

REMARKABLE SERVICE

The Culinary Institute of America THIRD EDITION



WILEY

REMARKABLE SERVICE



REMARKABLE SERVICE

THIRD EDITION



THE WORLD'S PREMIER
CULINARY COLLEGE

WILEY

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Editorial Project Manager: Lisa Lahey '00

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We dedicate this book to the students and graduates who have learned the meaning of remarkable service. By applying its principles on a daily basis, they endow our chosen career with the unmistakable hallmarks of a true profession.



Summary
Account
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Bill and r

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DATE	TABLE	CHECK #	SERVER
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1 Soup dj. 2

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1 Ling 2

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1 Chop m.w. 4
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Preface

A GUEST DECIDES TO COME to your to a restaurant for a number of reasons. Maybe the menu looked intriguing, the location seemed perfect, and the hours were convenient. Perhaps friends and family made recommendations, or published reviews caught his or her eye. While these positive factors are all important to guests, what stays in their minds after they leave, and what may determine whether they decide to both come back again and recommend the restaurant to their friends, is the quality of service.

Excellent service may call for different activities, depending on the style of the restaurant. We do not expect the same type of service at a casual restaurant as we might at a four-star, fine-dining establishment. Nonetheless, we expect excellent service in both venues. As customers, we recognize and respond to excellent service to such a degree that we may even overlook any minor shortfalls in the food. Studies in this country and elsewhere have shown time after time that the ability to provide guests with excellent service is good for the guest, good for the server, and good for the entire operation. *Remarkable Service, Third Edition* includes the basic steps of performing service as well as the fundamental principles of remarkable service that will lead to ever higher levels of service for your guests.

Our goals for *Remarkable Service, Third Edition* include:

- ▣ Making *Remarkable Service* the go-to book for service professionals.
- ▣ Clarifying the essence of *Remarkable Service* by distinguishing between hard skills and soft skills and then demonstrating how to bring soft and hard skills together for top-notch professional service.
- ▣ Defining and describing contemporary service practices that complement and enhance modern menus and restaurant concepts.
- ▣ Introducing appropriate management information for the operation of a restaurant dining room.
- ▣ Teaching the skills necessary to work effectively with the dining room's partners in the kitchen.
- ▣ Developing a book that supports learning objectives in introductory and advanced table service/dining room management courses.

The new edition echoes our best efforts to achieve those goals. We begin with an introduction to the profession, including its history and traditions and an overview of various traditional and contemporary service styles. From these

fundamental lessons, readers build to more advanced service concepts and then on to dining room operations and dining room management topics.

Book Organization

The book is divided into ten chapters to address key concepts, techniques, and practices critical to the delivery of excellent service. The chapters build from and relate to one another.

Chapter 1, The Principles of Remarkable Service, presents the principles of remarkable service and the basic concepts that underlie great service at all levels of an organization, beginning with the importance of creating a positive environment for the guest and concluding with the notion of providing service that exceeds the guests' expectations.

Chapter 2, Styles of Service, considers the various service styles including French (à la française), Russian (à la russe), English, American, and family styles, by examining the history of these styles, including the how, when, where, and why behind these emerging or evolving styles. More than an interesting story of days gone by, this chapter presents a backdrop that gives context and meaning to much of the etiquette we rely on in our daily operations. As service organizations have evolved, a hierarchy has developed to spell out functions and responsibilities. This chapter includes a look at how your service style and the size of your operation influence the structure of your service team.

Chapter 3 covers the importance of maintaining **A Clean and Safe Dining Room.** Topics introduced here include basic hygiene and safety in the dining room, handling serviceware, avoiding cross contamination, handling perishable foods safely, and dealing with emergencies such as injuries, fires, allergies, and choking.

Chapter 4, Preparing and Maintaining the Dining Room for Remarkable Service, is devoted to preparing and maintaining the dining room. This chapter presents the steps that go into preparing for guests in a logical and coherent manner. The various areas of guest contact from the front door and reception desk to the table are managed to maximize guest comfort and worker efficiency. Techniques discussed here include arranging tables and chairs, clothing with linen, setting covers, and completing mise en place or side work tasks such as setting up the pantry, side stands, and host stand.

Chapter 5, Reservations and Waiting Lists, concentrates on reservations and waiting lists. This newly organized chapter places a special emphasis on providing excellent service to the guest from the first moment of contact, whether they are on the phone, contacting you via a website, or walking in the door. Special situations such as working with a no reservation policy, handling special guests without a reservation, walk-ins, and waiting lists are considered. Seating guests so that the room is filled evenly and appropriately is addressed in this chapter, as are the procedures for managing special table or server requests.

