Department: Food and Beverage

Date: June 2019

Applies to: All service team members (Hostess, Servers, Bussers, Runners)

Criteria: Sequence of Service

Purpose: To ensure consistent and pleasant service to our guests.

Every business has a set of procedures or guidelines whether it be written or verbal to make the day-to-day operations flow smoothly. With restaurants, despite the fact that every place is different and has their own set of rules or policies there is a basic blueprint for the steps of service. At the Independence Hotel, we want to be engaging but not intrusive, considerate and genuine in what we do.

The following is a basic guideline as to how we will interact with our guests. Try to follow this every time and build a rapport and routine, BUT…..don’t forget to also “read” your guest. Sometimes they are not so receptive to what we are offering, so you will have to adjust accordingly.

Sequence of Service:

1. Greet your guest
2. Take a drink order
3. Deliver the drinks
4. Tell features or specials
5. Take food order
6. Deliver the food
7. 2 bite check
8. Clear the table
9. Take dessert and coffee/tea order
10. Drop the bill
11. Thank your guests as or before they leave
12. **GREET YOUR GUEST(S)**

Allow our guest(s) a minute to settle in and get comfortable before you go over and say “Hello”. That said, it’s very important you don’t take too long before you make your first contact with them. You should greet your table within **1 minute, 2 minutes at the absolute maximum.** If your unable to get to that table in time then either get another server to start them off or even ask a manager to help you out.

* *If you cannot greet the guest, at least acknowledge their presence. They will understand if you are momentarily busy. Just letting them know you have seen them will buy you a little time.*
* *Time permitting, don’t be afraid to ask them how their day was or if they enjoyed themselves in what they did or visited. You are an ambassador of the region, the town and the hotel brand.*
* *Make eye contact and smile, it doesn’t cost you anything.*
* *Be aware of small children, offer the parents the option to get food for the child(ren) first. This can really endear you to the parents.*

1. **TAKE A DRINK ORDER**

Start by asking the table whether they would like to order drinks, or if they need a minute to settle in. This gives them the option without cornering them into making a panic decision than if you just asked **“What can I get you to drink?”**.

* *Remember to ID anyone ordering alcoholic beverages if they look underage or if your unsure if they are of legal age or they appear to be under 30. Better safe than sorry.*
* ***You are a SALES AGENT****, not an order taker. Suggest a drink, see what they feel like having, help them decide. You know what we can do, so suggest and make the sale. It will heighten the guest experience, increase your tip and generate revenue.*
* *Try to avoid “do you want…..” and use “would you like……”. It comes across as more personable and welcoming.*

1. **DELIVER THE DRINKS**

It’s important after you ring the drinks into the P.O.S. that you get their drinks to them as soon as you can, if you’re busy and you do this then it buys you a little time until you can get back to them for their food order.

* *If possible (check your surroundings), verbalize the order to the bartender who can start preparing the drinks. Don’t yell, talk over someone or be demanding, just try to be efficient and discreet and you can then start the guest check on the POS.*
* *All items ordered for guests are to be input into the POS - no exceptions.*

1. **INFORM OF FEATURES OR SPECIALS**

On occasion, we will offer features and/or specials. The best time to tell your table is as your delivering their drinks, to give them some other options to think about while they’re checking out the menu and while their focus is on food.

1. **TAKE FOOD ORDER**

If possible, we should be able to remember a two-top order that is not complicated. Impress your guests and take their order verbally. Or, if you need to, pull out the order pad and write down the order.

* *Start with ladies first, or the most senior female at the table, then the men.*
* *Bench seating is always #1, or the northern most person, then go clockwise for #2, #3, #4 and so on.*
* *If there are small children, ask if we should expedite the child(rens) order*
* *After you have written everything down, repeat the order. This avoids confusion and mistakes and is better cleared up now, then bringing the wrong order.*
* *Sell, Sell, and Upsell items – “would you like a lovely glass of pinot gris with that?” or “would you like an appetizer, or one to share?”. Not asking = 0% possibility of increasing your sale. Just asking increases that by 50%, and costs you nothing. Don’t come across as pushy. Read your guest.*
* *Then go and ring in the order into the POS.*

1. **DELIVER THE FOOD**

When delivering food to your table, pleasemake sure to name the dish as you present it to the guest. this down. This way if something is incorrect, it is picked up right away, but sometimes mistakes are made and this way you can work on rectifying it immediately.

