal with an immediate stress or can be a longer exercise intended to increase your ability to deal with stress in your life.

This first exercise or quieting response can be used at any time, at home or work, to deal with an immediate anxiety. When you become aware of the worry, annoyance, or anxiety, blink the left eye, then the right eye, then smile, inhale an easy, natural deep breath, exhale the deep breath and let the jaw, tongue, and shoulders go loose. Allow a feeling of limpness, heaviness, and warmth to flow to the toes as the breath is exhaled. Repeat a positive phrase such as “I can do it.” Then carry on with your task.

Longer relaxation exercises combine deep breathing with successive tightening and relaxation of all of the muscles of the body. To do this exercise, lie on your back or sit in a comfortable position. Take a deep breath, breathing in through the nose, with the breath filling the chest and stomach area. Hold the breath for a moment (up to a count of five), then release the air slowly (to a count of 10) through the mouth. Find a rhythm that is slow and natural. Repeat breathing five or six times. Then, while continuing to deep breathe, tighten and then relax successive muscle groups in the feet, legs, abdomen, chest, arms, neck, and head. Finally, tighten all of the muscles in the body and relax. Focus on the breathing and muscle tightening and relaxation, allowing all other thoughts to be submerged.

Relaxation exercises can be combined with visualization or meditation. Once the body is completely relaxed, picture a favourite place in your mind. Go to that place and feel how comfortable you are, enjoying the peace and quiet. Allow your mind to drift for several minutes. Then slowly and gently allow yourself to become aware of your body. Feel the energy in your feet and legs, arms, and hands. Then slowly feel the energy growing in your chest, neck, and shoulders, and then your head and face. Slowly open your eyes.

Congratulate yourself on successfully meeting challenges

Part of giving positive messages to yourself is to acknowledge when you have met a challenge or dealt with a stressful situation. Take a minute afterward to congratulate yourself and the other members of the team.

Reduce the stress of those you supervise

If you are the supervisor, you can play an important part in making the job satisfying and less stressful for the individuals you supervise. Encourage employees to help one another during busy times. Be willing to help others, even if the task falls outside of your job. After a hectic period, thank employees for pitching in.

If you notice tensions rising and tempers flaring, give a brief break to the employees involved if at all possible. If not, use a joke or funny story to break the tension. Acknowledge the stress levels when times are busy.

Be positive and upbeat about the challenges the team faces. However, do not minimize the challenge in such a way that group members feel unappreciated for their efforts. For example, you could say, “We have a real challenge coming up in preparing a banquet for the Olympic team. There will be a lot of hard work for several days and we will have

to plan carefully. However, with our staff team, I am confident that we can do a first class job.” This is not the time to express your doubts about the capability of the staff members. Remember, people rise to expectations.

Workers whose contributions and suggestions are considered feel that they are valuable members of a team. Before busy events such as a Mother’s Day brunch, ask employees for their suggestions on how to handle the crowds. When workers bring concerns and suggestions to your attention, do not dismiss their comments. Although not every recommendation will be feasible, discussion of the idea will often develop a better idea that can be implemented. Taking comments seriously also lets employees know that you value their contributions. This will encourage them to open their minds more broadly and potentially increase the scope of their observations in the restaurant.

Care in scheduling staff can reduce stress and improve morale. Research has shown that frequent shift changes are stressful and disrupt sleep patterns. When possible, keep individuals on the same shift during a week (for example, from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.). If a person must work different shifts during the week, it is usually easier to change from an early shift to a late shift than the reverse.

Consider the personal needs and preferences of employees. If the workers you supervise are able to manage their personal lives more easily and with less stress, they will be able to cope with more stress on the job. Of course, your ability to meet these needs will depend on the needs of the business, the conflicting needs of others, and the requirements of legislation and collective agreements.

A job is also more stressful if employees are confused about their role or expectations, are bored, and have no room for creativity and personal input. Be as clear as possible about your expectations of the employees you supervise. Provide opportunities for workers to take on new and interesting challenges. Give employees feedback about their performance, making sure that the feedback is constructive. Strive to keep the lines of communication open.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an inevitable and healthy part of life. Each person has a different set of values and beliefs that colours his or her perceptions of the world. Each person also has a different set of goals, wants, and needs. At work, each person may have a different opinion about what needs to be done to solve a problem. Too often, people assume that there has to be a winner in a conflict. They do not attempt to find a solution that is satisfactory to all. When you deal with conflict in a healthy, open manner, you often find a better solution.

People are frequently in conflict over resources, perceptions, and values. Conflicts over resources are easier to resolve than conflicts over perceptions and values. When the executive chef and the restaurant manager argue over budget for renovations, their conflict is about resources. The most difficult conflicts to resolve are over values and beliefs. For example, two managers may argue about the appropriate way to involve staff members in decision making. One may believe that it is better for the boss to make decisions rather than asking the opinions of others. Depending on how strongly both persons hold these beliefs, the conflict may be very difficult to resolve.

Not all conflicts and differences can be resolved. Sometimes, you have to learn to agree to disagree. When you can learn to respect one another's point of view without feeling resentful, wanting revenge, or retaliating, you have handled the situation constructively.

Ineffective Ways to Deal with Conflict

At work, people may be afraid to express their disagreement. If you constantly avoid conflict when your views are different from those of others, you may become angry and resentful. Eventually, you may have so many negative feelings bottled up inside that you act inappropriately and can no longer be constructive.

Your lack of input can also reduce the effectiveness of the team's efforts. You may have a valuable insight that could reduce the amount of work needed or see a problem with the proposed solution that no one else has identified. Contributing your ideas, even if initially they are contrary to the opinions of others, will help find the best solution to the problem.

Of course, if you air your differences in a way that belittles other people, you may create hard feelings in others. Similarly, if you are overly insistent on having your own way, you may badger and bully others into acceptance of your view. The other party may give in but will feel resentful.

Another often ineffective approach is a bargaining approach. While this is more effective than avoiding conflict or winning at all costs, it may not be the most creative approach. One party may offer something that he or she does not feel good about. In the end, both parties may not get what they need. For example, the two managers arguing over renovation funds may agree to share the funds equally. However, the chef may now not have the money to replace the inadequate grill. The restaurant manager also may not have the needed funds to accomplish the necessary renovation to the dining room.

By spending a little more time, identifying what the problem is and what each party wants and needs, a more creative solution might be found. Bargaining is often used as a quick-fix solution.

Effective Conflict Resolution

You can learn to deal with conflict in a positive and constructive manner that enhances decision making and contributes to effective working relationships. These skills are called conflict **resolution** skills.

Constructive conflict resolution is an opportunity for change, growth, and understanding. The most important quality in resolving a conflict is to shift from making judgments about other people and their statements to being

curious. Instead of thinking, “Joe is a real fool. How can he expect anyone to buy that idea?” the constructive person thinks, “I wonder what Joe has in mind?”

When you make the shift from judgment to curiosity, following through with an appropriate question, others are not likely to feel defensive. They may be flattered that you are interested in their ideas. When people do not feel defensive, they are more likely to consider new ideas and cooperate.

Conflict resolution process

The steps in effective conflict resolution are:

1. Create an effective atmosphere
2. Clarify perceptions
3. Focus on individual and shared needs
4. Take a positive approach
5. Generate options
6. Develop a list of stepping stones to action
7. Make mutual benefit agreements
8. Part on good terms

Create an effective atmosphere

Conflicts cannot be resolved in the heat of the moment, in between preparing meals. If you have a conflict to resolve, arrange to meet at a convenient time when you will not be interrupted or distracted. Never deal with a conflict in front of customers and guests. Start the discussion of the problem in an open, positive way.

If you are angry, postpone the session until you can control your emotions. Sometimes, it can be useful to move the discussion to a more neutral place. For example, you might agree to meet for coffee with the person. A public location where you feel obliged to be polite can help you stay in control of your feelings. You will be less likely to really unload your anger on the other person. Because the one party may feel intimidated by being alone with the other, choose a location in which your conversation can be kept private, but neither party will feel unsafe.

Clarify perceptions

Make time at the beginning of the session for each person to state his or her views. Avoid using blaming statements such as, “You make me so angry.” Instead, state your observations and feelings about an event. For example, you might say, “I had asked for Saturday night off because my mother is visiting out of town. I’m upset because my request is not reflected in the new schedule.”

Avoid abusive or inflammatory remarks. If you say, “You are a rude and insensitive jerk!” or “You are always late,” the listener is likely to tune out. He or she becomes defensive and unwilling to listen further. If you say, “I was hurt by your jokes about death. My father is terminally ill and I am very worried about him,” the listener is more likely to be willing to engage in further conversation.

When it is your turn to listen, pay careful attention to what the person is saying. Use paraphrasing, summarizing, and questions to clarify what the person is saying and feeling. For example, you might say, “So what you are saying is that you were very angry when I asked you to work Saturday. You wanted the day off to spend with your mother. You thought that I ignored your request.” If the speaker uses blaming or inflammatory language, try to avoid taking the comments personally. Ask questions to determine exactly what the problem is.

Watch your language, tone of voice, and nonverbal gestures. Keep calm and centred.

Focus on individual and shared needs

Find out what each person wants and needs to resolve the situation. For example, in the scheduling conflict, Martine, the supervisor, needs a cook on staff on Saturday night. She does not want to pay overtime. She also wants to keep Bob, the cook, happy. He is an excellent, motivated employee and she would hate to lose him.

Bob wants time off to visit with his mother, but he likes this job and does not want to jeopardize it. Both Bob and

Martine want to resolve the problem and continue their friendly working relationship. They share a concern for the smooth running of the restaurant. By identifying their shared needs, both parties are working toward a consensus. That is, they are attempting to find a decision that takes both parties needs and opinions into account.

Take a positive approach

To work toward a solution, you should take the attitude that together you can find a solution to the problem. This is not the time to think about failures to resolve problems in the past. Treat the agreement as if you are starting fresh. Forgive others for their mistakes in the past. Go on from today and work toward the goals you have set.