Chapter 6, Serving Guests, presents the soft and hard skills that go into serving guests. Soft skills such as suggesting, recommending, and upselling involve effective communication skills. The ability to read the table is critical throughout the sequence of serving guests as well as whenever it is necessary to engage in “guest recovery”. Hard skills in this chapter include plate-handling techniques to serve and clear, table maintenance, check presentation, and payment.

Chapter 7, Beverage Service, presents the basic and advanced skills of serving a variety of beverages, from basic water service to cocktails. Beginning with water, the ins and outs of tap vs. bottled, still vs. sparkling, are explored as they relate to the professional server. Information about cocktails and their ingredients enhance the server’s ability to provide the guest with a great experience and to communicate effectively with other members of the service team, including the bartender.

Chapter 8 covers Wine Service, beginning with the basics of wine styles so that servers understand how wines and foods are paired. The skills of opening still and sparkling wines as well as the steps in properly decanting a wine are presented and considered as part of the overall sequence of serving wine, from presenting the wine list to presenting wines at the table to the appropriate pouring standards from a bottle of wine.

Chapter 9, Banquet Service in the Restaurant, is dedicated to service for a banquet in a restaurant. This common practice calls for different service skills and techniques than à la carte service. The advantages and disadvantages of catering in a restaurant are presented, as well as approaches to advance planning, dining room arrangement, preparing buffets, and bars for banquets. The various styles of service used at banquets are introduced and the ways in which the menu selection and the type of event can be enhanced by choosing the appropriate service style are considered.

Chapter 10, Remarkable Service Interactions, a completely new chapter, is devoted to understanding and improving service interactions. It begins by presenting the steps to creating a service-oriented culture by hiring guest-focused employees and using training as a key component in providing remarkable service. Various approaches to motivating and empowering remarkable service are evaluated.

For the Student

Remarkable Service, Third Edition, teaches both the specific steps that go into delivering food and beverage to a guest and the general principles of fine service. Learning about the traditions of restaurant dining gives you an insight into how and why we perform certain techniques in a certain way. Those insights give a context for the basic principles in the book. An awareness of how service structures and hierarchies function in different situations prepares you to grow in this career.

For the Instructor

Remarkable Service, Third Edition, has been reorganized and enhanced with additional material for a more thorough and logical approach. The elements in the book include a variety of lists, checklists, and numbered procedures, often paired with either photo sequences to illustrate techniques or display photos that illustrate concepts. This makes it easy for you to pinpoint the material you want students to learn and gives them a model against which to compare their efforts.

New to This Edition

Every chapter in *Remarkable Service, Third Edition* was reviewed and updated to reflect contemporary standards and expectations for restaurant service. To that end, we have introduced the following changes:

- ▣ A new chapter, Chapter 3, A Clean and Safe Dining Room, in order to address issues of cleanliness and hygiene for workers, sanitary procedures for handling tabletop items, and safety concerns in the event of accidents or injury in the dining room.
- ▣ A new chapter, Chapter 5, Reservations and Waiting Lists, to better coordinate information and procedures to provide the best possible service whether you are taking reservations, timing seating, using waiting lists, managing special requests, or taking group reservations.

- All-new photographs provide clear details and instruction. They make it simple for students to identify the tools of the trade and to master specific service skills, from holding a plate to decanting wine.
- Clear chapter objectives enable student progress to be observed and evaluated.
- The history and traditions of professional table service and styles of table service are combined into a single chapter, Chapter 2, Styles of Service, to give these service styles context for today's restaurant.
- Reorganized materials related to dining room setup into a revised Chapter 4, Preparing and Maintaining the Dining Room for Remarkable Service.
- Chapter 6, Serving Guests, includes a new section on the soft skills of remarkable service, including empathy, communication, table reading, and techniques for suggesting, recommending, and upselling.
- Chapter 7, Beverage Service, now includes all beverage service skills, from water service to cocktails to espresso and tea. New to this chapter are basic drink recipes and updated information about base alcohols used in cocktails. The section on Responsible Beverage Service is included in this chapter.
- Chapter 8, Wine Service, features new tables to make wine information easier to use, including grape styles and updated basic wine and food pairings based on flavor profiles.
- Chapter 9, Banquet Service in the Restaurant, includes a new section on planning that introduces the banquet event order (BEO). The text has been clarified to eliminate confusion between banquet service in restaurants as compared to catering operations.
- Chapter 10, Remarkable Service Interactions, is an entirely new chapter devoted to creating and maintaining a guest-focused, service-oriented culture through hiring, training, motivation, and leadership.
- Newly created supplemental materials are now available to qualified adopters to help support your teaching efforts of this material.

