

REHEARSAL
GUIDE

A
Role
in
the
Show

Performing Effective Shift Meetings
Role Play Scenarios
Games and Contests

PERFORMING EFFECTIVE SHIFT MEETINGS

REINFORCE A ROLE IN THE SHOW WITH PRE-SHIFT TRAINING SESSIONS

A Role in the Show course is a training tool designed to create a solid, underpinning knowledge of customer care. Although the program presents consistent information in a one-on-one interactive format, the course should not be considered a replacement for traditional, face to face training and reinforcement.

One of the most effective ways managers can reinforce the topics presented in the course is through short, well planned "pre-shift" meetings.

Typically held just prior the shift, a shift meeting is nothing more than a brief training session. The primary objective of a shift meeting should be to reinforce the topics presented in the course. Few managers are naturally skilled at presenting effective training sessions to staff. In addition, many managers may be nervous about presenting a training session.

Luckily, there are no complicated secrets to presenting effective training sessions. There are however, some basic skills and procedures that can be applied which will help to ensure positive results. These common sense methods are based on skills you are probably already using in the management of your staff.

Everyone has their own personal style, and it is important to retain your own style. Use the ideas put forward in this rehearsal guide and adapt them to meet your specific requirements.

STEP 1

DETERMINE YOUR OBJECTIVES

It is important to first determine the desired results of the session, or what you hope to achieve. This is known as the objective.

What is the difference between an assignment and an objective?

An **assignment** is an action that you perform

An **objective** is what you hope to achieve by performing the assignment.

OBJECTIVES also help to keep the training session focused.

To establish the objective, two questions must be addressed:

1. What is the reason for discussing this topic
-indifference by the cast members
2. Who will this information be addressed to
-waiting staff, Host/hostesses, kitchen crew

The success of your training session can be judged by the change in performance that the participants have demonstrated after the session.

Objectives should be reasonably attainable, in addition to being measurable.

EXAMPLE:
If you are presenting a training session on **HANDLING COMPLAINTS**, your objective may be that cast members handle complaints professionally and effectively.

STEP 2

COLLECT SUPPORT MATERIALS AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

Once the objectives of the training session have been determined, you must gather and organise the contents of the session-information and support materials which will be presented.

Initially, you will need to have a general idea of the type of information you will use. You can do this by discussing possible sources of information with colleagues, or brain-storm* your own ideas.

*BRAIN-STORMING means listing as many ideas as you can about the topic.

Tips for brainstorming :

- ▶ write down any ideas that come to mind, however wild they may be
- ▶ do not judge the ideas as you write them, as this may break your chain of thought
- ▶ when brainstorming with colleagues, take turns writing down ideas until no-one can think of any more
- ▶ before evaluating your ideas take a day or two to 'sleep on it'

Try to list your ideas in a non-sequential way, using post-it notes for each idea. The notes can then be organised once you have had a chance to think about them.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT MATERIALS

- ☞ DIRECTORS GUIDE
- ☞ VOF BOOK
- ☞ ROLE CD-ROM
- ☞ COMPANY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
- ☞ YOUR SERVICE STANDARDS

STEP 3

ORGANISE THE CONTENTS OF THE TRAINING SESSION

Once ideas and information for the training session contents have been gathered, they must be put into a workable structure, or sequence.

THERE ARE 2 RULES TO FOLLOW WHEN DECIDING WHICH INFORMATION OR IDEAS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE TRAINING SESSION:

- ▶ Keep the ideas and information that will help you meet your objectives
- ▶ Cut out the ideas or information which do not meet your objectives

These rules are simple but may be difficult to adhere to. This is because the more you know about the topic, the more ideas and information you will generate.

As the presenter, you may feel that all of the ideas and information gathered is relevant to the training topic.

It may be helpful to ask yourself this question...

' If I cut this idea or information from the contents, will I still be able to achieve my objective? although the proposed contents may be relevant to the training topic, they may not be relevant to the training session objectives.

