

## Competencies Narrative

### Food Management Theory · Beverages 101

During my five-year tenure in restaurant and banquet operations, banquet planning, and hotel marketing, I have attained knowledge and hands-on experience with food services facilities, service operations, marketing, food preparation, sanitization and hygiene, and acquired certification by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce as Restaurant Specialist. I am petitioning for college level credit through this portfolio.

I began my career in the hospitality industry as a Pageboy during an internship at Parkhotel Taunus Conference Center in Bad Soden (Germany), which followed a three-year apprenticeship as Restaurant Specialist, also at Parkhotel (please refer to appendix-section one, in which you will find my resume). In Germany, an apprenticeship is a traditional path for acquiring a solid educational foundation and recognized certification by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, to pursue a career in the chosen field, and an alternative to acquiring a higher school degree (for example, completing thirteen years of Gymnasium) and subsequently attending University to attain an academic degree. The apprentice' on-the-job-training comprises of four days per week working alongside experienced personnel, and a fifth day of attending vocational school <sup>1</sup>. During the on-the-job-training in a hotel or restaurant business, senior staff teach skills in restaurant and bar operations, food preparation, beverages service and management (including managing the beverages buffet <sup>2</sup> and working in the magazine storage area <sup>3</sup>), restaurant service, banquet/catering planning and operations, as well as management and

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<sup>1</sup> More information about Germany's dual-system: "Vocational Education in Germany" by Elisabeth Oehler, Goethe Institut. (Accessed 24 May 2003) <http://www.goethe.de/kug/buw/sub/ein/en21491.htm> (Links to Internet websites lead to English language content, unless otherwise noted)

<sup>2</sup> Terminology used to describe the back office department providing beverages to waiters, who pick them up after an order was processed through a POS (Point of Sales) terminal

<sup>3</sup> Terminology used to describe the warehouse (storage area) where all supplies the facility purchases are kept

leadership skills. Vocational school includes math, politics, and economics classes. The significant courses for restaurant apprentices fall under the subject headings 'technology' and 'business operations', and include lessons in nutrition, food storage and preparation, restaurant service, beverage production and storage, hygiene, as well as banquet and restaurant management and operations. A series of final exams conducted by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce conclude the apprenticeship. During written, oral and practical tests, my proficiency was assessed and I passed the practical part with an A and the theoretical tests with a B<sup>4</sup>.

Appendix-section two contains documentation relevant to my apprenticeship: the certification document of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, my leaving certificate (transcript) from the vocational school, a certificate of attendance for a seminar I attended in preparation for the final exams, and employer testimonials from Parkhotel. The Parkhotel Taunus Conference Center is a full-service hotel offering lodging, a restaurant, bar, beer pub, terrace, and conferencing facilities accommodating 2-900 persons. It serves breakfast, brunch, lunch, coffee/tea service, dinner, cocktails, and caters off-site events. Please refer to section three in the appendix, containing information about the Parkhotel facility.

The curriculum of my Restaurant Specialist apprenticeship entailed working in most of Parkhotel's departments, but I spent significant time in restaurant and banquet operations, at the beverages buffet, in the kitchen, and in dishwashing<sup>5</sup>. During my assignment in the kitchen, I initially joined a kitchen apprentice for the early shift (begins at 6:00 AM) to help preparing the food for the breakfast buffet. First, we unlocked all icehouses, refrigerators, and cabinets in which supplies and foods are stored. Next, we assembled the breakfast buffet in the restaurant. It comprised of fresh fruits, breads, yogurts, cereal, jams, butter, cold cuts, as well as boiled and

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<sup>4</sup> Grading in Germany is done using different units, please refer to certified translation of the transcript in appendix-section two

<sup>5</sup> Departments I have no experience with are Accounting and Engineering

scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, and a juice bar. Our primary concern was finishing the buffet setup by 6:30 AM, and to cook the hot food timely. Once prepared, hot foods stay hot in an installation in the restaurant food buffet, comprising of food trays, which fit a frame that resides over hot water. The vapor, which develops from the hot water in the reservoir, keeps tray and food hot. However, the food inside the tray does not burn, as it could when direct heat is used. Figure 1 illustrates this installation <sup>6</sup>:

