

SOFT DRINKS



'To train and retain good staff you need to empower and inspire'

Ben Reed IPBartenders

'You have to get the basics right – small things make for excellent service'

Justin Green, General Manager, Henry's Bar

Motivating your team

Great decor and fine fayre need backing up with friendly, efficient barstaff

Investing in the skills of your people makes smart business sense. If you don't motivate your team, the good people leave – and worse still, the poor ones stay! Profitable bars and contented customers depend upon motivated, enthusiastic people – and that takes good management. Are you giving your staff something to smile about?

It is an old but proven fact in running any business – people buy people first. Great decor, good prices and fine fayre won't bring in the customers without friendly, efficient people on hand who enjoy what they do. If staff are ill-tempered, ill-equipped or ill-trained, customers definitely notice and then vote with their feet. So, what steps can astute managers take to ensure that their bar is delivering the positive atmosphere and service that matters to customers?

Recognition

There's a whole lot of skill involved in being a good barperson – but how often is that recognised? Ben Reed of IPBartenders said: "On the continent, bartenders are seen as professionals and held in high esteem. But that's not always the case in the UK."

Bar work is often seen as a casual, unskilled job, with staff being treated accordingly. Low status leads to low morale, so the effective manager is always looking to encourage staff to develop their skills and take pride in their work. Recognition for a job well done is a key factor in developing staff satisfaction.

Information

Ben Reed also said that to have happy, successful staff, they need to be "empowered and inspired". That goes beyond telling staff what to do and how to do it, it is also explaining why things are done in a particular way. For example, demonstrating the "perfect serve" will make far more sense to people when they know why it's important to customers and how it helps to encourage repeat orders. Empowerment is also about giving people reasonable control over how they do their job and how they respond to customers. But if you want them to make good decisions, then you need to invest in your people.

Training

"A good bartender will have four main areas of expertise," says Ben. "Knowledge, speed, style and etiquette. Each requires training to develop."

Ben feels that bar owners and managers should look at training as a sound business investment. Staff who understand wines, for example, are in a much stronger position to influence customer choice, and customers will appreciate that knowledge. Up-selling is a great profit opportunity but it requires staff who understand the products. You can't sell an expensive cocktail if you don't



know how to mix it and serve it with style – and without keeping your other customers waiting for their orders.

There are always difficult customers but how serious a problem they will be will also depend on the people skills of barstaff. Staff need to recognise and know how to refuse to serve someone who is at their limit or possibly under-age. Training can play a vital role in helping staff become confident and capable of dealing with tricky situations.

Equipment

Good service and a quality serve also depends on having the right materials to hand – quality products, the right glasses, the ice, the lemon and so on. Making sure your bar area is sensibly organised and uncluttered will also help your staff work more effectively.

Teamwork

Job satisfaction is very closely related to the success of working relationships. Smart managers should be on the lookout for ways of stimulating team working and co-operation. Team incentives and rewards – possibly linked to a manufacturer's promotion can be used in this way. Work needs to have an element of fun to it. If your staff don't enjoy their job, your customers won't enjoy your bar or pub.



Motivate staff to deliver great quality drinks every time

"Coca-Cola", "Coke" and the design of the "Coca-Cola" Contour Bottle are registered trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company.

A case in point



Henry's Bar in Piccadilly is an extremely busy bar/café opening every day at 8am. Staff training is at the core of its operations. General manager, Justin Green is convinced that the key to happy customers is an efficient workforce.

Henry's recruitment policy includes a trial shift to determine how potential recruits will perform within the environment. Key attributes are a "can-do" attitude, pace and a smile. Once employed, staff can expect one to two weeks training depending on their skills and experience.

Recruits are trained in the importance of using good quality ingredients and materials to make the best quality drinks and this helps them in up-selling and encouraging repeat purchases.

Justin recognises that management have to play their part for staff to work well. "Small things make for excellent service. You can't expect staff to excel if they don't have enough teaspoons, tea towels or the correct glassware. You have to get the basics right. If you don't, you end up with shoddy quality, dissatisfied customers and frustrated staff."



For more information on soft drinks and the perfect serve visit www.cokepubandbar.co.uk