STEP 4

STRUCTURE THE CONTENTS

Once the contents have been organised, they must be structured in a logical sequence, so that cast members will understand the message.

When structuring the contents, it is always best to look at the training session from the cast members' point of view. You can do this by asking several questions...

1. What would the cast members like to know?
2. What do they need to know?

The most crucial part of your training session will be the opening or introduction. When you begin a training session, your cast members should know 3 things:

1. The reason you are holding the session and what you hope to achieve from the session
 - poor manners which give a bad impression and result in potential loss of business
2. How they will benefit from the training session, or a reason for listening
 - increased confidence and ease in handling an unhappy guest
3. How you will go about presenting the session

EXAMPLE: Complaint handling

They would like to know what you are going to talk about and why

- ▶ They need to know the skills for handling complaints effectively

Few managers are naturally skilled at presenting effective training sessions to staff and many managers may be nervous about presenting a training session.

Listed below are typical reasons why managers may be concerned get anxious about presenting a training session, and some comments which may help to overcome them.

CONCERN I would run out of things to say in about 5 minutes

COMMENTS A well prepared training session will provide plenty to say

CONCERN There may be someone who knows more than me

COMMENTS Do not be threatened, use that person as a source of reference, by asking them a question which will back up your comments. Be careful not to let this person take over the session (retain control)

CONCERN What if I forget an important point?

COMMENTS Make notes on the important points, and tick them off as you cover them

CONCERN Someone may ask a question you can't answer

COMMENTS Don't blame! If you don't know the answer, say so. Ask if anyone else knows the answer, or promise to get an answer to the question after the session

CONCERN I don't want to look daft or silly

COMMENTS Concentrate on getting the message of your training session across, and you will forget about yourself

BODY LANGUAGE CAN HELP GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

When presenting your training session, pay attention to these areas;

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Be enthusiastic- Enthusiasm is contagious. Make sure your face reflects and reinforces what you are saying

USE YOUR HANDS OR ARMS

Time your gestures or movements to coincide with and emphasise key points

UPPER BODY AND SHOULDERS

Stand up straight and keep your upper body square. A good stance will allow you to remain balanced and maintain eye contact more easily

FEET

Keep your feet planted firmly on the ground, don't tap your shoes or shuffle your feet, as this can be distracting

MOVE AROUND WHEN APPROPRIATE

Do not stand behind objects which may obscure your vision. When asking a question, try to move closer to the group, which helps to break down barriers, and allows cast members to better hear and understand the question. When using a flip chart, do not talk with your back to the group.

EYE CONTACT

It is important to make eye contact with everyone in the session, and at regular intervals. Think of everyone in the session as an individual, not as a member of a group. When you only make eye contact with several of the cast members, the rest will feel left out.

Look at the training session from the perspective of the cast members which will be attending it. When planning a session, it is important to consider what the cast may;

NEED TO LEARN WANT TO LEARN ALREADY KNOW

Effective training sessions should introduce new skills or information, or reinforce existing training in an interesting way. Every training session must include information which will be considered of some benefit to the cast. Typically, this information will help them to perform their job more easily, confidently, or professionally.

For a session to be effective, it must be;

- ▶ **SIMPLE**
- ▶ **INFORMAL**
- ▶ **INTERACTIVE**

You should ask questions and demand feedback from cast members throughout the training session. This is necessary for 2 reasons:

1. To ensure that cast members remain focussed on the topics being discussed
2. To ensure that cast members both hear and understood the topics being discussed

HANDLE QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY

Cast members may ask questions for a variety of reasons. Recognising the reason for a question can help you to deal with the question more effectively.

Listed below are the typical reasons cast members may ask a question and comments how those questions may best be handled.

