

Chapter 7

Professional Expectations

Activity 7.1 Defining Professional Expectations

When you go to a restaurant, or really any establishment, you probably have certain expectations of the staff. You expect them to behave and present themselves in a particular way. Your future employer and guests will also have expectations of you.

Directions

Based on the textbook content, list the expectations of a restaurant or foodservice professional in your own words.

Professional expectations for presence and behavior:

It all starts with showing up. Your manager's most basic expectation is that employees show up for work according to the schedule. Being on time and ready to work is also important. People depend on you to be there to do your part. If you can't go to work because, for example, you are sick or your car breaks down, contact your manager right away—before your shift begins. The same is true if you are going to be late.

How you look matters too. You will be working with food and people—preparing meals, greeting guests, or serving food. Employers and guests expect employees to have a professional image. That means they look clean and neat. This covers everything from clean fingernails and hands to washed hair. Don't forget clean, ironed uniforms in the front and back of the house.

Professional expectations for front-of-the-house appearance:

All front-of-the-house employees should wear clothing that follows the company's dress code. Uniforms will vary by operation. Servers might wear polo shirts or button-down shirts. Hosts and hostesses might have a uniform or just dress in a certain color. In general, jewelry and other accessories should be limited.

Professional expectations for back-of-the-house appearance:

Traditionally, cooks and chefs wear the following:

- Comfortable, polished shoes that are kitchen-safe (i.e., nonskid soles and closed toes)
- Pants (solid black, black-and-white checked, or black-and-white striped) that fit well; solid white for pastry chefs
- Clean, ironed, double-breasted white jacket
- Clean, ironed apron
- Clean neckerchief, usually knotted or tied cravat-style
- Hat or toque

Professional expectations for attitude:

“Actions speak louder than words” is a common saying. Like attitudes, actions at work show who people are and what they value.

The best employees work well with others and take responsibility for their own actions. You’ll work with many types of people in restaurants. Each person plays a role in the operation’s success. With respect for others, good communication skills, a sense of responsibility, commitment to your work, and strong ethics, your actions will pay off for your team and for yourself.

Teacher Note:

This activity can be further expanded by asking students to describe the different types of expectations managers and guests have for different industry segments. Students should be encouraged to fill in each section of the table in their own words.

Professional expectations for personal responsibility and ethics:

Doing tasks correctly is a large part of your job. You are responsible for following directions and doing tasks in the time frame your manager assigns.

Problems come up. Maybe you need to help a busload of guests who showed up before you finished cleaning tables. Maybe you haven't been trained on how to use a piece of equipment. Whatever the reason, you are still responsible for the work your manager assigned to you. So, what can you do? The answer is simple: communicate. By communicating often and clearly, you give your coworkers and managers the chance to help solve problems so you can do your work.

Professionalism includes following your company's code of conduct. These rules often cover topics such as decision-making, dress code, and behavior. Most companies have a written code that reflects the ethics of its owners. Ethics are moral values that a group of people holds that often guide their decisions. They are typically based on honesty, integrity, and respect. Ethics can be influenced by culture, religion, and individual experiences.

Or, as another example, the operation could support the humane treatment of animals and conservation of environmental resources.

The American Culinary Federation, an organization for chefs that educates cooks, has a code of conduct for its members. The Culinarian's Code outlines four areas of responsibility for culinary professionals: to themselves, to coworkers, to the business, and to guests. It summarizes the expectations that many of today's culinary leaders have for themselves and others in the industry.

In addition to the textbook content, what expectations do you have for restaurant and foodservice staff? Do you think that you could meet these expectations?

Student answers will vary.

Activity 7.2 Teamwork and Communication

Directions

You will be working in teams to plan a small, catered dinner meeting for 20 business community members who are visiting local establishments in preparation for hosting their annual meeting of 200 members. The business guests will be looking for creativity and affordability.

To successfully complete the task, you will need to stay within budget, design a three-course meal that retails for not more than \$18 per person, determine room decorations, write a description of each dish on the menu, and complete the task within 30 minutes. If you go over budget or don't complete the menu, you will be disqualified.

Item	Cost	Serving size
Entrées		
Fish (salmon fillet)	\$10.99/lb	6 oz
Chicken breast (boneless)	\$8.99/lb	6 oz
Steak (sirloin)	\$7.99/lb	4 oz
Side dishes		
Rice (long grain)	\$0.10/oz	3 oz
Pasta (dry)	\$0.11/oz	3 oz
Potato (baked)	\$0.80/lb	each
Vegetables		
Green beans (frozen)	\$0.25/oz	4 oz
Carrots	\$0.99/lb	4 oz
Cauliflower	\$3.99/head	4 oz
Broccoli	\$2.39/head	4 oz
Desserts		
Cheesecake	\$8.99/7-inch cake (12 slices/cake)	1 slice
Cookies (bake and scoop)	\$9.99/40-oz tub	1 cookie (1 oz)
Ice cream (vanilla)	\$4.50/0.5 gal	½ cup

Item	Cost	Serving size
Beverages		
Soda	\$0.75/can	1 can per guest
Coffee, tea, decaf	\$1.00/serving	Unlimited refills, includes condiments
Condiments		
Sauces, spices, etc.	\$4.00 per person	
Decorations		
Napkins	\$0.25/each	1 per guest
Centerpiece	\$3.00/each	1 per table

Take your notes in the space below. Attach your menu to this sheet.

Teacher Note:

Each group will be provided with a list of raw ingredients, table decorations and linens, and a budget. Each team should be provided with paper and pencils to plan their event.

You may wish to adjust the price that students must not exceed. This must be done before students begin their work. As an alternative, you may ask different groups of students to work to a different price point and compare their answers in class.

When providing students with a budget, the price per pound provided for each item may not be exact based on current conditions but has been designed to provide students with a working tool. You may wish to give each group of students one item from each category (except for beverages) or you may decide to provide the students with all the options.

The price list table includes the main ingredients. For purposes of the activity, use a standard dollar amount to represent the sauces, seasonings, and other condiments that will be used when creating the menu.

After the students have completed the activity, lead them in a discussion about the following:

- Was this a fun task for your group? Why or why not?
- Did everyone give the same amount of input?
- Were any of your ideas rejected? If so, how did you feel? Did you stop giving ideas?
- What is the hardest part about group decision-making?
- Would you be pleased with the menu you planned? Why or why not?