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Seeing Others as Others See Us

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Hospitality EXPO – The Irish Industries Exhibition 2014

Seeing ourselves as others see us



James Murphy, Lecturer & Author – Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)

Presentation Overview



- **Introduction** – some initial considerations.
- **Our Customers** - seek to see yourself as others see you.
- **Making the difference** – your business purpose.
- **Creating first impressions** – one chance.
- **Improving on first impressions** – some techniques
- **Customer encounters** – examples and brief discussions.
- **Conclusion / Further Reading & Resources / Training & Skills Development**
- **References**

Introduction

Some Initial Considerations

- **Challenges to the bar industry today:** increased competition from a variety of entertainment sources,
- Bar owners recognize that other **establishments are providing a similar offering** sometimes at **lower prices**.
- This realization has brought about an increased focus the **care of customers and their viewpoints**.
- Customers encounters: unhappy customers, encountering **attitudes of indifference** from staff and **poor service**.
- **Dissatisfied customers** usually **talk to others** about their dissatisfaction and the negative effect of this outcome can paralyze, all your best pro-active customer and marketing efforts.
- It costs, on average, **five times as much to win a new customer** as it does to keep an old one.
- Bars put enormous efforts into winning new customers and very little into **customer care and retention**.



Our Customers



- Stone & Young (1993) argued that '*customer care is not a veneer to be applied to an organization to make it look good for customers*'.
- It should be a **core value** and should be **built in to the very fabric** of your offering you should **always seek to under promise and over deliver**.
- Seek to **see ourselves as others see us** in all our glory which **includes all our faults**.
- What can we do to improve our customer care techniques which in turn help to improve business and profitability?
- **The answer:** improve the quality of our service, we need job crafts, people-handling skills, a positive attitude, good business procedures, communication and teamwork and a commitment to continual learning.
- Getting it right for your customer involves: **knowing** what to do, and to **obtain the ability** to do it in thoughtful, **appropriate and efficient ways**.

Making the Difference



So much has been written and spoken about customer care, customer service, even customer delight, but what does it all mean to your bar.

Peter Drucker (1954) wrote *'there is only one valid definition of business purpose: to create and keep a customer'*.

- **How your customers feel about you** and supporting your establishment largely reflects how they think you feel about them.
- **Passion** and the **ability to impact** on your customers are the two major factors in the bar industry today.
- Ability to convey your **enthusiasm** and to surround yourself with **employees who buy into it**.
- If everything that you and your employees do **sends a consistent message to customers** that they are **valued and respected** your chances of retaining their business increase immeasurably.
- Impress your customers through sincerity and enthusiasm and delighting them with your product and service.
- Customer care therefore **does not work** unless people are committed to it.
- **Customer expectations:** service delivery levels are rising, increased demand on all staff to perform, everyone can make the difference.
- **Committing yourself**, commit yourself to providing the highest levels of service in every aspect of your duties and responsibilities.
- **The hidden differences**, the major hidden difference between people is of course their *personalities*, similarly the hidden difference between the many products and services offered in your bar is the employees who make, sell and serve them.

Creating First Impressions

The Greeting Process

A prospective customer will be won or lost by their **first impressions** of you and your bar. You will usually have only **one chance** to make a first impression, so the **initial impression** is vital.

- (a) a natural smile, a welcome expression.
- (b) immediate acknowledgement of the customer's presence.
- (c) undivided attention a courteous, hospitable and efficient manner adopted at all times when dealing with customers and potential customers.
- (d) use eye contact see social skills
- (d) customers should be addressed by name (discretely).
- (e) present a smart, neat appearance
- (f) Customers should be advised of any delays in service.
- (g) do not drink or eat in front of your customer's while on duty



Creating First Impressions (continued)

Grooming and Social Skills

It is crucial that the **bartender's image** is always **presented in harmony** (professional) with the professional image that the bar wishes to portray to its customer's.

The bartender must remember that they are always in the **public eye** and must therefore pay **special attention** to the following areas;

- *workplace clothing*: must be professional, clean and pressed
- *shoes*: clean and polished
- *hair*: groomed or tied back
- *make up and jewelry*: worn discreetly
- *name badges*: if appropriate, worn at all times
- good standard of *personal hygiene*
- *posture*: alert and interested
- *mannerisms*: bad manners should be checked
- *facial expressions*: sincere and welcoming
- *keep a good eye contact*: implies honesty and interest
- *listening* and really hearing
- *speech*: your projection and volume is crucial, it's not what you say it is how you say it.

Finally **staying cheerful** even when you are tired, agitated or in a bad mood, you must always **try to not let your personal feelings** and **negative feelings** affect how you deal with customers or work colleagues.