REASON FOR THE QUESTION

To clarify understanding, or seek additional information

SUITABLE RESPONSE

If the question is relevant to the topic, provide the information. Otherwise state that you will be happy to go into further detail once the session is finished

REASON FOR THE QUESTION

To waste time

SUITABLE RESPONSE

Provide the answer quickly and move on

REASON FOR THE QUESTION

To show everyone else their knowledge on the subject

SUITABLE RESPONSE

Thank them for the input and encourage future participation

AVOID USING JARGON THAT THE STAFF MAY NOT UNDERSTAND

USE THEIR IDEAS, WHEN APPROPRIATE

In a training session, it is important to encourage interaction. Most of your staff will probably have the answers you are looking for. Your role is to provide the coaching necessary to extract the information required. People never argue with their own ideas. They will take ownership of the information you wish to impart if they feel that they have had a part in providing it.

RELATE THE MESSAGE TO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES THE STAFF MAY ENCOUNTER

Staff must appreciate how your topic relates to situations they may encounter.

STEP 9

REHEARSE THE TRAINING SESSION

The best way to build confidence and quell anxiety is to rehearse the training session.

Every professional actor or actress practices or rehearses at least 5 times more than they ever actually perform.

Performing shift meetings frequently will increase your confidence, whilst keeping staff focussed on offering a star performance that exceeds your audience expectations.

**THOSE WHO FAIL TO
PLAN**

MUST PLAN TO FAIL

STEP 10

INFORM THE CAST

Once you are ready to present the training session, inform the cast.

Cast members should know the following details about the session in advance:

- ▶ DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION OF THE SESSION
- ▶ WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED
- ▶ WHY THEY ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND
- ▶ HOW LONG THE SESSION WILL LAST
- ▶ WHAT YOU WILL EXPECT FROM THEM

USING PROPS

Props provide an opportunity to enhance your guests dining experience. When a guest has seen something that is being described, they have a better basis for making an ordering decision that is right for them.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review with the cast the section 'How can props be used?' located on page 38 in the workbook.
2. Divide cast members into teams and ask each team to list 3 props which you can use in your restaurant, and how you can use them. Allow 10-15 minutes.
3. List answers on a flip chart and discuss.

PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE

As a performer and sales person, part of each cast member's role is to offer suggestions and recommendations that will result in a great dining experience and subsequently, increased sales.

Product knowledge is vital to providing guidance and assistance on the menu. Good product knowledge allows cast members to describe and recommend menu items in a tempting and appetising way.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review with the cast the section 'Product knowledge' located on page 40 in the workbook.
2. Divide cast members into teams and ask each team to list one of the popular items served in your restaurant, then answer the questions below. Allow 10-15 minutes.
3. List answers on a flip chart and discuss with the chef.

Menu Item What are the Ingredients? How many do you get with an order? What is the weight or size? How is the item prepared? How is the item served? How much does it cost?

BRINGING THE MENU TO LIFE

Combining product knowledge with appetising words is an ideal way to bring the menu to life.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review with the cast the section 'Menu guidance' located on page 43-44 in the workbook.
2. Divide cast members into teams and ask each team to list of appetising words that can be used to make a mouth watering description of the items on your menu. Allow 10-15 minutes.
3. Instruct each team to choose a menu item for each category listed below.
4. Using photocopies of the worksheet on page 45, instruct each team to write product descriptions using the appetising words from their list.

SHOWMANSHIP

As in any skill, technique is important to food service. Like the orchestra conductor with grand sweeping movements, the athlete with spectacular leaps, or the lancer with dazzling spins, you can entertain customers with your showmanship.

There are countless ways for the cast to be creative and add flair to your service performance.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review with the cast the section 'Showmanship and Flair' located on page 40 in the workbook.
2. Divide cast members into teams and using the categories listed below, ask each team to list two ways they can use showmanship and flair to improve your guests dining experience

How can you add showmanship & flair?

- ☞ When greeting and seating guests
- ☞ When taking the order
- ☞ Throughout the meal
- ☞ When guests are leaving