Generate options

Use the brainstorming approach to get out as many ideas as possible without evaluating or criticizing them. Treat each idea as new material to help solve the problem. Remember that ideas that you think are frivolous and silly may help you think about the problem a new way. If nothing else, they help build a bridge of laughter behind the two parties.

Develop stepping stones to action

Sort through the ideas to see which ones will work. Set goals and develop an action plan. Create short, achievable steps that work toward your overall goal.

Make mutual benefit agreements

This step may look like bargaining, but it starts from a different point. The point is to make sure that you both get what you need. Rather than finding a compromise, you are finding a way that both parties can win.

For example, the two managers discussed their renovation needs. Both managers agreed that the quality of food was important in maintaining the profitability of the restaurant. Because the grill was affecting service times, the restaurant manager agreed to support the executive chef's request, and postpone work in the dining room. In turn, the executive chef agreed to support the restaurant manager in the next round of budgets.

Part on good terms

When you have dealt with a conflict, or if you have agreed to disagree, make a point of parting on good terms. Treat the other person with respect and dignity. Thank the person for discussing the issue with you. For example, you might say, "I really appreciated you explaining your point of view. Even though we might not agree on this issue, I respect your beliefs." This creates a climate in which you can continue to work together harmoniously. It also means that the person will have a positive approach to resolving the problem when another conflict arises.

Dealing with Anger

Conflicts cannot be effectively resolved if you cannot control your anger. If you are feeling angry:

- Take a few deep breaths to calm down
- Say that you are angry and explain why (without becoming abusive)
- Postpone the discussion if you cannot calm yourself
- Write down your key points and concerns before going into another session
- Move your discussion to a neutral location

If the other person is angry, acknowledge his or her feelings. For example, you might say, "I can see that you were really upset and angry when I asked you to redo the banquet plan." Acknowledging another person's feelings does not mean that you have to agree with them. It simply says to the person that you recognize what he or she has said or felt. If the person is unable to regain calm, suggest postponing the discussion.

When one party thinks there is no conflict

Sometimes, you may feel upset or angry, and the other person does not see the problem. This can be very frustrating. You may be more successful in raising the issue if you are as specific as possible in describing the problem and how you are affected. If necessary, write your concerns down on paper.

When you feel nervous about confronting someone

You may feel very anxious about confronting someone with a problem. Perhaps you have had trouble dealing with

this person before. Perhaps the problem is with a supervisor. It may be useful to role play the situation with a friend or co-worker and ask for feedback on how to handle the conflict more effectively. Think through exactly what you need for successful resolution beforehand. Arrange a meeting in a neutral location with the person.

When the other party does not seem to want a resolution

Sometimes it appears that the other party does not want a resolution. In this case, the best approach is to ask the person directly whether he or she wants to find a solution. If the person says yes, explain why you thought that a resolution was not wanted. Deal with these issues first. If the person does not want a resolution, you must decide whether you can live with the conflict or whether you need to take some other action.

For example, you may consider finding another job because you have been unable to resolve a serious conflict with a co-worker or supervisor. However, you may also decide that the assets of working with this individual or in this job outweigh the problems associated with the conflict. If you have gained some respect and understanding for the individual's position, you may be able to agree to disagree.

Some people may not want to find a solution because they only want things their own way. You may be able to get beyond their defences by making a special effort to find out what they need. Ask them how you can help meet their needs while still meeting your own.

When conflicts are apparently unresolvable, it may be necessary to find a mediator to help you deal with the problem. Some communities have mediation services. You could also involve a person at work whom both partners in the conflict trust and respect.

When the other person has a complaint about your behaviour

If you have made a mistake and you think that the person's complaint about you is fair, make an appropriate apology. Then attend to how to correct the problem in the future. Do not keep apologizing over and over again. Focus on making a decision that puts the matter right. Thank the person for bringing the concern to your attention.

If the complaint is unfair, make it clear that you think so. Attempt to deal with the misunderstanding that arose between you. Perhaps your communication has not been as clear as it should be. Try to close the matter in a way that allows you to part on good terms. Even though the complainant may have been wrong or misinformed, do not try to make him or her look foolish or argue about minor details. Find a way of giving thanks. For example, you might say, "Thanks for discussing this with me."

Handling Customer Complaints

Handling customer complaints is a special application of conflict resolution skills. Dissatisfied customers can have a very negative impact on your business. Most food service businesses depend on repeat business and word-of-mouth advertising. When a customer is unhappy with a meal or with the service, you lose potential business in the future. You may also lose other customers who have heard about your customer's bad experience, as people are more likely to share a bad experience than a good one. Especially today, with sites like [Trip Advisor](#) and [Yelp](#), it has become very easy for the average person to post public feedback about his or her experiences.

Customers who have complained and whose complaints were satisfactorily addressed are more likely to become repeat customers than those who did not complain in the first place. This is because many dissatisfied customers simply walk away and never return. A complaint is an opportunity to find out what mistakes your company has made and to correct them, turning dissatisfied customers into satisfied ones. It is in your company's interests to resolve customer complaints promptly and satisfactorily.

You may receive a complaint whether or not you were responsible for the problem. If you take the attitude "That's not my responsibility; I cannot help you," the customer will become even more angry and difficult to deal with. Customers who complain want to be taken seriously and treated with respect. They may want immediate action, compensation, or punishment for the person who wronged them. They may also want to clear up a problem so it does not happen again.

To handle a complaint, you have to be a problem solver. The skills required are:

- Diffusing anger

- Recognizing when to move to problem solving
- Problem solving
- Knowing the boundaries of authority

Diffusing anger

When a customer complains, he or she may react strongly and negatively to the situation. This may have been the last straw in a day filled with frustrations. You must deal with the emotion and upset before you can solve the problem. Until the emotions have been calmed, the person is unable to hear logical suggestions and solutions.

When someone is angry and complains, it is easy to become angry yourself. You need to stay calm and controlled. Keep eye contact and adopt a concerned body posture, voice tone, and facial expression.

Do not take the complaint personally. Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself if necessary. Encourage the person to blow off steam. Apologize and acknowledge the person's feelings. Keep your apologies sincere and dignified. Do not apologize so abjectly (in a miserable, degraded manner) that the customer may begin to doubt your sincerity. Show empathy by nodding, encouraging the person to finish the story. Be sure to be an active listener. Reassure the person that you want to help solve the problem.

Solving the Problem

When the person is calm and able to discuss the situation fully, you can move to the problem-solving stage. Ask the customer what he or she would like done to resolve the situation. Offer solutions that are within the scope of your authority. Agree on a solution. If you are unable to offer a satisfactory solution, assist the person in taking the complaint to the manager or owner. If this is not immediately possible, take full information from the individual about the problem and promise to relay the information. Let the individual know when the owner or manager will respond. Always thank the person for bringing the complaint to your attention.

If you are in charge of staff, make sure that they understand effective complaint resolution procedures. Make sure that they know how you want complaints to be handled in your restaurant. Many companies have a policy of "no questions asked." If customers return a menu item, the item is replaced free of charge or their money is refunded.

Effective Problem Solving and Decision Making

Types of Decision Makers

Problem solving and decision making belong together. You cannot solve a problem without making a decision. There are two main types of decision makers. Some people use a systematic, rational approach. Others are more intuitive. They go with their emotions or a gut feeling about the right approach. They may have highly creative ways to address the problem, but cannot explain why they have chosen this approach.

Six Problem-Solving Steps

The most effective method uses both rational and intuitive or creative approaches. There are six steps in the process:

1. Identify the problem
2. Search for alternatives
3. Weigh the alternatives
4. Make a choice
5. Implement the choice
6. Evaluate the results and, if necessary, start the process again

Identify the problem

To solve a problem, you must first determine what the problem actually is. You may think you know, but you need to check it out. Sometimes, it is easy to focus on symptoms, not causes. You use a rational approach to determine what the problem is. The questions you might ask include:

- What have I (or others) observed?
- What was I (or others) doing at the time the problem occurred?
- Is this a problem in itself or a symptom of a deeper, underlying problem?
- What information do I need?
- What have we already tried to address this problem?

For example, the apprentice you supervise comes to you saying that the electric warming oven is not working properly. Before you call a repair technician, you may want to ask a few questions. You may want to find out what the apprentice means by “not working properly.” Does he or she know how to operate the equipment? Did he or she check that the equipment was plugged in? Was the fuse or circuit breaker checked? When did it last work?

You may be able to avoid an expensive service call. At the very least, you will be able to provide valuable information to the repair technician that aids in the troubleshooting process.

Of course, many of the problems that you will face in the kitchen are much more complex than a malfunctioning oven. You may have to deal with problems such as:

- Discrepancies between actual and expected food costs
- Labour costs that have to be reduced
- Lack of budget to complete needed renovations in the kitchen
- Disputes between staff

However, the basic problem-solving process remains the same even if the problems identified differ. In fact, the more complex the problem is, the more important it is to be methodical in your problem-solving approach.

Search for alternatives

It may seem obvious what you have to do to address the problem. Occasionally, this is true, but most times, it is important to identify possible alternatives. This is where the creative side of problem solving really comes in.

Brainstorming with a group can be an excellent tool for identifying potential alternatives. Think of as many possibilities as possible. Write down these ideas, even if they seem somewhat zany or offbeat on first impression. Sometimes really silly ideas can contain the germ of a superb solution. Too often, people move too quickly into making a choice without really considering all of the options. Spending more time searching for alternatives and weighing their consequences can really pay off.

Weigh the alternatives

Once a number of ideas have been generated, you need to assess each of them to see how effective they might be in addressing the problem. Consider the following factors:

- Impact on the organization
- Effect on public relations
- Impact on employees and organizational climate
- Cost
- Legality
- Ethics of actions
- Whether this course is permitted under collective agreements
- Whether this idea can be used to build on another idea

Make a choice

Some individuals and groups avoid making decisions. Not making a decision is in itself a decision. By postponing a decision, you may eliminate a number of options and alternatives. You lose control over the situation. In some cases, a problem can escalate if it is not dealt with promptly. For example, if you do not handle customer complaints promptly, the customer is likely to become even more annoyed. You will have to work much harder to get a satisfactory solution.