Improving on Those First Impressions



Techniques for Improving on those first impressions

- (a) **Anticipation** of customer's requirements, e.g. refilling a wine glass or remembering the order of drinks.
- (b) **Co-operation** with customers in a hurry.
- (c) **Attention** to the needs of **special groups** e.g. elderly, children or handicapped.
- (d) All customers treated **equally**.
- (e) **Tactful approach** to problems and awkward situations.
- (f) **Personnel** telephone calls in front of customers should be discouraged (mobile phones included).
- (g) Conversation among staff should not be **imposed on customers**.
- (h) A good **team spirit** leads to a pleasant **atmosphere** for the customers.
- (i) Avoid being **over familiar** with customers.

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Customer Encounters



The key to success for your bar in this competitive environment lies in the **quality of the service offered**; this vital mechanism can be used to achieve a **competitive advantage**.

Quinn (2006) contends that '*customer driven people in companies always have to fight with people who have other priorities*'.

Carefully consider the following customer care scenario carefully, discuss their implications.

- **Scenario A:** a party of three people has booked a table at a restaurant. When they arrive, the restaurant owner apologises and informs them that the table will be another twenty minutes. *First ending*, so would they mind waiting in the bar area. *Second ending*, he will understand if they wish to cancel the reservation but if not, perhaps they would care to enjoy a drink in the bar area with his compliments.
- **Scenario B:** an engineer has just finished a routine service on the central heating boiler of an elderly bar owner and informs him that; *First ending*, all is done, if you sign here I'll be away, I've got a really busy day today!. *Second ending* OK, that's all done, no problems there, it's all in good condition. I also checked the pipe work out to the oil tank; that's fine too. Oh, and by the way, the door to the heating boiler in the cellar was a bit loose so I tightened up the hinge. No problem, it only took a second.

Consider each scenario carefully, in what way did these businesses gain or lose?

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Conclusion / Further Reading & Resources

Conclusions

- Customer care training is not an optional extra but an essential part of all hospitality establishment's business strategy.
- The success of any establishment depends on the minute-by-minute performance of its staff members.
- To successfully managing customer care staff members must know what to do and have the ability to do it in thoughtful, appropriate and efficient ways to please the customer because each encounter is different.
- The care begins with creating and improving on the first impressions, which includes all staff members grooming, appearance and social skills.

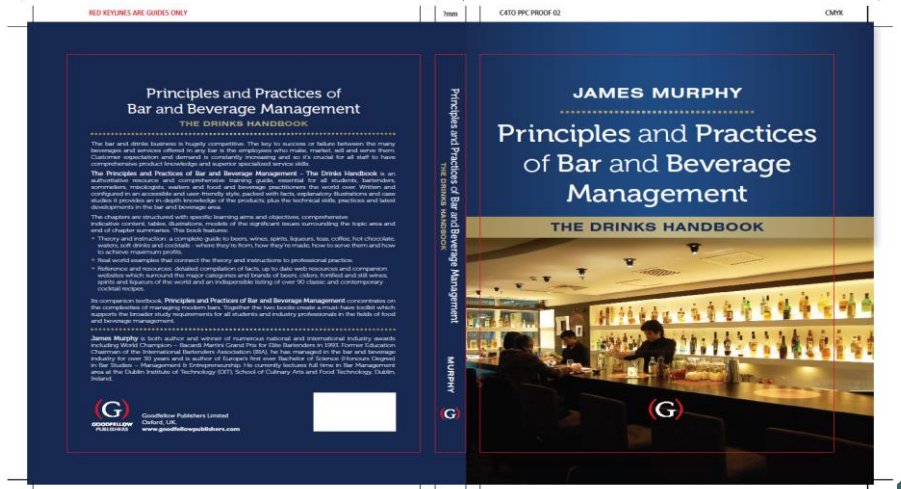
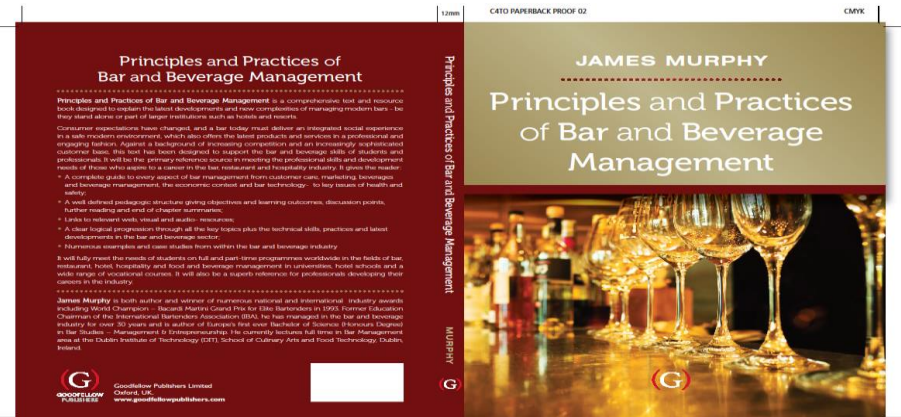
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Training & Skills Development

The Dublin Institute of Technology, School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1. (Full / Part-time courses)



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