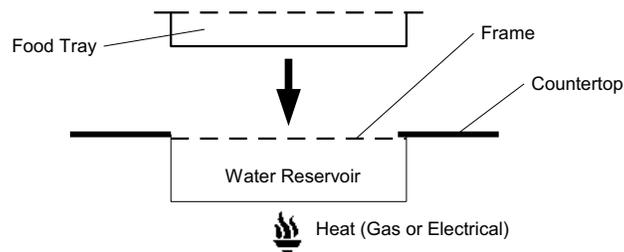


Figure 1: Hot Food Station in Restaurant Food Buffet illustrated

To prepare the hot breakfast foods we used a variety of cooking methods. Bacon was broiled in a 'hot-car', which resembles a fridge, but is essentially a 'oven on wheels'. Food is placed on tray's which slide inside the 'hot-car'. It is used on other occasions to pre-heat china or to keep pre-cooked food hot. Scrambled eggs and sausages were prepared in large pans, and boiled eggs were boiled in large pots.

The previous-day late shift had prepared, arranged on presentation trays and bowls, and stored overnight in an icehouse all cold foods, such as cold cuts, cheeses, yogurts, and jams. This preparation-work is known as the 'mis-en-place'. Mis-en-place describes the process *and* the result of planning for and arranging of sufficient amounts of supplies required for an event or service. It entails tasks such as polishing glasses and silverware, setting aside china and spare tablecloths, and setting up tables for the service type planned (these are restaurant and banquet tasks). In the kitchen, the process focuses on food preparations. Four additional mis-en-place

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<sup>6</sup> All illustrations in the narrative created by the author

tasks performed by the late-shift are: confirming the of number of guests expected for breakfast (obtained from reception desk), ordering sufficient amounts of bread for delivery from an outside bakery, slicing bacon and placing it onto tray's suitable for the hot-car, and preparing sufficient amounts of liquid scrambled eggs. Each shift in the kitchen takes part in the mis-en place process. The early shift begins the mis-en-place for lunch service, as soon as the breakfast service has ended. Subsequent shifts perform additional mis-en-place work (for example, the afternoon shift prepares the mis-en-place for the evening service).

Commercial kitchens are departmentalized and the departments are known as 'stations'. A senior cook is known as 'Chef de Partie' and has a specialty skill, which determines the role he or she maintains, such as preparing the desserts, cutting and cooking meats, or creating appetizers. The Chef de Partie manages a 'station' and is in charge of preparing the food that this station cooks. Parkhotel's stations are (with their specialty in parentheses): Patisserie (desserts), Entremetier (side dishes, such a vegetables), Garde Manger (appetizers, cold dishes, salads, platters for buffets), Tournant (meats), and Saucier (sauces). A junior cook, assisting the 'Chef Entremetier' for example, is known as 'Commis de Cuisine'. Please refer to appendix-section three, which includes an illustration of the kitchen facility and stations at Parkhotel.

The 'Chef de Cuisine' and 'Sous Chef' (Assistant Chef) primary roles are to create menus (e.g. for restaurant and onsite/offsite catering), procure supplies, and manage personnel (e.g. recruiting, creating the roster, and training). Besides designing interesting dishes, likely to find customers' appreciation, the Chef also ensures that each dish prices appropriately. The calculation involves cost for ingredients, supplies, and wages, and is relevant to the cost/income ratio. This industry term describes the ratio between expenses spent to produce a service or product (such as wages, supplies and facilities costs, like gas, water, power), and the revenue

generated through it. The higher the cost is, the lower profits will be. The challenge for a food services manager therefore is, to balance the need to price a product attractive for the customer, while simultaneously maximizing the profit margin. A skilled negotiator in the purchasing department can have a major role in keeping costs low by negotiating low supply prices. Successful negotiations, proper resource management, and creative menu design achieve that the customer perceives excellent value in quality and quantity of the menu, and is willing to pay its price, allowing the business securing revenues.

In addition to working the morning shift, I also helped in a-la-carte cooking during the regular day shift (which comprises two shifts with a three-hour break in between: a lunch-service-shift from eleven AM to three PM, and an evening shift to prepare dinner from six PM to ten PM). 'A la Carte' describes the scenario when guests visit a restaurant and order dishes from a menu offering a variety of appetizers, main courses, and desserts. They may have made a reservation, but did not negotiate price and content of the menu in advance. I am pointing this out, as it is the significant difference to lunch or dinner arrangements made by the host of a seminar or wedding (for which menu and price are agreed upon in advance, and most guests will consume the same dishes, or choose from a limited menu), impacting the food service managers planning, procurement, and staffing.