Implement the decision

Once you have made a decision, it must be implemented. With major decisions, this may involve detailed planning to ensure that all parts of the operation are informed of their part in the change. The kitchen may need a redesign and new equipment. Employees may need additional training. You may have to plan for a short-term closure while the necessary changes are being made. You will have to inform your customers of the closure.

Evaluate the outcome

Whenever you have implemented a decision, you need to evaluate the results. The outcomes may give valuable advice about the decision-making process, the appropriateness of the choice, and the implementation process itself. This information will be useful in improving the company's response the next time a similar decision has to be made.

Creative Thinking

Your creative side is most useful in identifying new or unusual alternatives. Too often, you can get stuck in a pattern of thinking that has been successful in the past. You think of ways that you have handled similar problems in the past. Sometimes this is successful, but when you are faced with a new problem or when your solutions have failed, you may find it difficult to generate new ideas.

If you have a problem that seems to have no solution, try these ideas to “unfreeze” your mind:

- Relax before trying to identify alternatives.

- Play “what if” games with the problem. For example, What if money was no object? What if we could organize a festival? What if we could change winter into summer?
- Borrow ideas from other places and companies. Trade magazines might be useful in identifying approaches used by other companies.
- Give yourself permission to think of ideas that seem foolish or that appear to break the rules. For example, new recipes may come about because someone thought of new ways to combine foods. Sometimes these new combinations appear to break rules about complementary tastes or break boundaries between cuisines from different parts of the world. The results of such thinking include the combined bar and laundromat and the coffee places with Internet access for customers.
- Use random inputs to generate new ideas. For example, walk through the local shopping mall trying to find ways to apply everything you see to the problem.
- Turn the problem upside down. Can the problem be seen as an opportunity? For example, the road outside your restaurant that is the only means of accessing your parking lot is being closed due to a bicycle race. Perhaps you could see the bicycle race as an opportunity for business rather than as a problem.

Job Search Skills

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe effective goal setting
- Prepare a short and long-term career plan
- Prepare a resumé

This chapter focuses on effective goal setting techniques, how to prepare a short and long-term career plan, and how to prepare a resumé

Setting Goals

To become successful, you must know what you want, set goals, and work toward those goals. Success can only be determined personally. What is success for one person may not be success for another.

Your definition of success is determined by your values and beliefs. Once you know what you want from life, there is a common set of skills that can be applied to reach those goals whether you wish to become a member of the national culinary team, own your own restaurant, or teach cooking in a developing country.

Once you have completed your apprenticeship, there are many career paths available to you. You may wish to open your own restaurant, which may mean saving money to purchase and develop the property. You will also have to acquire skills in business management. You may choose to work in large hotels, working your way up through a variety of positions and properties to become an executive chef. You may aspire to be an educator, to cater meals in a client's home or on movie locations, or to work in an institutional setting such as a hospital or ferry. Other individuals are content to work under a well-known chef or in a particular restaurant chain. It all depends on what you want from your job and from life.

Setting goals gives your life direction. Goals give you something to work for and provide a sense of accomplishment. While this book focuses mainly on work-related goals, the same process can be used to set and work toward goals in any area of your life. Of course, once you have set a goal, this does not mean that you have to rigidly follow a set path. Often, opportunities may come up that create a means to shorten your path or change direction. For example, the bankruptcy of the restaurant in which you are working or a job shortage may cause you to create your own job or change your career direction.

Values and Beliefs

What you want in life depends on what you value and believe. The first step in setting goals is to think about what is important to you. If you simply base your goals on what others want or believe to be important, you may not be happy even though you achieve these goals. Your choices and decisions have to be based on what you think, feel, and believe.

Your values and beliefs come from your family and your experience of the world. For example, if you come from a close and loving family where parents and children spend a lot of time together, you are likely to place a strong value on family time. You may also develop this value if you feel that you were lacking in this closeness as a child.

Values and beliefs may shape:

- Where you want to live
- What hours you want to work
- How much money you want to have
- What kind of family life you want
- What kind of job and job responsibilities you want
- What kind of community involvement you choose
- How much leisure time you desire
- How important religion, altruism (generosity to others), and spirituality are to your life

These factors, in turn, will shape what type of job you want. For example, some people are willing to work long, hard hours in a remote mining camp away from friends and family in order to make more money and to spend time in a remote wilderness setting. Notice that there is seldom a way of having it all. You have to set priorities, deciding which values are more important than others. Sometimes these decisions are long term. A person whose long-term

goals include making money and spending time hiking and fishing may spend many seasons working in a remote lodge setting.

For others, these goals may be short-term decisions that form a stepping stone to reaching another goal. For example, the attractive wages in an oil drilling camp might allow a person to save enough money to open a bistro or coffee shop. This person may be willing to spend two or three seasons working in a camp while saving as much as possible.

Before proceeding any further, think about your values and beliefs. What are your priorities in life? What is your current situation? What are your current responsibilities?

What Are Goals?

Goals are statements of what you want to achieve, do or be. They should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Timely

For example, “I want to qualify as a **chef de cuisine** within the next seven years” is a realistic goal for someone who is completing the Cook Apprenticeship program. At the end of seven years, you would be able to tell whether you had achieved this goal or not. Whether a goal is realistic depends on the your situation. For example, if you have not completed high school or begun a cooking apprenticeship, this goal may not be realistic.

“I want to live in a nice place” is not a measurable goal. You haven’t said when you want to achieve this goal, whether the place is a city or town, or a house or apartment. Does the statement mean that you own the place? You can’t tell from the way it is worded. The more specific you are about your goals, the more likely you are to achieve them.

Factors that prevent people from setting and achieving goals

At first thought, lack of money, education, and time seem to be important factors that prevent people from achieving their goals. However, the success of some people who lack all of these things and have family responsibilities as well suggests that other factors are more important. The most critical factors that prevent people from reaching their goals are fear of failure, lack of self-esteem, a fear of missing other opportunities, and a lack of confidence in their ability to meet their goals.

Keys to successful goals

The key to achieving goals is, first and foremost, to set a goal that you really want: a goal that you are passionate about and willing to work hard toward. You must believe that you can reach your goals. Your goal must be achievable. There is no point in setting an unattainable goal. You need to have timelines for achieving the goals. You must recognize that you need the support of others in reaching the goal. This may include your friends and family. You also need to recognize that some people will not be supportive and find ways to minimize your interaction with them.

Not enough time

Lack of time is a common complaint and a common excuse for not reaching goals. Everyone has just 24 hours a day. Some people have better time management skills. This allows them to get more done in a day than others can accomplish. Everyone finds time for those things that are most important to them. If you find lack of time a problem, consider how you manage your time. Do you waste a lot of time? Do you set priorities for your time? Could you delegate some chores to others? Are there some things you could drop or postpone in order to have time to achieve your goals?

Obviously, some people have more commitments than others. Some people also have lower energy levels or a higher need for sleep than others. This may mean that they must allow more time in order to achieve the same goals, or find other ways of achieving these goals. For example, you may only be able to attend one course per year rather than

two or three while working full time if you are also a full-time parent. Perhaps a distance education course might be an option that allows you to achieve your goal.

Taking Stock

Once you have set a goal, you need to take stock of where you are. This means identifying your strengths related to the goal, and the barriers in the way of reaching your goal. Strengths include skills and experience related to the goal, any personal habits that make it easier to achieve success, the support of family and friends, and resources that you have such as access to a car, a special library, or a free babysitter. Barriers are all the things that get in the way of meeting your goals. They may be a lack of something, such as education, money, information, or experience. They may also be an existing financial or personal commitment that gets in the way of easily achieving the goal.

For example, Susan, who wants to own her own restaurant, might identify the strengths and barriers as shown in Figure 16.

Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will complete Cook Apprenticeship program this year 2. Three years' experience working in a restaurant 3. Worked as a bus person and server during high school 4. Knowledge of wines as a result of my winemaking hobby 5. Have been promised a full-time job as a cook on completion of apprenticeship 6. Confident self-starter 7. Highly motivated 8. Need little sleep 9. Can work long hours 10. Supportive family 11. Uncle owns a restaurant
Barriers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack business management skills and experience 2. Have not developed a menu on my own 3. Do not know the market for new restaurants in this community 4. Do not know the legislation and legal requirements for opening a restaurant 5. Do not know how to mix drinks 6. Do not know how to deal with customers or sell 7. Lack the capital to start a business 8. Have a car loan of \$5,000 9. Make child support payments of \$200 a month 10. Work irregular shifts which make it hard to attend courses

Figure 16 Sample list of strengths and barriers

Once you have assessed your skills, strengths, and barriers, you are ready to start the next step, planning. Planning must take into consideration the strengths and barriers you have identified. To begin, use cards or small pieces of paper to write down ideas about steps you can complete to bring you closer to your goal (Figure 17).

Once you have run out of ideas, arrange the papers or cards in time order. For example, Susan may want to rearrange her budget and move to a smaller apartment so that she can pay off her car loan more quickly and then begin saving money. She might also decide to sell her car and buy an older, used car so that she can pay off her loan right away.

Check to see that you have not missed any steps. Refer to your barriers to see whether you have found ways around



Figure 17 Write down the steps you need to take on small cards or sticky notes. Image used with permission of go2HR.

each. Look at each card to see if there are any steps you need to complete before you complete this one. For example, in order to register for a distance education course, you may have to request high school transcripts from another province.

Each step should be something that you can complete in a short period of time, usually no more than several months. Each step should bring you a little closer to reaching your goal. Be realistic about the time it will take to complete a step. Make the steps a little smaller if they will take a year or more. The steps you will identify will be different from those for another person with a similar goal because you start with different skills, abilities, and strengths and face different barriers.

