

**Profitable Hospitality Members-only Resource**

## **Creating a happier and more productive workplace**

As the owner or manager of a hospitality venue, you can often be quite removed from the personal affairs of your staff. Sure, bars, restaurants, and clubs are often known for having a staff team that feels more like ‘family’ – but late nights, high paced environment, and alcohol-fuelled customers can create stress and pressure.

So, how can you create a happier and more productive workplace for your staff?

For most owners or managers, this equates to an expensive exercise! But you don’t need to throw money at the problem in the form of expensive team building days, higher rates, or extra pay. In fact, some of the most effective steps to creating a happy workplace don’t cost a cent.

Here’s how you can start, today.

### **Ask for their opinion.**

One of the fastest ways to avoid or defuse unhappiness in the workplace is to ensure that your staff feel heard. Your business relies on their happy participation in the venue’s daily processes – so why not ask them their opinion? They will be able to give you grassroots insight into how you could streamline or improve the day-to-day.

This could mean anything from opening and closing procedures, to new recipes, to ways you could improve customer experience. Asking for their opinion won’t just bring you fresh ideas, but also allow them to feel actively involved in the business they put so much into.

### **Share the unpleasant work evenly.**

Sound obvious? We know. But without noticing, the unpleasant tasks can often be left to, or taken on by, one member of staff. Often this will be a manager or long-time staff member who simply takes over when younger or newer staff complain.

Be mindful to check in that your cleaning rosters are being followed, and the unpleasant tasks such as kitchen cleaning, bin emptying, toilet and bathroom maintenance, or customer complaints are being handled by a range of employees. Whilst you might not think it’s a big deal for a staff member to take on cleaning duties twice, they will remember.

### **Offer compensation for extra work, always.**

Just as you should share the unpleasant duties, you should always be on the lookout for staff performing extra work.

This can include:

- Arriving early, or working late
- Taking on other staff's shifts
- Going over and above for a customer
- Helping out with a task outside of their employment contract (e.g. marketing, social media)

Consider how you can compensate this work: if your budget is tight, why not organise a free meal with their friend? Or, gold class movie tickets? There are more ways than one to recognise their efforts.

### **Reward and celebrate staff, awarded by staff.**

Speaking of rewarding your staff, do it and do it often! Celebrating the accomplishments of your staff will never grow tired for them. It compels them to keep trying their hardest, and also signals that you are watching and noting their behaviour – a great comfort in a busy environment!

But it is also important to encourage your staff to reward the other staff. By running a monthly staff-nominated reward system, it forces them to look beyond their work and appreciate how hard their teammates are working.

### **Action all communication.**

Having a happy work environment also comes down to feeling that change is possible. If you receive any kind of communication from a staff member – be it in an email, text message, written note, phone call, or verbal communication – make sure you action their request!

This won't always be in an obvious action, but perhaps something more subtle. Speak with them, and let them know that you have received their message. If they have requested you take a certain action, speak with them about how this could happen. Involving them in your management process and proving to them that you're listening is sure to make them feel happy and safe in their role.

### **Avoid unnecessary titles.**

One of the greatest causes of inter-staff conflict is jealousy. Gifting one staff member with special rights or title will cause a rift if another member thinks it hasn't been earned. So, how can you get around this when creating a management system within your venue?

Try and avoid unnecessary titles. Instead of titles such as 'Assistant Manager', 'Manager', or 'Second in Charge'; why not create names that indicate task instead of rank? These could be 'Kitchen Leader', or 'Produce and Stock Leader'.

Another idea is a rotation of management roles. If you are trying to avoid segregating the group with titles, consider opting for a weekly or monthly schedule for management tasks. Whilst you



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will still need a few official titles for legal purposes, try and avoid creating too many sub-roles – invariably, someone will be left out.

### Happiness is contagious.

The sentiment of a workplace filters from the top down: happy boss, happy company. If you bring the stress of your work into the venue, your staff will notice your bad mood, and feel on edge. And when your staff are on edge, they are going to be short with your customers.

So, make an effort to always bring positivity to your workplace! Happiness is contagious, and will only work in your favour to entice customers to your venue. Teach your staff by example, and show them that a smile is the most valuable thing in customer service.

Being mindful of what kind of business you want to create is so important. Whilst some hospitality venues will be extremely formal, and others will be casual dining, all need to be happy.

You are responsible for the health and happiness of your staff, so make sure you make that part of your mission as their boss: to create a workplace they can't wait to arrive at every day.

Visit the Profitable Hospitality team at the Silver Chef stand (Stand HD48, Level 4) at Fine Food Australia 2017.

You'll receive a promo code to sign up and receive **3 months FREE access** to Profitable Hospitality, which includes online tools, training and templates that will help you build a profitable business.

PLUS go in the draw to win a **2 hour business consultation** with founder Ken Burgin!

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