Supplemental Materials

Remarkable Service, Third Edition is now accompanied by an **Instructor's Manual** with a **Test Bank** and Answer Key. Each chapter in the book is presented in the **Instructors Manual** with these features:

- Chapter Overview
- Chapter Objectives
- Key Terms

- ▣ Chapter Outlines
- ▣ Additional learning activities and projects

The **Test Bank** has been specifically formatted for **Respondus**, an easy-to-use software program for creating and managing exams.

A password-protected Wiley Instructor **Book Companion website** devoted entirely to this book includes access to the online **Instructor's Manual**, the **Respondus Test Bank**, and **PowerPoint lecture slides**. Please visit www.wiley.com/college/cia to access these resources.

Acknowledgments

Remarkable Service is a simple concept, one that can be achieved with no more dramatic costs than that of a welcoming smile, knowledge of the menu, and the willingness to pay attention to your guests for the entire time that they are in your dining room.

This book, with its grounding in basic principles of service, demonstrates the underpinnings of a style of professional service that can only enhance the entire industry, both in terms of the respect with which it is held and the revenues it can generate *for* dedicated professionals.

The goal of this book is to turn every comment into a compliment. The delivery of remarkable service is the only way to ensure a steady stream of positive remarks and engender the word-of-mouth promotion that no amount of money can buy.

Reaching this goal has meant calling on a variety of individuals:

Lead writers: Ezra Eichelberger, Heather Kolakowski, John W. Fischer

Content reviewers: Jennifer Purcell, Doug Miller, Courtney Kaisin, Steven Kolpan

Photography consultation: Phil Papineau, Ezra Eichelberger, Steven Kolpan, Jennifer Purcell, Doug Miller

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the students and MITs who gave their time and talent to make the photos come alive.

REMARKABLE SERVICE

1

The Principles of Remarkable Service

WHEN EVERYTHING COMES TOGETHER, working in a restaurant's dining room feels like you are giving the best dinner party ever. Trained cooks and a great chef send out delicious food; beautiful surroundings and the right music coax guests into an expansive mood; a professional, highly trained staff brings the guests whatever they need, ideally before they even know they need it. In the dining room we have the opportunity to bring complete strangers into our warm, welcoming space and make them feel like they are a part of our family, so that they will want to return over and over again. We are in the hospitality business. And making hospitality a business involves identifying what takes service from acceptable to remarkable and then reliably performing those actions whenever necessary.

This chapter addresses both practical service skills (sometimes referred to as *hard skills*), such as setting the table, serving food, and presenting the check, as well as the less tangible hospitality skills (*soft skills*). Keep in mind that less tangible does not mean "less important." In fact, attention to the intangibles is exactly what separates remarkable service from ordinary service.

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- ▣ Define hospitality and service.
- ▣ Combine hospitality and service skills for remarkable service.
- ▣ List and define the personal qualities of a remarkable server.





What Does the Word *Hospitality* Mean to a Professional Server?

IN ORDER TO SUCCEED in the service industry, you must understand the concept of hospitality. It is not easy to arrive at a succinct definition of what *hospitality* means for the professional server. You can study and master the smallest details of fine table service, but hospitality extends beyond such professional skills. Hospitality in the restaurant can be expressed in a number of ways, such as making eye contact with the guest; anticipating a guest's need based on body language or facial expression; adapting easily and unobtrusively to the needs of the guest; and similar actions aimed at creating a relaxing, positive experience. (These skills are often referred to as the *innate* skills that servers should already possess.) Hospitality implies constant concern for the welfare and enjoyment of the guest. Every action you perform needs to come across as genuine. You can say all of the right words, but if you do not convey certain warmth, your guest will feel the lack of sincerity.

Hospitality is often the intangible aspect of our industry, and that can be the most challenging concept to create and maintain. A professional server's people skills are critical to creating hospitality, especially since no two guests are the same. Each guest entering your establishment has different expectations, experiences, and desires, all of which you need to keep in mind when interacting with them.

HOSPITALITY (*hospi'tæliiti*).
[*a. OF. hospitalité (12–13th c. inHatz-Darm.), ad. L. hospitalitas, f. hospitalis (see HOSPITAL) a.*.] 1. *a. The act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill.* (Oxford English Dictionary)

What Does the Word *Service* Mean to a Professional Server?