Once you think that you have all the necessary steps listed, ask a friend or family member for input. Add any new steps and reorder them if necessary. In Susan's case, her uncle, who owns a restaurant, could provide valuable assistance. He may also be able to suggest ways in which he could help Susan, perhaps by acting as a mentor.

Finding a Mentor

A mentor is a person who is a trusted advisor, someone you can consult on an ongoing basis concerning your progress and problems. You could approach someone who has already achieved a goal similar to the one you have set for yourself. This could be a former supervisor, a chef you have met through the local chefs' association, or a restaurant manager you know. You should try to find someone you like and trust, a person who is willing provide you with help and encouragement. This individual should also be prepared to give you constructive criticism when you need it.

A mentor can be very helpful in keeping you focused and working toward your goals. He or she usually has more experience and can help you tackle the problems that arise as you work through your action plan.

Setting a timeline and sticking to it

Next, set a time for completing each step in your plan. Be realistic about the amount of time it will take to complete the step and the amount of time you can devote to the step during a particular time period. Plan to accomplish something each week and month, even if these steps are very small. Promise yourself a small reward for accomplishing a certain number of tasks on time. Share your plan with others who will help keep you motivated and ask them for their continued support. For example, Susan's uncle might offer to meet with her once a month to review her progress toward her goal.

Enlist the help of family members and friends when appropriate. For example, Susan knows someone who might be willing to share a house and who would be willing to have her four-year-old son (who lives with his father) visit on weekends. By sharing, both Susan and her friend might reduce their living costs.

Keep checking your action plan to see whether you are on target. Don't get discouraged if you miss a deadline occasionally. Readjust your timeline to catch up with the steps. If some unexpected problems arise, take stock again, add new steps if necessary, and readjust. For example, Susan had a car accident that caused her to miss two months of work and undergo intensive rehabilitation. During that time, she was unable to complete a course. Once she had recovered, she reviewed her action plan and adjusted her dates as necessary.

Figure 18 shows a partial list of the steps Susan identified in order to meet her goal and the timeline she prepared. She prepared this plan in March; you are looking at her progress in early May.

Step	Planned Completion Date	Actual Completion Date
Rework personal budget to save \$200 per month	March 31	March 31
Give notice to present landlord	March 31	March 31
Find new accommodation that fits new budget	April 15	April 6
Sell car and pay off car loan	April 15	April 18
Use proceeds to buy older car without loan (brother may have a lead on a good car)	April 22	April 23
Move into new apartment	May 1	May 1
Write Cook Red Seal exam	May 15	
Increase monthly savings to \$400 as a result of having no car loan	June 1	
Borrow Restaurant Operations Manual from uncle and study legal and legislative requirements section; rework action plan if necessary	June 15	
Register for a bartender's course to start in September	June 15	

Figure 18 Progress on Susan's action plan

Note that Susan has not met all of her timelines. However, she is making steady progress toward her goal. With support from her uncle, other family members, and friends, she will achieve success. At the end of June, Susan had met all of her goals so far and gave herself a weekend camping trip as a reward.

Preparing a Short- and Long-Term Career Plan

Setting Employment Goals

Previously, we talked about setting goals. The example given in the text was Susan's goal of eventually owning her own restaurant. In this example, she was promised a job on completion of her apprenticeship. On completion of training, many graduates look for employment. Before applying for jobs, you need to decide what kind of a job you want and where you want to work. In other words, you have to focus your search. Ideally, the job you seek should relate to your long-term career and personal goals.

Some people simply want to have a job. They apply for jobs without considering their skills and experience, their interests, and their goals. This process is bound to be frustrating. You may apply for jobs at a much higher level than you are qualified for and be turned down so often that you get discouraged. Or you may apply for jobs for which you are overqualified. You may not be hired because the employer thinks you will not stay at the job long. Or you may be hired and become bored because of the lack of challenge in the work. If you work at a job you do not enjoy, you will likely suffer a lot of stress.

Making an Inventory of Your Skills, Abilities, and Interests

Many people believe that they do not have skills because they have limited job experience. Others think that because they are making a career change, they have few skills of relevance to their new goals. These beliefs are not true. You have acquired skills in a wide variety of ways during your life. Places where you may learn skills and examples of some skills you may have acquired are shown in Table 4.

Place to Acquire Skills	Skills Acquired
Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed a personal budget • Organized time
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned student association or club functions • Operated a computer • Worked as a part of a team during group projects
Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speaking experience • Planned community celebrations or concerts
Clubs and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of wines as a result of membership in wine tasting club • Ability to conduct meetings • Planned and prepared fundraising dinner
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependability as a result of delivering community newspaper • Got jobs done on time
High school cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOODSAFE Level 1 • Prepared and garnished salads • Established respectful working relationships with cooks and servers

Table 4 Examples of places in which skills are acquired and examples of skills learned

An inventory of your skills is an initial first step in preparing to find a job. It provides a full list of your skills and abilities. You can then use this list to prepare your resumé.

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are those skills that you have learned in one setting and that you can apply in a variety of situations. For example, you may have learned to plan a function or event when you were on the social committee for an association, but you can apply that skill in the hospitality industry. Similarly, you may have learned to supervise other employees when you worked at a fast-food restaurant, but you can transfer that learning to other jobs. You may have dealt with customers when you worked at the front desk of a hotel (Figure 23), but the essential skills of customer service are the same in other jobs.

When preparing your inventory, focus on transferable skills unless the skills are directly relevant to your present employment goal.

Identify Your Interests



Figure 23 Customer service skills are transferable. Image used with permission of go2HR.



Figure 24 A list of enjoyable accomplishments can help you decide what job factors are important. Image used with permission of go2HR.

You may have a wide variety of skills, but some of these skills may have been gained in jobs which you do not want to do again. This is why it is important to identify your interests. What kind of job do you want? What kind of skills do you want to use? What kind of work do you find satisfying? The answers to these questions will help you target the kind of job you want. Some people already know exactly what they want from a job. However, most people are not completely clear about their interests.

A good starting point is to make a list of all of the enjoyable accomplishments in your life (Figure 22). These are things you did well and felt good about. Try to list at least 25 accomplishments from all parts of your life: school, work, volunteering, hobbies, and your personal life. Develop this list over four or five days. Write down the ideas as they occur to you.

Once you have a list, select the seven most important. Rank the accomplishments with the most important first. Write a paragraph about each accomplishment. Then identify what things are common to each of the stories. For example, you may find that your most important accomplishments all include elements of completing tasks against intense time pressure, preparing elegant and beautifully presented meals, dealing with people, and organizing activities. This suggests that these factors are ones you find important and should look for in your work.

Other exercises you can complete to discover your interests include:

- Identifying your work-related values
- Listing the things you really like to do
- Thinking about each job you have held and identifying what you found satisfying and dissatisfying
- Thinking about the qualities of supervisors or managers with whom you had a good relationship
- Imagining where you would like to be in your life in five or 10 years
- Inventing your ideal job
- Imagining the job you would have if you won the lottery, but still wanted to work

For each of the statements below, rank how important it is in terms of your overall career objectives. Use the following scale:

1. Not important at all
2. Somewhat important
3. Reasonably important
4. Very important in my choice of job

—	ability to advance in the job
—	helping others
—	supervising others
—	helping society
—	meeting challenges
—	working for something you believe in
—	public contact
—	pleasant and friendly co-workers
—	competition
—	working alone
—	working with others
—	personal growth and development
—	minimal supervision
—	enjoyable work tasks
—	freedom from pressure
—	high pressure environment
—	being an expert
—	recognition from the community
—	ability to be creative
—	learning on the job
—	location of the workplace
—	tranquility on the job

—	predictable schedule
—	money earned
—	change and variety
—	fast pace
—	having time for personal life
—	power
—	adventure or risk-taking
—	prestige
—	recognition from supervisors and co-workers
—	job security
—	chance to make an impact
—	clear expectations and procedures

Once you have completed the exercise, circle those items you marked “4” and choose the five most important. Which would you give up if you were forced to compromise? Which would you be most reluctant to give up?

Identify Possible Jobs

There are many options and environments when it comes to finding the right fit for your skills and interests. To find the right situation for you, take the information you have gathered and start to think about the employers and places in your community where you could work. If you are not sure how your interests and skills match with the jobs you have identified, talk to your instructors, friends, or acquaintances who work with a particular employer or visit the restaurant or food service facility as a customer (Figure 25).

Plan Short- and Long-Term Career Goals

Remember Susan and the steps she took to plan her goals? Taking the goal-setting approach to your career is equally important. Think about the next 10 years and where you would like to be in your career at that time. Think of the skills and experience you will need to gain in order to accomplish those career goals. Writing down your career path and goals will help you accomplish them, and allow you to focus on each step at a time. Table 5 shows a completed table of timelines, career goals, and skills and experience.



Figure 25 Visiting a restaurant can help you decide whether you want to work there. Image used with permission of go2HR.

Timeline	Career Goal	Required Skills and Experience
1-2 years	Complete apprenticeship and obtain Red Seal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete technical training and hours • Gain experience on all stations
4-5 years	Sous-chef position in leading restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 years' experience in similar environment after Red Seal • Supervisory training
6-7 years	Chef position in leading restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 years' experience as sous chef • Additional management training
10 years	Open own restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 years' experience as Chef • Additional business courses

Table 5: Planning sheet for short- and long-term career goals

As you can see, thinking of your end goal helps to plan the steps along the way. If your ultimate career goal is to be the executive chef of a large hotel, then spending a number of years working your way up in small bistros is likely not

the best plan. However, if owning your own small restaurant is the goal, gaining experience in similar places will do you more benefit than working in a large hotel.

Of course things will change, and it is important to understand that sometimes if you decide to change direction, you will have to re-evaluate. If you have worked your way up to sous-chef in a small restaurant, and want to switch to the hotel environment, you will likely have to take a step back and take a job as a cook in order to learn how a large hotel operates.