* *Clear all appetizers and used plates/glasses. Ask the guest if they are finished if a plate is not empty.*
* *If a guest gets up to go to the bathroom as you deliver the food, keep the food warm in the kitchen until they return and then deliver it.*
* *Don’t have long discussions with the guest if something is incorrect. Action speaks volumes – make it right and make it quick.*
* *Follow up and ensure the guest is content.*

1. **THE 2 BITE CHECK**

After 2 bites or within 2 minutes – but look and see if they even tried the food - this is when we would like you to check with the guest and their meal. If everything is good, wish them a “bon appetite.” If something is wrong, the guest will inform you and we will have to react and adjust accordingly.

* *It is a great time to see if they would like another beverage or to clear empty glasses.*
* *Please, please, please do not do this when the guest is just putting food into their mouth. Be courteous and not make the guest talk with their mouth full.*

1. **CLEAR THE TABLE**

There is great debate as to when or whether you clear your tables plates; A - as they become empty, or B - you wait until everyone has finished their meal.

We will wait until everyone is finished because if someone can’t finish their meal or would like to share with someone else at their table, this makes it a whole lot easier for them to offer it around without having to share one plate and one set of cutlery. Also, we are not “rushing” the guest or the slower eaters.

* *Obviously if a guest would like to have their plate cleared, please abide by their wishes. Otherwise, we wait until all guests are finished eating.*
* *We clear ALL dishes, including – b&b’s, side plates, main plates, bread baskets, empty glassware, unused cutlery and salt and pepper shakers.*

1. **TAKE DESERT AND COFFEE/TEA ORDER**

Once your table has had a little time after you have cleared their meals and let them digest and chat a little. Then head on over and ask for/offer desert, coffee, tea or after dinner drinks - digestives. Take everyone’s order, ladies first, and input it into the P.O.S. Then set the table again accordingly – coffee/tea mis-en-place, dessert spoons, forks, etc.

* *If someone ate too much, a digestive is a great added sale.*
* *Our loose-leaf tea is a great way to cap off the meal*

1. **PRESENT THE BILL**

Unless someone had specifically asked you to bring the bill directly to them, when dropping off the bill, place it in the middle of the table as best you can. This way it gives your guest(s) the option to jump right in settle up, or to just sit on it for a while without feeling obligated to settle up right away.

* *Be sure to continually check to see if the bill is ready to be paid, don’t repeatedly go up and ask. Keep an eye on it from a distance and when it’s ready then go on over.*
* *It’s crucial you don’t make the table wait because you could have done an amazing job throughout their whole dining experience but if their last impression is having to wait 15 minutes to pay a bill then all that work has gone to waste, not to mention your tip will probably struggle because of this.*
* *You should only give a bill when it has been requested, sometimes guests will change their mind and maybe order a dessert or have another drink.*
* *If a guest orders something as you bring the bill, return to the table with the ordered item and a new, updated bill.*

1. **THANK YOUR GUESTS**

These people have taken the time to come and dine in the restaurant you work in, which pays your wage and your bills so a simple thank you is the least you can give back to them, apart from the amazing service. They have other options to go to, so we should be happy they chose to spend their money with us. This will leave a positive last impression on them and is the last thing they remember when they leave the restaurant.

**Service should not stop after your guest(s) pay their bill**.

Servers do an amazing job with a table only to suffer in the end because after the guest(s) pay their bill they just leave them be until they leave. On occasion a guest may want a glass of water or perhaps order some take out to bring home with them, but if no one is around to help them out with that then they feel neglected. Maybe even help them with a coat or scan the table as they leave, perhaps they forgot something. It’s the little things that count, plus, we want to have them back as guests, so treat them like family.