THE QUALITY OF SERVICE plays a very large part in determining the long-term survival of a restaurant and its market share of the available business. The most common meaning of the word *service* in the foodservice industry refers to the manner of presenting a meal to the guest. There are other meanings of the

SERVICE (*'sær-vəs*). 1. *a. The occupation or function of serving; b. employment as a servant; 2.a. the work performed by one who serves.* (Oxford English Dictionary)

term *service* when it is used by a professional server. Traditionally, a *service* referred to the group of dishes composing a given part of a meal, such as a tea service. Service can also signify the utensils necessary to serve a particular part of a meal. Service in this sense would encompass the whole ensemble of objects used at the table: linens, plates, glasses, silver, and hollowware. Guests will often use the term *service* to refer to the timeliness in which the food was served, as in “Wasn’t that amazingly quick service?”

Specific actions on the server’s part can lead to desired feelings and emotions on the guest’s part. These actions can be singled out, defined, described, and put into simple, trainable terms:

- ▣ Anticipating the pace of a meal and bringing successive courses at just the right time
- ▣ Avoiding bare-handed contact with plates or glass rims
- ▣ Suggesting menu items that will complement dishes already ordered
- ▣ Presenting the check at the appropriate moment when the meal is done

These actions can be defined in more tangible and concrete methods. The skills needed to deliver remarkable service include all aspects of restaurant service, from greeting to order taking, service to check presentation, as well as reservations, banquets, beverage service, and special challenges in the dining room, are described throughout this book.

Combining Hospitality and Service Skills for Remarkable Service

HOSPITALITY AND SERVICE MAY SEEM, at first glance, to represent very different kinds of activities. Hospitality has to do with intangibles such as attitudes and behaviors, while service is demonstrated through the tangible aspects of presenting a meal for a guest. Hospitality depends on feelings and impressions, while the essence of service resides in actions. Service is being able to carry four dinner plates without spilling the sauce, or opening a bottle of Champagne without losing some of the contents in a gush of foam. While the service tasks themselves do not involve emotion, they can evoke positive feelings in guests when they are carried out in a professional manner.

A high level of caring for the comfort of guests—remarkable service, in other words—is the distinctive attribute of the best dining establishments. Providing

service is at the heart of all businesses, from auto repair shops to hairdressers to restaurants. The more personal the service, the more comfortable and confident the guests or clients will feel that they are being treated with respect and care. With the challenges of the restaurant industry today, creating a competitive advantage through remarkable service can lead to significant financial success as well.

When you combine the intangibles and the tangibles encompassed by hospitality skills and the service skills, you create a seamless experience for your guests. It is that state of attention and care for the guests that is the essence of remarkable service.

We have identified nine basic principles of remarkable service that are the foundation of the lessons throughout this book. Since the principles represent various aspects of service and share the common objective of making guests feel comfortable, it should not come as a surprise when two or more of the principles overlap. Nor should it come as a surprise that remarkable service draws upon both the hospitality and service skills in the professional server's toolkit.

REMARKABLE SERVICE CREATES A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Working with positive people is a pleasure—they create an environment that is pleasant for everyone, including the guests. A professional server maintains a happy and positive attitude, even amid chaos. This mindset helps you to see solutions to a problem or situation, and even permits you to see problems as opportunities to improve quality.

The dining room can be a fast-paced and challenging environment, physically as well as emotionally. A professional server needs to assess and understand each guest and what their expectations are, while maintaining a positive attitude that reflects the restaurant's standards for service.

One way to create a positive environment is observing some basic etiquette. There are many levels of etiquette and dining room protocol meant to enhance the entire experience; the more formal the dining room, the more elaborate the etiquette. In any situation, however, the basic concept of etiquette can make social situations run more smoothly. At its most basic, *etiquette* refers to the things you do to make others feel comfortable—smooth, uncertain social interactions, subconsciously informing people that they have nothing to fear. Courteous behavior tells the guests that they are in a caring, comforting environment. When the meal is over, a thank-you for the guests—as well as a thoughtful farewell—is essential.

REMARKABLE SERVICE IS CONSISTENT

Guests visit a restaurant the first time for many different reasons. They come back for only one: they like the restaurant, including its food and its service. Making good use of all of the principles of hospitality and service can persuade a guest to come back to the restaurant, and the consistent delivery of high-quality food and service will bring their repeat business. The key to achieving long-term success is the consistent delivery of the best possible service to every guest—every day, every week, every month, and every year. Reliability is the foundation needed in order to create repeat guests and build a strong, positive reputation for your establishment.

REMARKABLE SERVICE IS EFFICIENT

Efficiency is obviously important to the servers and the restaurant. More work can be done (and more money made) with less effort when it is done efficiently. The absence of efficiency, while costly in itself, can also seriously affect the comfort level of the guests. Disorganization and unseemly haste are contagious—guests are made to feel just as harried as their servers.