Preparing a Resumé

A resumé (pronounced reh/zoo/may) is a summary of your skills, training, and experience. Its primary purpose is to interest the employer in you as a potential employee. A well-written, carefully planned resumé will help get you an interview that may lead to a job offer. It may be included with a letter of application, attached to an application form, or handed to a prospective employer when you are interviewed. Copies of your resumé may also be given to instructors, friends, or family members who have agreed to help you in your search.

Resumés and cover letters are essential tools for finding jobs. You can use these tools to sell a potential employer on your skills and abilities. In the past, resumés were used only in professional and management level jobs. However, today most employers require a resumé. Even when one is not required, a well-prepared resumé can help you get a job.

Parts of a Resumé

There are a variety of formats you can use to present your resumé. However, no matter which format you choose, all resumés usually contain the following (Figure 19):

Name, address, email, and phone number

Your name, address, email, and phone number should be given on your resumé so that you can be easily contacted for an interview or possible employment. Make sure you leave a number where messages may be left for you. Do not leave your current work number, as your present employer may not appreciate personal calls during work time.

Employment objective

The employment objective identifies the type of position you are seeking. If you are looking for a range of different jobs, leave the objective out or tailor each resumé to the situation. You could also include your employment objective in the cover letter.

Avoid using specific job titles. Be concise and specific. Concentrate on the job you are seeking right now, not 10 years from now. For example, you might say “a challenging position as a First Cook or Chef de Partie.” Do not include vague, self-gratifying statements such as “so I might become a better person.”

Education

Show educational qualifications, starting with the most recent and most relevant. There is no need to give the name of your secondary school if you have completed college or university. Identify any relevant training courses you have taken in high school or outside of a formal training institution if they are relevant to the work you are seeking. Take your cues from the job advertisement or the information you received from your contacts. For example, you might include first aid training if the job is in a remote camp.

Areas of knowledge and experience

Identify your skills and experience in past jobs and volunteer experiences. Keep the statements brief and to the point. Focus on the needs of the employer. Include your accomplishments from community activities and hobbies only if they are relevant to the job. If you are applying to a catering company, the statement “planned and catered a banquet for the regional soccer championship (100 guests)” would be relevant. An employer is not likely interested in whether you are a fly-tying expert. Be honest and be sure that you can back up every statement. Do not claim skills in any area in which you do not have practical experience, and don’t overstate your experience. Don’t claim to have managed the kitchen or created the menu if you have only assisted in these tasks.

Use verbs (action words) to describe your accomplishments. The following provides a list of verbs associated with different types of skills:

Creative and technical



Figure 19 Parts of a resume. Image used with permission of go2HR.

- adjusted
- altered
- arranged
- changed
- created
- demonstrated
- designed
- developed
- devised
- formulated
- generated
- improvised
- invented
- modified
- originated

- performed
- prepared
- produced
- predicted
- restructured
- simplified

Working with people

- aided
- assisted
- advised
- advocated
- conferred
- consulted
- collaborated
- counselled
- encouraged
- facilitated
- guided
- helped
- interpreted
- interviewed
- implemented
- informed
- mentored
- recommended
- referred
- reassured
- served
- shared
- suggested
- supported
- trained

Communication

- advised
- commented
- communicated
- interpreted
- outlined
- promoted

- presented
- spoke
- summarized
- translated
- wrote

Business or administrative

- administered
- advised
- analyzed
- authorized
- budgeted
- deliberated
- designated
- developed
- distributed
- drafted
- hired
- investigated
- implemented
- recorded
- managed
- marketed
- monitored
- organized
- planned
- proposed
- purchased
- recommended
- reported
- scheduled
- selected

Analytical

- analyzed
- assessed
- appraised
- combined
- compared
- concluded
- contrasted

- deduced
- determined
- inferred
- interpreted
- evaluated
- monitored
- reviewed

Leadership

- assigned
- coordinated
- delegated
- evaluated
- led
- motivated
- negotiated
- persuaded
- supervised
- supported

Achieving results

- adapted
- attained
- completed
- contributed
- decreased
- increased
- doubled/tripled
- eliminated
- established
- expanded
- implemented
- improved
- introduced
- maintained
- multiplied
- opened
- proposed
- provided
- realized
- recommended

- reduced
- revised
- revitalized
- risked
- saved
- simplified
- sold
- solved
- stimulated
- streamlined
- structured
- submitted
- succeeded
- unified
- upgraded

Professional activities

You should list any related activities, such as membership in professional or trade associations or volunteering that relates to your application. Be sure to list any responsibilities that you held in these positions as often these activities are great ways to demonstrate experience you have not gained in your work experience.

References

References may be listed in your resumé or they can be listed on a separate sheet. You should have at least three references lined up when you apply for jobs. Be sure to get each person's permission to use her or him as a reference. Supply the reference with a copy of your resumé and a copy of the job ad or posting so that he or she can speak knowledgeably about you when contacted. Have the person's full name, title, position, company name, address, and phone number for each reference.

The most important factor to keep in mind when choosing references is that the person has a favourable opinion of you. The person should also have a title that shows responsibility, especially responsibility relevant to the position you are seeking. If your reference is someone the potential employer likes and respects, so much the better.

Do not use a relative, especially one with the same last name. Do not use anyone who shares your address as a reference. Make sure that the people you select can communicate well orally and in writing. Always make sure that your references are people with whom you have had recent contact with. A good borderline is within the last two to three years. Try and keep in touch with your references by an email or phone conversation so that if they are called to give an opinion on you, firstly, they remember you, and secondly, they have recent knowledge of what you might be doing currently.

Chronological and Functional Resumé Formats

Chronological resúmes list your experience and education from the most recent to the least recent. Under each position or employer, you should list the skills and experience gained at that employer. This style of resumé highlights a steady employment record. It emphasizes growth and development in employment history. However, it can expose drawbacks such as gaps in employment, frequent job changes, lack of related experience, or lack of career progression. This type of resumé is suitable if your most recent employment is directly relevant to the job for which you are applying. Figures 25 and 26 present examples of chronological resúmes.

Suzanne Chung

345 Any Street
 Anytown, B.C.
 V0X 1R0
 (250) 555-1234
 schung@anyemail.com

Job Objective: To obtain a position as a sous-chef in a full-service restaurant

Experience:

2009 to present

First Cook
 Pleasant Stay Hotel
 345 Seaview St.
 Anytown, B.C.
 V0X 2T7

- Prepared breakfasts, lunches, and dinners in a busy hotel coffee shop
- Prepared banquets for up to 300 people
- Supervised meal preparation in pub kitchen
- Operated cold kitchen and pastry station for main hotel dining room
- Assumed duties of sous-chef during vacations

2006-2009

Apprentice Cook
 Mountainview Resort
 Box 197
 Resorttown, B.C.
 V0S 2T0

- Prepared menu items under supervision of First Cook
- Prepared banquet menu items
- Sliced and served meats at banquets and buffets
- Prepared pastries, cakes, and desserts

2004-2006

Kitchen helper and dishwasher (part-time)
 Valley Resort
 Box 181
 Resorttown, B.C.
 V0S 2T0

- Assisted with preparation of salads, soups, and other menu items
- Scrubbed pots and assisted dishwasher
- Cleaned kitchen equipment and work stations

Education:

2014
Selkirk College
HSP 321: Food and Beverage Cost Control
2006-2009
Camosun College
Attained Cook Certificate of Qualification with an Interprovincial endorsement
Professional Activities:
Active Member of the Anytown chapter of the Canadian Culinary Federation, currently responsible for planning student culinary competitions
Member, BC Restaurant and Food Service Association
References: Available on request

Figure 20 A chronological resumé for a person applying for a sous-chef position

David Peterson

1655 Frederick Street

Anytown, B.C.

V0X 1R0

(604) 587-3301

dpeterson@anyemail.com **Job Objective:** To obtain a position as a First Cook

Experience:

2012-2014

Apprentice Cook

Freddy's Restaurants

Kelowna, B.C.

- Prepared menu items under supervision of First Cook
- Prepared banquet menu items
- Sliced and served meats at banquets and buffets
- Prepared pastries, cakes and desserts

2010-2012

Kitchen helper

Valley Resort

Box 181

Resorttown, B.C.

V0S 2T0

- Assisted with preparation of salads, soups and other menu items
- Scrubbed pots and assisted dishwasher
- Cleaned kitchen equipment and work stations

2009-2010

Crew chief

McDonald's Restaurants

Resorttown, B.C.

V0S 2T0

- Supervised crew
- Assessed inventory
- Prepared food and served customers
- Calculate wastage and promotional product sales

Education:

2012-2015

Okanagan College, Kelowna, B.C.

Completing Professional Cook 3 Technical Training in May 2015

Will qualify for Professional Cook 3 Certificate of Qualification with an Interprovincial Red Seal endorsement

Professional Activities:

Volunteer Camp Cook, Anytown Summer Camp for disadvantaged children, 2013
Junior Member of the Anytown chapter of the Canadian Culinary Federation, currently assisting with preparations for the Food Show
References: Available on request

Figure 21 A chronological resumé for a person just completing an apprenticeship

A functional resumé (Figure 27) is a good way to display your most relevant skills and accomplishments. Under the heading “Experience” or “Skills and Accomplishments,” you list your capabilities under broad headings such as supervision, food and beverage cost control, menu planning, and so on. Under each heading, list all of the skills you have related to that topic without regard to where you acquired that skill. Your previous positions and employers are briefly listed under the heading “Work History.”

This resumé format minimizes drawbacks such as gaps in employment and lack of directly related experience. It is most useful when you have acquired a broad range of skills relevant to the job through many different employers. It can also be useful if your job titles did not adequately reflect the duties performed. It is harder to prepare a functional resumé. Functional resumé can be confusing to read if not well written.