As Parkhotel is a busy seminar- and conference-hotel, it often serves a high number of lunch- and dinner dishes during weekdays. I am using a typical seminar-scenario to illustrate service-type and transportation for a main course: assume a seminar with forty attendees meets during the morning in one of the conference rooms and breaks for lunch around noon. An adjacent conference room was setup for lunch by banquet-service staff. Once the seminar-participants take their seats, service personnel serve beverages, and the kitchen staff sets up what

I like comparing to an assembly line <sup>7</sup>:

- Pre-heated china is readied for the service
- The prepared foods for the main course, pre-cooked and kept hot, are readied
- All necessary kitchen utensils are setup and sufficient staff is assembled

Plates are sent through the assembly line, and the first cook in line begins by placing one component of the dish onto the plate. Subsequently, other components are added by other cooks, and at the end of the line, the Chef de Cuisine performs quality control (ensuring the dish is complete and neatly arranged on the plate), before wait-staff transports the dish to the table. A variation of the assembly line is used in contract feeding, such as in educational or corporate institutions, only that consumer transport the trays or plates. Figure 2 illustrates the assembly line:

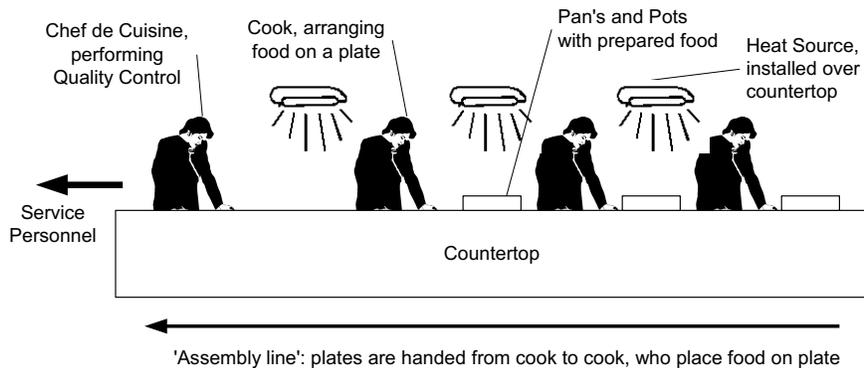


Figure 2: 'Assembly line' illustrated (simplified)

The kitchen is in close proximity to the conference center and restaurant. After the plates leave the assembly line, wait-staff transport up to three plates each to the area where the event takes place. In other words: distances between kitchen and serving areas at Parkhotel are not too big, and food is still hot once served to the guest. However, occasionally the organization hosting a seminar desired faster lunch service and foods were arranged on plates in the kitchen area,

<sup>7</sup> In this example I assume that a starter course was served already

covered with a 'cloche' <sup>8</sup>, and placed inside a hot-car. The hot-car was wheeled to the conference room shortly before the scheduled lunchtime, cloches were removed from the plates, and the course was served. This was not the most exquisite style of service, but the customer preferred this somewhat unsophisticated method to save time.

Kitchen and service staff at Parkhotel provided outstanding service and an excellent menu with premium wines during a memorable dinner of the German chapter of the Chaine des Rotisseurs <sup>9</sup>. What I described as an assembly line was also used during this event. However, the main course was served utilizing a combination of French- and Russian-style service: foods making up the main course were arranged on serving platters in the kitchen, and subsequently presented to guests by wait-staff at the table. The food was served from the serving platter to the guest, at the table. During a-la-carte service and when serving groups of seminar attendees, we mostly performed "American" service (all food arranged on plates in the kitchen, then transported by wait staff to the restaurant area and served to guests). Another frequently used service style was the 'buffet-style', when guests choose from hot and cold foods presented on platters on a separate table, and help themselves to the appetizers, main courses, and desserts they like. Figure 3 illustrates that Parkhotel's back office area is setup with kitchen, dishwashing, service personnel work area, and the beverages buffet in close proximity. The design ensures short distances between product and consumer, and aids the mis-en-place work.

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<sup>8</sup> A utensil used to cover food on a plate. Varieties of 'cloches' are used in restaurants and kitchens. Those made of plastic are mostly used to cover food on plates prepared in the kitchen ahead of time. The cloche is removed before the dish is served. However, in upscale restaurants, a cloche made of silver or stainless steel is placed over the food in the kitchen, the dish is served at the table, which is when the cloche is removed

<sup>9</sup> Is a society of food and wine connoisseurs. Link to the United States chapter website: <http://www.chaineus.org>

