



LABOR SOLUTIONS :

Best Practices for Training & Development

Staffing has become the number one issue for restaurant operators, with high turnover and difficulty hiring new employees as the biggest pain points. With appropriate training, these concerns can be addressed and managed successfully. One of the top three reasons employees in the restaurant industry say they would stay longer at their current employer is proper training.¹

Why is Training so Important?

- Employees who are regularly trained are more motivated and confident, leading to improved performance and teamwork.
- During the training process, you and your managers are regularly communicating with employees, getting to know them better, which results in stronger relationships.
- New employees learn what the expectations are for good performance before they begin their job, reducing confusion and frustration that can lead to lower retention.
- The cost of turnover for a single restaurant employee averages over \$5,000 when you consider the costs for recruiting, selection, orientation, training and loss in productivity.²

62% of employees say lack of training would make them leave their company.¹

The training process should begin before your new staff member is even hired by developing a training program based on your restaurant's operations and values. When you promote your training program and career advancement opportunities to job candidates, you will be positioned to attract high quality, long-term employees to your restaurant.

Building your Training Program

Every restaurant will be different, but the general tips below can help you get started in developing your detailed training plan.

- **Integrate your company culture** and performance standards into the program. If you decide to use an off-the-shelf plan, be sure to make adjustments that align with your organization.
- **Offer the best learning experience** for each employee depending on the position and how they engage. Some people learn better with an online system while others prefer face-to-face training.
- **Hands-on, practical experience** is crucial to success and allowing strong employees to help in the training process is motivating to both the trainer and the trainee.
- **Cross-train your employees** to be prepared to perform multiple jobs when necessary. Not only will this help you when someone calls in on a busy Saturday night, it also provides employees with new opportunities for growth and development.
- **Provide ongoing training** for all employees to continue to hone their skills and promote your commitment to their success. 82% of foodservice employees who receive training every 6 months express higher satisfaction with their job.¹
- **Set clear advancement goals** to provide an incentive to employees who are looking for a career, not just a job.

Company Background & Culture

Regardless of whether your new employees have experience working in a restaurant, they need to understand what makes your business different in order to be successful. However, less than 5% of food and beverage employees report that they receive this type of training.¹

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Welcoming new employees with your company history gets them more involved and engaged with you and your business from day one. Include the information below as part of their orientation process.

- Who the owners are and their background in the restaurant industry
- Why, when and how the business started
- What the concept of the restaurant is, where the name came from and how the menu was developed
- Key dates in history - new locations, awards and achievements
- Company values like quality, teamwork and proudly independent
- The experience that customers should receive and how they can help to deliver it

70% of employees in customer-facing roles receive **zero** customer service training.¹

Training Manual Basics

Once you have successfully hired and immersed your new employees into your restaurant's vision, you need to give them the tools to perform their job. Developing an employee handbook will provide a reference tool for all employees to standardize rules, regulations and procedures. Naming your manual something else may also make your new employees feel more comfortable - like "Quality Handbook" or "Pizza Partner Guide."

- **Outline employee standards** like your dress code, expected behavior, health & safety, scheduling, payroll and performance reviews.
- **Develop checklists** for each position to help trainees learn faster and break down more complicated tasks for completion. These are especially useful when an employee may be working on their own to make sure they don't miss something.
- **Include the "why"** when training so employees understand the importance of what they are being asked to do - it will also provide some extra motivation if they see the bigger picture.
- **Get a training sign-off** from both the trainee and trainer once the training is complete to ensure the new employee takes accountability for the knowledge.
- **Use the Grande Cheese app** to visually show procedures for creating recipes and menu items. Grande 100-Percenters can [download the app here](#).



Employee Engagement = Retention

You have done a lot of work to get your new employees hired and trained, but keeping them for the long-term is a continuous process. In addition to ongoing training you should also provide an environment and activities that will keep your staff motivated and loyal to your business.

- **Recognize top employees** through an employee of the month reward program. You can also call out their achievements at company meetings or on social media.
- **Create goals for performance** together with your employees and reward them for reaching them.
- **Perform regular employee evaluations** to provide feedback on progress and opportunities for improvement. Providing a schedule for reviews, whether it is quarterly, yearly or somewhere in between, shows that you are committed to their growth.
- **Provide advancement opportunities** and promote from within, if possible, to showcase your commitment to employee growth.

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- **Implement contests and rewards** for your staff. Examples include a competition for selling the most specials in a week or rewarding employee attendance. Not only will your employees have fun and reap the benefits, but you can also improve profits and productivity.
- **Provide transparency on decisions** and include employees in the decision-making process.
- **Solicit feedback** through meetings or suggestion boxes. Follow through by implementing suggestions that make your business stronger to encourage continued engagement.
- **Educate staff on menu items through regular tastings.** Your employees will not only appreciate the free food, but more importantly, learn about the menu and ingredients to communicate more effectively to your customers about what you are offering.
- **Sponsor team building exercises** through competitions, parties and activities outside the restaurant. The stronger the relationships among your team members, the more productive and supportive they will be.

Career Advancement & Development

The opportunity for career growth was the second most popular benefit hourly workers cited for convincing them to stay longer with a company.³ The restaurant industry is one of the few segments where it is still possible to move up the ladder without a college education, making on-the-job training more critical for employees who want to advance.

80% of restaurant owners and 90% of managers started their career in an entry-level position.⁴

Make sure your staff understands what career opportunities are available to them and how they can reach those goals. By making it clear during the interview and the beginning of their employment, new hires will be motivated to learn quickly and request additional responsibilities. Continuous training and feedback are important to keep your ambitious employees engaged and working toward that goal.

Grande 100-Percenter can access additional tools and templates to help with training and developing employees by [clicking here](#).

¹ 2019 TalentLMS Survey

² The Center for Hospitality Research at Cornell

³ Snagajob State of the Hourly Worker Report, 2019

⁴ National Restaurant Association, 2021 State of the Industry