ANGELO GUCCI

345 Princeton Street
 (604) 587-8762
 Anytown, B.C.
 V0X 1R0
 (agucci@anyemail.com)

OBJECTIVE: To gain a position as an Executive Chef in a full-service hotel

EXPERIENCE:**Menu planning**

- Prepared banquet menus for a variety of functions
- Participated in creation of new menus for coffee shop, dining room, pub, and room service
- Developed standard recipes and procedures for new menu items
- Conducted yield tests
- Revised menus based on popularity and profitability of menu items

Food and beverage cost control

- Maintained inventory control procedures
- Purchased and received goods
- Developed purchase specifications for goods
- Used recipe management software to cost menu items
- Analyzed sales history information to project sales volumes and expense levels
- Used a computerized inventory management system to maintain stock levels and reduce waste.

Supervision of staff

- Selected and oriented new staff
- Trained apprentice cooks
- Prepared work schedules for kitchen and dining room staff
- Evaluated staff performance and provided constructive criticism

Food preparation

- Prepared high-quality menu items in Broiler/Grill, Cold Kitchen, Fry, Soup, and Pastry stations of a large hotel kitchen
- Gold Medal prize winner at Okanagan Chefs Association culinary competition in 2013 and 2014

WORK HISTORY

2005 to present
 Sous-Chef
 Crest Hotel
 Anytown, B.C.
 V0X 1R0
 2002 – 2005

Sous-Chef
Tigh-na-mara Fishing Lodge and Resort
Canim Lake, B.C.
VOX 1R0
1999 – 2002

First Cook
Freddy's Restaurants
Kelowna, B.C.
VOX 1R0
1996 – 1999

Apprentice Cook
Spruce Meadows Country Club
Mission, B.C.
VOX 1R0

EDUCATION:
2014
Chef de Cuisine certificate
2011-2012
Tourism Supervisory Development Program: Food & Beverage Option
Okanagan College
1999
Cook Certificate of Qualification with an Interprovincial endorsement
Vancouver Community College
1995 – 1996
Professional Cook Certificate
Northern Lights College
Completed all three levels of the program with an A average
2014
In-house training on Squirrel Food and Beverage and Inventory Management packages

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:
Active Member of the Anytown chapter of the Canadian Culinary Federation, currently Membership Chairperson
Member, BC Restaurant and Food Service Association

REFERENCES: Available on request

Figure 22 A functional resumé for a person applying for an executive chef position

Tips on Preparing a Resumé

There are several websites that offer free templates for building different styles of resumé. It is important that the presentation is professional and well laid out.

When preparing your resumé, keep the following points in mind:

- Use good quality 8.5" x 11" stationary in white or cream for print copies
- Use perfect grammar, spelling, and punctuation; check and recheck your resumé
- Use ample margins and white space to enhance the appearance and readability of your resumé

- Limit your resumé to two pages
- Label the second page with your name and page number as well in case the two pages get separated
- Staple your resumé pages together
- Print the resumé using a good quality printer
- Be clear and concise
- Be accurate; the employer may check on what you have written
- Be consistent in your format and style
- Be positive in tone; focus on results and accomplishments
- Tailor the resumé to the employer's requirements
- Be complete; make sure that you include company names; do not abbreviate
- Use headings and paragraphing to organize the content
- Avoid company jargon when presenting accomplishments; they may not be readily understood

Cover Letters

Unless you are handing your resumé directly to the person who will read it and you have an opportunity to speak to that person about your skills and abilities, you should always include a cover letter. The cover letter acts as an introduction to the reader and encourages him or her to read the resumé carefully.

Today, employers receive many applications for each job, so they may never read beyond the cover letter. You have approximately 30 seconds to grab the employer's attention and persuade him or her to read your resumé. Otherwise, your application may end up in the recycling bin.

Cover letters and resúmes are often sent electronically. You can either type the content of the cover letter into an email, or attach it as a separate document along with your resumé. If you submit it this way, be sure to include a short email stating your interest in the position and that your cover letter and resume are attached. Be clear to identify your purpose for the email by using the subject line. For example, the subject line "D. PETERSON – Resumé" will clearly show the recipient the purpose of the email.

Cover letters have three parts: an introduction that explains why your resumé is sitting on the person's desk, the benefits of hiring you for the job, and a closing that focuses on the outcome you want: asking the employer to contact you.

Writing Cover Letters

To write an appealing cover letter, keep in mind the following:

- Use standard, business letter format; start with your complete mailing address and the date the application will be mailed.
- Always address the cover letter to an individual; if you do not know the person's name, call the company and inquire. Make sure that the information including the spelling of the person's name, his or her title, the company name, and the address is correct.
- Use an appropriate salutation such as "Dear Ms Jones," or "Dear Selection Committee" (ask when you call the company or refer to the job ad).
- Make sure that your opening gains interest and explains why you are sending this application. If you are responding to a job advertisement, give specific details (newspaper or website in which the ad appeared, title of job, date, posting number). A sample of a cover letter in response to a job advertisement is shown below. If you were asked to apply or were recommended by someone who knows the individual, say so.
- Briefly mention the qualities or experience you have that meet the company's requirements. Show that you have done your homework. Be positive and realistic. Explain why you would be an asset to the company. Do not mention salary (unless specifically requested to) and don't express any doubts about your ability to handle the job.
- Suggest a meeting to further discuss how you could benefit the company. You could indicate that you will follow up with an email or phone call, or ask to hear from the reader. Make it easy for the person to contact you; give your contact information in the form of email and a phone number.
- Sign your letter.
- Proofread your letter very carefully.

If sending in a hard copy:

- Use good quality stationery of the same type and colour as used for your resumé.
 - Do not staple the letter to the resumé. Place the letter on top.
 - Send your cover letter and resumé, unfolded, in an 8.5" x 11" envelope.
-

Sample Cover Letters

Example 1: When responding to a job advertisement

1655 Frederick Street
Anytown, B.C.
VOX 1R0
May 28, 2015

Mr. Steve Cooke
Chef, Abby's Restaurant
268 St. George Street
Anytown, B.C.
VOX 1R0

Dear Mr. Cooke,

I believe that I have the skills and experience you require for the First Cook position you advertised on the go2HR website on May 27, 2015. I have just received my Professional Cook 3 Certificate of Qualification after completing a three-year apprenticeship with Freddy's Restaurants in Kelowna, B.C. You will find me a hardworking and enthusiastic employee who works well in a team.

I have worked breakfast, lunch, and dinner shifts preparing a full range of menu items. My job at Freddy's Restaurant was fast paced and taught me to prepare a high volume of menu items at a consistently high quality. I have had the pleasure of dining at Abby's several times and have always been impressed with the quality of food and professional service.

I have assisted with preparing banquets on a regular basis for occasions such as weddings, birthday celebrations, conferences, and business meetings. I am available to work evenings and weekends. Further details of my work experience and education may be found in the attached resumé.

May I hear from you soon regarding an interview? You may contact me at 778-555-3301 or via email at dpeterson@anyemail.com.

Yours sincerely,

David Peterson

Enc.

Figure 23. When responding to a job advertisement

Example 2: When looking for job leads (unsolicited)

345 Any Street
 Anytown, B.C.
 V0X 1R0
 June 21, 1996

Ms Alanna Stevens
 Executive Chef
 South Shore Resorts
 Box 154
 Sunny Acres, B.C.
 V0T 1S3

Dear Ms. Stevens

Are you looking for a motivated sous-chef to assist with the planned expansion of the South Shore Resorts food services described in the business section of the *Anytown Times* on June 19, 2014? I am looking for just such a challenge.

I have worked in all food service areas of a large hotel, including the coffee shop, dining room, and pub kitchens. I have prepared banquets for up to 300 people. During the absence of the sous-chef, I assumed all of his duties, receiving the commendation of the executive chef.

I have recently completed a distance education course in food and beverage cost control offered by the Open Learning Agency. As part of this course, I completed an analysis of the menu for the Pleasant Stay Hotel dining room. My report was implemented by the executive chef and has already led to increased revenues.

I will be visiting Sunny Acres during the week of July 10 to 17 and would like to discuss employment opportunities at South Shore Resorts with you. I will contact you to set up an appointment on July 2, 2014. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the qualifications I have outlined in the attached resumé, please contact me at (250) 555-1234 or by email at schung@anyemail.com.

Yours truly,

Suzanne Chung

Enc.

Figure 24 When looking for job leads (unsolicited)

Information to Leave Out of Cover Letters and Resumés

The Human Rights Code prohibits **discrimination** on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, gender, religion, place of origin, sexual orientation, political belief, marital status, family status, age, and criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment. This includes information about your plans for marriage or child care, your date of birth, place of birth, height, or weight.

Employers are not allowed to ask you for a photograph that might identify your race and gender. Nor can they ask about present or previous health problems, WorkSafeBC claims, or any absence due to stress or mental illness.

They cannot ask about military service outside Canada. Information related to these prohibited grounds should not be included in your resumé. Most employers will not request this information.

If you are asked for inappropriate information, you have three options:

- Fill in the information or answer the question even though it may be illegal.
- Write a dash or N/A (not applicable) in the application form.
- Send a copy of the application form or advertisement to the Human Rights Commission and make a complaint.

Job Search Skills

Visible and Hidden Job Market

Experts estimate that only 20% of jobs are ever advertised through a newspaper ad, job posting, or an employment agency. This 20% is the visible job market. It takes relatively little time to apply for advertised jobs. Be sure to search the visible job market as thoroughly as possible. An employer will not be impressed if you phone looking for a job, unaware of an advertisement.

Job Advertisements

Online job boards, classified ads, and newspapers are the main channels through which jobs are advertised. A number of hospitality-specific websites cover all aspects of the tourism industry enabling employers to advertise positions in specific fields. Useful hospitality and tourism websites include www.go2HR.ca, www.hcareers.ca, and www.workopolis.ca (hospitality and tourism sections). The B.C. government has also recently invested a great deal of resources into a provincial job board and other tools such as an apprentice job match at its WorkBC website.

In smaller communities, check the local newspapers, or newspapers from the nearest metropolitan area as well as classified ad websites like Craigslist and Kijiji. Each ad usually includes the job title, qualifications, and experience needed, and how and where to apply for the job.