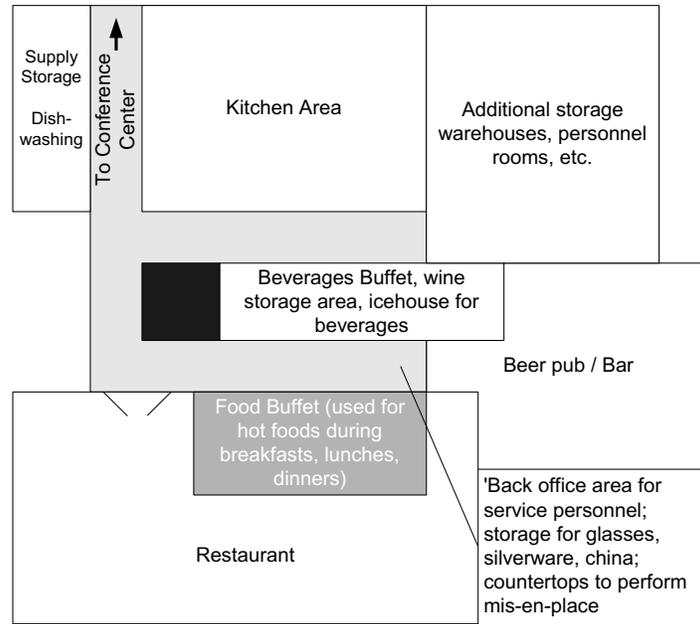


Figure 3: Parkhotel back office <sup>10</sup>

When assigned to assist a Chef de Partie in the kitchen during a-la-carte cooking, I performed minor tasks such as handing food supplies (e.g. raw vegetables, meats, pasta, pre-cooked sauces, etc.) from the icehouse or storage area to the Chef, who was in need of those supplies to create a dish that just had been ordered by wait-staff; or getting washed pots and pans from the dishwashing area; or warming up small side-dishes, such as vegetables.

On occasion, I cleaned pots, pans and other cooking utensils in the dishwashing area, or operated automated dishwashers, cleaning china and silverware. Dishwashing detergent, scrubbers and sponges help removing foods and other stains. The detergent contains agents that resolve grease, sanitize the equipment (removes germs), and lower the water's surface tension, resulting in the water dropping off quicker from the utensils. We used two variations of detergent: machine-compatible, released automatically inside the machine during the washing process, and detergent used to wash pots, pans, serving-plates, and other kitchen utensils such as

<sup>10</sup> The drawing does not scale, is simplified, and illustrates the close proximity of the key back office areas at Parkhotel

large scoops and forks. Kitchen utensils, china, and silverware are pre-washed (rinsed) by hand to soak the dirt and stains attached to the surface, a process easing the removal of residue. Figure 4 illustrates an automatic dishwasher:

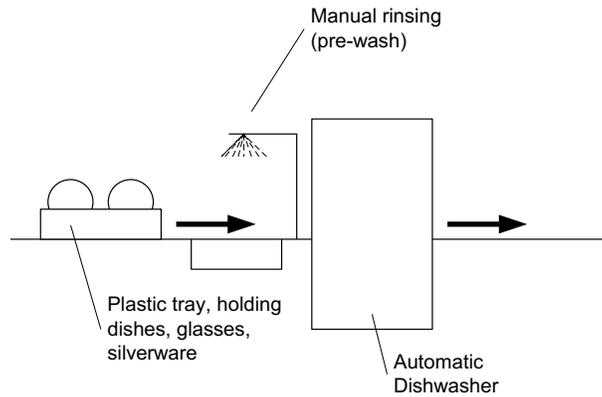


Figure 4: Automatic Dishwasher

Plates, glasses, and silverware are placed into trays, which slide into the dishwasher, after the rinsing. Once the dishwashing program ended, the tray is removed by sliding it to the right, out of the washer, where it is left to cool off. The temperature in the machine is very high, as heat helps removing residue and reduces water stains on porcelain and glass <sup>11</sup>.

Kitchen and restaurant equipment are not the only 'surfaces' that require cleaning. First, all kitchen personnel must wash hands with soap before their shift begins. Hands should also be washed as needed during the shift. For example, when raw fish has been handled, and chopping vegetables follows this task, thorough cleaning of hands in between the two tasks prevents contamination of the vegetables with fish residue. Replacing the apron one is wearing is suggested too, should it have become unclean. Of course, besides ensuring personal cleanliness, cleaning of the work area where the fish was handled should be done, too, before chopping the vegetables, as residue may be attached to the countertop. A clean cutting board, clean pots or

