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EMPLOYEES

How to Better Delegate Job Duties to Your Bar and Restaurant Managers

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Burning out attempting to accomplish everything yourself is one of the worst recipes you can create at your restaurant. Without delegating to your bar and restaurant managers, the long hours and constant task switching leave little time to work on your business.

Delegation is imperative for growth, explains Ryan Pernice, owner/operator of Table and Main, Osteria Mattone, and Coalition Food and Beverage. “If you’re not able to step out of your restaurant and let it run without you, you didn’t do your job,” he says, “Restaurants are built on processes and systems; a good process and a good system aren’t person reliant.”

From hiring to training to feedback, by delegating the right restaurant manager duties, owners can ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

Hire the Proper Fit

If you’re solopreneur-ing it and don’t have a team member to promote, craft your ideal restaurant manager job description then hire someone who matches those skills and fits your personality.

“90% of it is finding the right people; 10% of it is training them to make decisions you would,” says Pernice, who looks for a willingness to embrace, solve, and run to problems in managerial hires. “Because if you’re not mentally prepared, and willing and able to solve [problems], then we’re going to spend a lot of time spinning our wheels when we could be moving the pile forward,” he adds.

Ray Camillo, founder and CEO of Blue Orbit Restaurant Consulting, believes there are five personality types that form an exceptional core management team: the mayor, nurse, noticer, nun with a ruler, and mechanic. “Even if you only have three managers, those five personality traits or strengths need to be present in those three managers,” he explains.

1. **Mayor:** The GM, not great at one task (for example, accidentally leaving the lights on at night), great at motivating, excellent at one-on-ones
2. **Nurse:** The one who hears complaints, staff caretaker, good at reacting and handholding
3. **The Noticer:** The one who sees everything, can’t pull the wool over their eyes
4. **The Nun with a Ruler:** The disciplinarian, good at managing other bar and restaurant managers, good at documentation, toughest to please
5. **The Mechanic:** The problem solver, manages repairs and maintenance, finds mistakes and ways to save money on the profit and loss statement.

Hiring for personality is how Brian Poe, executive chef and owner of The Tip Tap Room, Parish Café, and Bukowski Tavern, finds new staff. “One of the important things is recognizing those



traits that you like with people you already work with and/or someone that you're interviewing that's come into the building," says Poe.

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Train Them Well

Once you've hired, start figuring out how to work together, building trust, and offloading some restaurant or bar manager duties. Spend time side-by-side, correcting, coaching, and improving in your manager's specific areas of responsibility so that you don't waste hours putting out fires, explains Camillo.

"Delegation doesn't mean I'm completely done now," says Poe, "Delegation means now I can look at the picture more broadly and see the whole playing field and step in where I need to. If I leave that closing manager every night with the same problem, and I don't help them get in, solve it, and take care of [it], when they reach their threshold, I lose a good manager."

Start with teaching them your brand's philosophy along with how to explain dishes and cocktails to guests. Then, train them on how to provide you with weekly financial updates, handle upcoming changes in the restaurant, and manage routine, but nonessential tasks like tidying up or general accounting.

Delegate Specific Tasks and Tactics for Restaurant Delegation

Your job as an operator is to identify which tasks benefit most from your involvement like one-on-ones, investing in and growing the business, and setting and maintaining the company direction. Then, offload non-value added tasks like payroll, cleaning, and interviewing certain staff members, says Pernice.

'Who orders light bulbs?' is the first question consultant Camillo asks. Because that task hits several categories from possible bar manager duties to facility management, it easily shows if a restaurant is delegating responsibly.

"The real magic is in non-essential, but value-added tasks. For instance, I think my job now is to find different, exciting, creative ways to take people's experiences from good to amazing," says Pernice, "...when I'm in the restaurant I can give guests, particularly our regulars who keep the lights on for us, amazing, out-of-the-box experiences and do things for them that restaurants don't have any business doing. That's where you really win."

Pernice also uses the Eisenhower method for delegating. It's a two-by-two matrix describing tasks as urgent, important, not urgent, or not important. He recommends focusing on urgent and important tasks and, "anything that's not important and not urgent...that's what you should be delegating."

Another way to have managers accomplish tasks is to have a sit-down lunch, explains Camillo, where you're clear about expectations, have notes on what you last spoke about, and know what's important to that manager.

Give Continual Performance Feedback

Although it may not wind up in your restaurant or bar manager job description, you need a manager who'll take and incorporate feedback, and as the restaurant owner, you need to be comfortable providing constant constructive evaluations.

Frontload expectations including performance metrics and timelines from the beginning so restaurant managers know how you'll judge their success, explains Pernice. If you don't want to end up disappointed with the results, you need to be clear from day one.

The philosophy Pernice implements from *Setting the Table* is called "constant gentle pressure", which means feedback needs to be constant, gentle, and apply a bit of pressure. If he sees his team veering off track, he'll mention it to help them deal with little problems before they become big ones

ing success.

“You can't just say, ‘Increase sales,’ and walk away...Understand where each individual manager is on the spectrum of having tasks delegated to them, then apply the right amount of tell, show, do, review to get them to be successful,” Camillo explains.

And when they succeed, let them know immediately. “To tell someone, what you did right there, that is on fire. Fantastic. That's exactly what I wanted you to do,” he adds, “Thank you for doing that, and everybody around them hears that, and everybody wants that.”

Delegation Checklist

- ✓ Hire the Proper Fit
- ✓ Train Them Well
- ✓ Delegate Specific Tasks and Tactics for Restaurant Delegation
- ✓ Give Continual Performance Feedback

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