A job advertisement may also give you information about the company, the salary and some of the benefits offered. Read the ad very carefully to see what the job requires. Compare the requirements with your own qualifications. In the current job market, you will need to meet all of the requirements in order to be interviewed for the job.

Job Postings

Most companies will have a career section on their website that may include available positions and how to submit resumés. Many of these will also include an online application form that must be completed.

Job ads may also be posted in trade publications, websites, and newsletters. Professional associations and special interest groups such as trade associations and organizations are a helpful source and often have job postings.

Colleges, institutes, and universities often have student employment or placement offices that provide information about job postings and advice on job searches.

Positions with the provincial government (for example, a cook in a provincial penitentiary or provincially run hospital) may be listed on the B.C. government's MyHR website: https://search.employment.gov.bc.ca/cgi-bin/a/searchjobs_quick.cgi.

Private Employment Agencies

If you choose to do your search through a private employment agency, be sure that it deals with employers in the hotel, restaurant, and food service industry. Employment agencies must register with the Employment Standards Branch. They are not permitted to charge you a fee for finding you a job or identifying possible employers. They receive payment from the employer who uses their services.

Hidden Job Market

Many jobs are filled without ever having been advertised. You can find these jobs by contacting employers directly or using your personal and business contacts to develop job leads. You can contact employers directly by email, mail, or in person. Usually, personal contacts are preferable.

To identify employers who might hire someone with your qualifications, consult an online search engine or a local business directory.

A good way to find job leads is to become involved in the local branch of the restaurant association or the Canadian Culinary Federation. Some associations offer student or junior membership. Volunteer to assist with fundraising and other events. When a chef or restaurant manager knows that you are interested in the trade and willing to volunteer, he or she may be more willing to help you find a job. Attend trade fairs, restaurant, and food shows. This will help you find out more about the businesses in which you could work and can be a source of job contacts.

Watch for news items in your local media that may identify job opportunities. For example, a local travel magazine may have an article on a resort that will be opening soon or a hotel that is expanding its dining room. You might also come across a website that caters to foodies that lists upcoming restaurant openings.

Another source of direct contacts for job leads comes from your family, friends, colleagues, and co-workers, as well as from former employers, customers, and suppliers. The wider the range of your contacts, the greater the likelihood of a successful lead. Let people know that you are looking for a job so that they can be on the lookout for possible opportunities. Social media is an increasingly popular way to identify the hidden job market. Posting your profile on [LinkedIn](#) or asking your contacts via social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter for leads can pay dividends.

Conducting an Information Interview

The process of exploring possible job leads is called information interviewing. There are five steps to keep in mind:

1. Make initial contact

Speak with people directly. Have a specific person's name if possible. If not, ask to speak to the restaurant manager or the chef. In large hotels, ask to speak to the executive chef. If you are contacting someone you know well, you may leave a message if that person is out.

If you don't know the contact well, try and find out the best time to reach that person. Take into account the schedule of the business that you are contacting. If a restaurant is open for dinner only, try in the early afternoon. If they are open for lunch, try before lunch service or after it ends. Be polite and thank the person to whom you are speaking.

Once you have reached the manager or chef, ask the person to meet with you briefly about job leads. Explain that you would like to speak with him or her even though the company is not hiring right now. Be clear and to the point as you describe your background, training, and experience. Prepare yourself for the call so that you can speak clearly and concisely. If the person agrees to meet with you, confirm the person's name, address, and the time of the meeting. Thank the person for his or her time.

If the person is unwilling to meet with you, ask whether he or she has any suggestions for other persons or companies you can contact. Get the necessary information. Thank him or her for speaking with you and go on to the next contact.

2. Request assistance

Arrive for the meeting on time. Dress neatly and be well groomed. Treat this meeting as though it were a job interview. Be polite. Bring a copy of your resumé and references. Be prepared with the necessary information to fill out an application. Be prepared with specific questions. Some questions that you might ask include:

- How are new employees usually recruited and what strategies work best (e.g., dropping in on employers, going through an employment agency)?
- Where might a person with my skills and background fit in this field of employment?
- Who would you recommend I talk to about job opportunities?

Ask whether the person might be willing to make an introduction for you. Having your contact write or phone other prospects is always more effective than you making the contact. If you make the contacts yourself, use the initial contact's name when you call. For example, you might say, "This is Peter Jones calling. I was referred to you by Mr. Goodhost, the manager of Jerry's Good Eats."

3. Record information

Make notes during each contact interview for later follow-up. When you contact any of the leads given to you by another source, make notes for each person. Be sure to update your files each time you contact someone. Also be sure that you keep copies of all letters, job ads, and other job search information.

4. Encourage contact

Leave your name, email, and telephone number to make sure that everyone you contact knows how to get in contact with you. Request that the person contact you if he or she thinks of a lead after you leave. Leave a copy of your resumé. This provides the person with the necessary information for talking about you to others. Write a brief thank-you note after the meeting. This provides you with another opportunity to remind the person of your name and goal.

5. Keep checking

Check regularly and briefly with all of the people on your list of contacts. This acts as a reminder for them and may also provide new information. It is especially important to check with those people who have agreed to put you in touch with someone else. You want to be able to make that new contact as soon as possible. When you get a job, send a brief thank-you note to the contacts who assisted you in finding the job.

Preparing for an Interview

Resumés and cover letters interest the employer in hiring you. However, most employers compile a short list of candidates using the applications they receive, and then interview the people on this short list. This is especially true in the food service and hospitality industry where personal suitability and presentation is a key ingredient in customer service.

Remember that when you drop off a resumé or application, or call regarding a job opening, employees of the company are forming an impression of you. Always be polite and friendly. If you visit the company, dress appropriately and pay attention to your grooming. The person with whom you speak may pass along her or his impressions of you to the person doing the hiring.

It takes a lot of work to get the stage where you are offered an interview, so it is important to make the interview count. When employers are asked why applicants interviewed for jobs are rejected, interpersonal skills and personal characteristics are often key factors.

Applicants may be rejected because of:

- Poor personal appearance and hygiene
- An overbearing, conceited attitude
- Poor communication skills
- Lack of clear career goals
- Lack of interest, commitment, and enthusiasm for the job
- Lack of confidence and poise
- Overemphasis on what the employer offers them (salary, benefits, vacation)
- Lack of tact, maturity, and courtesy
- Poor attitude about the job, previous employers, or school
- Failure to look interviewer in the eye and limp handshake
- Inability to relate skills and experience to the job
- Lack of knowledge about the company
- Obvious personal problems
- Lack of tolerance, strong prejudices, and narrow interests

Types of Interviews

Often you will be interviewed in person. However, in larger companies or when applying for a job in another province, you may also be interviewed by telephone. Today, it is quite common to have an interview via Skype. This allows the interviewer to see you and make an opinion on your appearance. It is important to look professional in this situation as well. Some companies conduct screening interviews as a way of reducing the number of applicants who are considered for a job. Screening interviews may be conducted by someone other than the person who is responsible for the actual hiring. These initial interviews may be a preliminary step to an in-depth personal interview.

Being Prepared

Before going to an interview, you should make sure that you have prepared carefully. You should research the company

so that you know what the company sells and how your skills might fit their needs. When applying for a position as a cook, you might visit the restaurant, study the menu, and perhaps even order and eat a meal. Take a good look around. What does the restaurant look like? What is the general ambiance and tone? Do the staff appear to get along well? Do staff members work as a team? Is this a place where you would like to work? Do you feel that you would fit in? Doing your homework about the potential employer makes you look interested in the job and committed to the new employer.

Before going to an interview, you should:

- Be able to describe how your experience and skills would benefit the company.
- Anticipate possible questions you might be asked and have answers prepared.
- Plan transportation to arrive a few minutes early.
- Choose appropriate, business-like clothing and accessories to wear. Take a look at how the staff are dressed when you visit, and dress accordingly. A suit or sports jacket, tie, and dress slacks are appropriate for men. A suit or skirt and blouse are acceptable for women. Women may also wear dress slacks.
- Make sure that clothing is clean, well-pressed, and in good condition. Shoes should be freshly shined and in good condition.
- Be immaculately groomed (for men, freshly shaved or carefully trimmed beard or moustache; for women, simply styled hair and subdued makeup).
- Wear only simple, subdued jewellery and perfume.
- Make sure that you have a clean copy of your application letter, job ad, resumé and references and/or reference letters, and copies of transcripts or certificates relevant to the position to take to the interview.
- Take a pen and paper.
- Prepare questions to ask the interviewer and write them neatly or print them on a piece of paper.

Anticipating Questions the Interviewer May Ask

Employers use interviews to gauge whether you have the qualities to perform the job well. They are looking for ability and aptitude, a willingness to work and learn, a desire to help accomplish the organization's goals, and maturity and compatibility. For the most part, the interviewer will already have established that you have the minimum training and experience for the job by reading your resumé.

Interviews use a question-and-answer format. You should be prepared to answer questions such as those listed below. Even if these are not the exact questions which will be asked, you should rehearse the subject matter so you have a well-rounded complete answer to give when the question is asked.

Can you tell me something about yourself?

This is usually an invitation to talk about yourself on a personal but not intimate level. Stress such points as your family background, length of time in the community, work with community groups, hobbies, and interests. End by focusing on your work experience, work values, aptitudes, and qualities and how these are relevant to the job in question.

What are your future plans?

Describe your specific career plans and how this job fits into these plans.

Why do you want to work here?

You want to emphasize how this position will use your existing skills and develop additional skills. You might also mention the company's reputation as a leader in the industry, a fair employer, or a good corporate citizen, its reputation for providing high-quality training to staff, and other relevant considerations.

Can you work under pressure and deadlines?

This question usually indicates that pressure is a feature of the job. Use examples from your work, school, and personal life to illustrate your ability to handle pressure and deadlines.

Why did you leave your last employer? or Why do you want to leave your present employer?