Inefficient technique wastes the guests' time as well as that of the servers. It interrupts the flow of the meal and erodes the environment of trust that is essential to a relaxed dining experience. However, when guests see the server's work being done quickly, smoothly, and easily, they are put at ease. They do not feel that they have put the server to any "trouble."

Economy of motion is essential to a server's success. Acting efficiently means getting the same work done, but with less effort and better results. A general rule for a fast-paced restaurant is "never enter or leave the dining area with empty hands." There is almost always something to be taken to or removed from a table or a service station. The ability to catalog orders and plan trips to the kitchen and service area saves steps. The time saved by being organized can be spent on better serving the customer.

Careful attention to *mise en place* (having everything in its place), an intelligent economy of motion, and a cooperative attitude make the server's job easier to perform, and the resulting ease sends a strong signal to the guests that they are in good hands.

REMARKABLE SERVERS ANTICIPATE THE GUESTS NEEDS

Remarkable servers anticipate the dining needs of the guests. This begins with the first point of contact—the reservation—and continues through the delivery of

the check and a final farewell. If a guest has a reservation, it is imperative that the table be ready for the guests at the time of their expected reservation; otherwise, it creates a negative impression and can dramatically influence a guests' overall experience.

Providing just the right items or services to the guest just before they are needed means that your guests never have to wait while you find a clean cup or brew more coffee. There are countless opportunities to anticipate the guests' needs. Here are a few examples:

- Have tables ready and set for guests *before* they arrive.
- Refill glasses or cups *before* they are empty.
- Set down the proper flatware for each dish *before* the guest needs it.
- Bring cream and sugar *before* pouring hot coffee.
- Have the check ready to present *before* the guests requests it.

REMARKABLE SERVICE REQUIRES EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The heart of restaurant service comes down to communication. The art of communication consists of transmitting just the right amount of information exactly when it is needed. Remarkable servers know that effective communication is a two-way street and depends as much on listening as it does on speaking. When you listen to your guests and the questions they are asking, you will be able to provide the right answer. For example:

Guest asks: "What is in the spinach and goat cheese quiche?"

Server replies: "Spinach and goat cheese."

The preceding exchange is technically accurate, but hardly helpful, and certainly does not make the customer feel appreciated. The guest is not asking you to read the name of the dish. The guest wants to know something more than what is written on the menu. With that in mind, the exchange might go like this:

Guest asks: "What is in the spinach and goat cheese quiche?"

Server replies: "In addition to locally grown spinach and farmhouse-fresh goat cheese, the chef includes onions with a bit of pancetta baked in an egg-and-cream custard."

Remarkable servers adapt their communication styles to the situation and the guests to whom they are speaking. Some guests respond well to humor, some prefer

What Makes It Extra-Virgin?

This is an example of the kind of question that a server should be prepared for. Although a witty waiter may have several clever retorts for this question, a professional server has the correct answer:

Olives are pressed much like grapes. The best olive oil is extra-virgin olive oil, and then the next grade is virgin olive oil. Cold-pressed oil from the

first pressing of the olive (if under 1 percent acid) is considered extra-virgin olive oil. If the oil from the first pressing contains from 1 to 3.3 percent acid, it is labeled “virgin olive oil.” The subsequent pressings of the same olives produce “pure olive oil.” Usually a good year for grapes is not as good for olives, and vice versa.

more formality. Your tone is as important as the words you speak; you can use it to convey warmth, welcome, and sincerity.

When you are talking to the kitchen staff and fellow servers, you should use the specific jargon that makes communication between professionals quick and effective, whether you need to ask about the timing of a dish, alert the kitchen to an upcoming rush of orders, or let the chef know about a special request from a guest. However, that same jargon is rarely appropriate or helpful when you communicate with your guests. You and the kitchen know that “86 chicken” means the kitchen has run out of chicken, but your guest probably will not understand.

The type of establishment very often determines the form and style of conversation between servers and guests. Some of your guests may be looking for peace and quiet or a private conversation, while others may prefer to chat a bit. Reading the table (discussed in Chapter 6) can tell the server which guests want to talk and ask questions about the restaurant and which prefer to be left alone.

Communication takes other forms, as well. For example, uniforms make it easy for guests to locate a member of the service staff. Menus, both printed and spoken, tell the guest what is available to eat and drink. Signs on doors indicate restrooms and exits. The goal is to be certain that all communication is both appropriate and effective.

Certain words and phrases (please; thank you; you’re welcome; and pardon me) are essential to the vocabulary of foodservice personnel. Polite words and considerate actions indicate a sincere regard for others’ well-being—fellow employees as well as guests.