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<sup>11</sup> Stains may still appear, hence the earlier notion of 'polishing glasses and silverware' as part of the mis-en-place

containers (as needed), as well as washed utensils (e.g. knives) prevent contamination too. Overall, all kitchen areas are cleaned regularly, mostly between shifts and on an as needed basis, but also in the early morning hours before the kitchen opens. Detergent used sanitizes countertops, the interior of refrigerators and icehouses, as well as kitchen walls and the floor. Bacteria and germs are common in kitchens, as foods and humans both carry them. Inside refrigerators, multitudes of foods are exposed to each other and cross-contamination happens frequently and quickly. To minimize loss of supplies, regular and proper cleaning of refrigerators, icehouses and warehouses; minimizing contact of foods that cross-contaminate; covering open foods with plastic, or storing them in closed containers; storing foods at appropriate temperatures; and monitoring their expiration dates are necessary precautionary measures. Filters in fume extractors require regular cleaning as well.

A high-pressure water-washer (essentially, a hose that releases hot water with high pressure, easing the removal of residue) is used to clean walls and the floor. Manual cleaning with a sponge and detergent where necessary is done too. The design of a kitchen can permit or prevent efficient and quick cleaning. For example, countertops made of stainless steel are standard nowadays; most machinery and equipment in a kitchen also can be moved on wheels quickly, to clean behind them. Put in simple terms: an area that cannot be reached easily is difficult to clean. Imagine two separate countertops installed next to each other with a gap in between. If cleansers and water cannot reach the dirt in the gap, an unsanitary condition can quickly develop, due to food-residue that may accumulate. Additional preventive measures in design and operations ensure food safety and allow efficient cleaning. Four of them are:

- Regular staff training, ensuring spills are cleaned instantly
- Regular inspections of kitchen and storage areas

- Use of pest control
- Minimizing injury risk, e.g. avoidance of glass containers in icehouses

Safety and injury-prevention are important. For example, AC powered equipment introduces a risk when performing wet cleaning with a sponge and water. Equipment nowadays is properly designed, minimizing the risk of electrical shock. However, applying strong caution and unplugging the AC power cable is suggested. Additionally, kitchen floors nowadays are specially designed, and rugged stone tiles minimize the risk of falls when a spill occurred.

Risk management is an important topic for food services managers, too. Besides traditional risk management issues relevant to financial resources, a changing political or economical landscape, safety and security risks, food service businesses are quickly exposed to the risk of what I like describing as 'lost reputation'. Health violations, rude service personnel, or consistently low quality in product and service will lead to diminishing business, as potential guests will decide against the product based on reviews and due to its reputation spreading by 'word of mouth'. Food service managers can prevent this by maintaining a consistently high standard of quality and implementing efficient control mechanisms.

I understand that regulatory instances in the United States prescribe that workers in food service positions are healthy and educated about food sanitation and protection. I have personal experience with the equivalent German authority, which compares to the United States Food and Drug Administration. In Germany, all workers in positions handling food (in restaurants, kitchens, hotels, their suppliers, as well as contract feeding institutions, etc.) obtain a license from the German 'Gesundheitsamt'<sup>12</sup>, which confirms they are healthy and certified to handle food products. This agency is one of many and involved in prescribing and enforcing sanitation,

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<sup>12</sup> Translation: Gesundheitsamt = Ministry of Health

hygiene, processing, and garbage disposal through regulations <sup>13</sup>. A German regulation, serving as an example how consumers are protected from food poisoning, says that hot and cold foods served on a buffet, when returned to the kitchen after the function ended as 'leftovers', cannot be resold. As the food was exposed to air and germs and individuals attending the function may have come in contact with it, food poisoning may occur if the food is served again and contaminated. I like adding that there is an ethical dimension in such a situation, too, as a food services manager charges for the food provided and is supposed to scale the amount sufficiently at a price generating a profit. Re-sale of the returned food to a different customer also means that *two* customers paid for the *same* product, which is a questionable business practice.

In addition to the United States FDA, there exist regulating agencies such as the federal Department of Commerce <sup>14</sup>, city agencies such as the New York City Department of Health <sup>15</sup>, and state authorities, such as the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets <sup>16</sup>. In addition to regulatory authorities, quality awards are of importance to food service managers too. A German example is the 'CMA Gütezeichen' <sup>17</sup>. The organization behind it performs quality control and presents awards and ratings to food processors and suppliers. Purchasing goods from a supplier that sells CMA rated products is not a competitive advantage for a food service institution. However, a food service manager can assess quality and be certain having purchased a good product, which is used to produce own product(s) and generate revenues.