Mention acceptable reasons for leaving a job such as lay-off, illness, relocation, or retraining, or wanting a new challenge. If you were fired, be honest about the reason and explain why you think you would be a good employee now (e.g., learned from mistakes, dealt with personal problems).

What are your strengths?

Your strengths should present you as an efficient and committed worker who can perform the job competently. Other strengths required in every job are honesty, dependability, enthusiasm, and cooperation. Mention them if appropriate.

What are your weaknesses or limitations?

This question may sometimes be phrased in more subtle ways, such as “What are some areas in which you can improve?” “How have you grown over the past few years?” or “Where do you see yourself needing to grow in the next few years?” It is not a good strategy to avoid mentioning shortcomings because you may come across as dishonest, defensive, or weak.

Mention one or two shortcomings in a way that is not damaging. You can do this by mentioning a weakness that is a mirror of one of your assets or by mentioning those that are easily remedied. For example, you might say, “I drive myself very hard and have to be careful not to assume that other staff have the energy that I have.” Or you might say, “I would like to take a course in menu planning. So far, I have some on-the-job experience and have done some reading on my own.” These type of responses indicate a willingness to be open, a knowledge of your shortcomings, and a willingness to address them. This will create a favourable impression on interviewers.

Why should I hire you?

Your answer should stress how your skills and experience benefit the company and help meet the company’s goals. If you are being hired to address a specific problem, explain how you have handled similar situations in the past.

Other things you might be asked about include:

- An explanation of any gaps in your resumé, poor grades, or a change in career direction
- How you might handle a specific problem on the job
- How you would describe your personality
- How you feel about overtime, working on holidays, or other job conditions
- How much you expect to be paid (be flexible; either indicate a range you would find acceptable, or invite the employer to make the decision based on your previous jobs, experience, and salary)
- What you value at work and in life, what you look for in a job, or what is your ideal job
- What you find difficult to do or who you find difficult to work with

When planning responses, be positive. Indicate how you have learned from experience, what benefits you have gained, and how this learning benefits the employer. Be honest and sincere. Some employers may ask about your leisure activities. Often these employers are looking for someone who is well rounded and contributes to the community.

Handling Discriminatory Questions in Interviews

The Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination in the recruitment of employees except in the case of bona fide (genuine) occupational requirements. Most employers avoid questions regarding these prohibited grounds in interviews because they know that otherwise they may be open to complaints of discrimination by unsuccessful candidates. Review the section earlier in the book on the B.C. Human Rights Code for more information.

Behaviour in the Interview

Interviews are short and interviewers have only a brief time to make a personal assessment. Small details can make a big

impact. If you display confidence in yourself and in your ability to do the job, much of this confidence will be transmitted to the interviewer.

If you have not participated in an interview before, you can practise your responses with a friend or fellow student to build confidence and reduce nervousness. It can be very useful to videotape your mock interview. You will get useful feedback from watching yourself which can be used to improve your performance in interviews.

Be courteous and friendly in the interview, without being overly familiar. Interviewers respond to pleasantness and respect.

Some tips on coming across well in an interview include the following:

- Arrive alone and a little early for the interview.
- Remove sunglasses and coat before the interview.
- Get the interviewer's correct name and use it during the interview.
- Smile and be ready to shake hands firmly.
- Look the interviewer in the eye. If there is more than one person conducting the interview, make sure you look at each of them when they are speaking with you, rather than only maintaining eye contact with the "lead" or more senior person.
- Remain standing until you are invited to sit.
- Do not bring your personal problems to the interview.
- Answer all questions clearly, specifically and honestly.
- Do not make jokes or wisecracks or get into arguments.
- Be poised and calm. Do not fidget, crack your knuckles, or engage in other nervous mannerisms.
- Ask a few pertinent questions about the job.
- Thank the interviewer for his or her time and shake hands.

Questions You Can Ask

Asking some questions yourself in the interview demonstrates that you have confidence in your abilities and that you are genuinely interested in the job and in the company. You can ask the following:

- Do you have any questions about my resumé?
- Can you tell me more about the responsibilities of this job?
- What possibilities are there for promotion and advancement if I do a good job?
- What are the future plans of the company (e.g., expansion, franchising)?
- When will you make your decision about this job?
- What training programs do you have for employees?
- What opportunities are there to transfer to other properties owned by the company (if your research indicates that the company is part of a chain)?

Following an interview, you should assess your performance so that you can improve your interviewing skills.

Activities:

- Prepare a career plan for the next 10 years
- Prepare or update your resumé
- Create or update your profile on LinkedIn

Key Terms

Key Terms

active listening

Restating or paraphrasing what you have heard in your own words, to confirm the understanding of both parties

advancement

The opportunity to move ahead

aggressive

Behave in a hostile fashion

apprentice

A person learning a trade under the direction of a qualified tradesperson

assertive

Confident and direct in claiming one's rights or putting forward one's views

brigade

Traditional name for the kitchen team and organizational structure

chef

The head of the kitchen brigade

chef de cuisine

The person responsible for the day-to-day operations of the kitchen in larger operations with multiple departments or food outlets

chef de partie

The head of a section or station in larger kitchens

collective agreement

A contract between a union and employer concerning the terms and conditions of employment for employees in the bargaining unit. A collective agreement is a legally enforceable document binding on all parties involved.

conditions of employment

All matters and circumstances that in any way affect the employment relationship of employers and employees

conflict

Opposition between two parties

criticism

The act of passing judgment as to the merits of anything

day

A) A 24 hour period ending at midnight

B) In relation to an employee's shift that continues over midnight, the 24-hour period beginning at the start of the employee's shift

delegation

To assign a task to another person

discrimination

To deny a person or class of persons any accommodation, service, or facility customarily available to the public because of the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, or age of that person or class of persons

employee

- A) A person, including a deceased person, receiving or entitled to wages for work performed for another
- B) A person an employer allows, directly or indirectly, to perform work normally performed by an employee
- C) A person being trained by an employer for the employer's business
- D) A person on leave from an employer
- E) A person who has a right of recall

employer

- A) A person who has or had control or direction of an employee
- B) A person who is or was responsible, directly or indirectly, for the employment of an employee

entremetier

Cook who works in the main hot section, preparing vegetables and starches

executive chef

The head of the kitchen brigade in larger operations. Executive chefs often are not involved in day-to-day production

executive sous-chef

In a large operation with more than one sous-chef, the executive sous-chef is the second in command and in charge when the executive chef is not present

garde manger

- A) Cook who works in the main cold or salad section, preparing a variety of foods
- B) The cold kitchen or station responsible for preparing cold menu items

line

The main cooking area of the kitchen where most hot foods are produced

line cook

Cook who works in the main hot section, preparing a variety of foods

manager

A person whose principal employment responsibilities consist of supervising or directing, or both supervising and directing, human or other resources, or a person employed in an executive capacity

motivation

Desire to do; interest or drive

non-verbal communication

Sending and receiving wordless (mostly visual) cues between people

occupational association

An organization, other than a trade union or employers' organization, in which membership is a prerequisite to carrying on a trade, occupation, or profession

overtime wages

The wages an employee is entitled to receive according to the Employment Standards Act or the terms of an employment agreement

passive

Opposite of aggressive

pay period

A period of up to 16 consecutive days of employment

payroll record

A record of hours of work and pay required under the Employment Standards Act to be kept by an employer

professional cooking

Cooking for others as an occupation, not as a hobby

professionalism

To act in a professional manner according to set standards

promotion

To move to a higher position in the same organization

regular wage

A) If an employee is paid by the hour, the hourly wage

B) If an employee is paid on a flat rate, piece rate, commission, or other incentive basis, the employee's wages in a pay period divided by the employee's total hours of work during that pay period

C) If an employee is paid a weekly wage, the weekly wage divided by the lesser of the employee's normal or average weekly hours of work

D) If an employee is paid a monthly wage, the monthly wage multiplied by 12 and divided by the product of 52 times the lesser of the employee's normal or average weekly hours of work

E) If an employee is paid a yearly wage, the yearly wage divided by the product of 52 times the lesser of the employee's normal or average weekly hours of work

respect

To show regard or consideration for

resolution

To resolve a problem

right of recall

The right of an employee under a collective agreement to be recalled to employment within a specified period after being laid off

rights

A just claim or title, whether legal, prescriptive, or moral

sous-chef

Second in command below the chef. In larger operations, there may be many sous-chefs with different areas of responsibility.

special clothing

Includes a uniform or a specified brand of clothing required by the employer

stations

Areas of the kitchen set up for an individual or individuals to prepare a group of menu items. A professional kitchen will have several stations

statutory holiday

New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, British Columbia Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, and any other holiday prescribed by regulation

stress

A condition that can have an impact on an organism's mental and physical well-being

stress relief

An action that results in the reduction of stress

swing cook

Cook who rotates between different stations in the kitchen. also known as a tournant.

temporary layoff

A) In the case of an employee who has a right of recall, a layoff that exceeds the specified period within

which the employee is entitled to be recalled to employment

B) In any other case, a layoff of up to 13 weeks in any period of 20 consecutive weeks

termination of employment

A layoff other than a temporary layoff

termination pay

Pay for each week of notice an employee is entitled to, based on the average of the previous eight weeks' hours of work and pay

tournant

Cook who rotates between different stations in the kitchen. also known as a swing cook

trade union

An organization of employees formed for purposes that include the regulation of relations between employees and employers

tribunal

The Employment Standards Tribunal; the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal

wages

A) salaries, commissions or money, paid or payable by an employer to an employee for work

B) money that is paid or payable by an employer as an incentive and relates to hours of work, production, or efficiency

Does not include gratuities, money that is paid at the discretion of the employer and is not related to hours of work, production or efficiency, allowances or expenses, penalties, and administrative fees

week

A period of seven consecutive days beginning for the purpose of calculating overtime, on Sunday, and for any other purpose, on any day

work

The labour or services an employee performs for an employer whether at the employer's place of business, in the employee's residence, or elsewhere

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