Food service managers are aware of and enforce administrative, hygiene, quality, and safety regulations, in order to protect workers and customers alike, and to avoid potential fines or

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<sup>13</sup> More Information is available from a website of the German Consulate New York: [http://www.germany-info.org/relaunch/info/facts/facts\\_about/07\\_04.html](http://www.germany-info.org/relaunch/info/facts/facts_about/07_04.html)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.commerce.gov>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us>

<sup>17</sup> CMA='Centrale Marketing-Gesellschaft der deutschen Agrarwirtschaft mbH', which means 'Central Marketing-Society of the German Agricultural Trade'. The 'CMA Gütezeichen' is CMA's 'sign of approval'. See more detail: [http://www.cma.de/profis\\_2455.php](http://www.cma.de/profis_2455.php)

lawsuits. To maintain food and personal safety in the workplace, kitchen staff uses varieties of additional measures:

- Use of gloves: latex to avoid contamination, cotton when handling frozen foods, or gloves made of metal-rings when cutting produce with a sharp knife
- Wearing 'Chef's hats', preventing hair to mix with the food
- Wearing boots to ensure hot spills do not cause injury, and to minimize the risk of falls, as the soles are rugged
- Wearing long-sleeve tops, to protect against hot fat splatter
- Appropriate processing, e.g. food is stored and cooked at proper temperatures
- Ensuring that only freshest ingredients are delivered and processed

Customer safety is no factor in the kitchen area when it comes to the design of the facility; this is more relevant to design of public spaces in (for example) restaurants and bars.

One department closely interacting with the kitchen staff is the magazine. Its staff controls quantity, price, and quality of most deliveries of fresh produce and processed foods, store them appropriately <sup>18</sup>, and secure the warehouse. Re-stocking supplies in buffet, restaurant and kitchen as well as performing scheduled inventories are additional responsibilities. Inventory is the process of counting and documenting all supplies stored in all warehouses and icehouses. The inventory data aids the food service manager in determining cost of operations, and may lead to adjustments such as price increases or improved supply management (Spears 341).

Selected fresh foods (e.g. fish and meats) are delivered at Parkhotel to the kitchen area directly, to ensure quality control by the Chef de Cuisine or Sous Chef. The Magazine Manager mostly manages and maintains dry-stored foods (not refrigerated); kitchen supplies, such as

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<sup>18</sup> Dry, cool, and in the right combination. Certain raw produce may release odor, residue, or moisture and should not be stored with others. For example, onions, raw potatoes, raw vegetables

canned foods, condiments and spices; and kitchen utensils and machines (cutters, hot-cars, slicers, as well as aprons, cloths and cleaning supplies). Important when storing perishables is to ensure that fresh deliveries are not placed on shelves in front of units of the same product, delivered earlier in a different batch. For example: assume a batch of five cans of olive oil was delivered several weeks ago, and four were subsequently used. To ensure sufficient amounts of oil are available in stock, the food service manager places a new order. When it arrives and the new cans are placed *in front of the remaining fifth can of the prior order*, the fresher batch of oil will be used first. This introduces the risk of the fifth can of oil expiring and becoming unusable (bad). To avoid such scenarios affecting the cost/income ratio, new supplies are always stored *behind* the batch ordered previously. A method to discover unsuitable supply storage is, when inventory data shows in an increased demand for certain supplies, without a correlating increase of revenues.

Suppliers of a food service business are often so-called wholesalers, who do not sell their products to the public and only in bulk quantities. It allows them to charge lower prices, which allows the processor of the supplies (processor, in the context of this narrative, is the food services institution, as it transforms supplies –input– through process –cooking– into a sellable product –output–) to price the resulting product at a competitive rate. An example for a large distributor of wholesale products for the lodging and restaurant industry is 'Rungis' in Paris, France. Through research on the Internet, I found leading suppliers in the United States, three of them are Leading Brands, Inc <sup>19</sup>, U.S. Foodservice <sup>20</sup>, and Sysco Corp. <sup>21</sup>. However, not all suppliers are wholesalers. Existing local retail-infrastructure may offer goods and services, and deliver supplies in timely fashion at a price that does not affect the cost/income ratio negatively.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.lbix.com>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.usfoodservice.com>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.sysco.com>

Parkhotel, for example, purchased fresh breads and pastries from a local bakery.

Production, storage and transportation costs as well as 'supply and demand' factors determine the supplier's price. Supply and demand factors exist when high demand or decreased availability (e.g. due to seasonal factors affecting availability) determines pricing. Food service businesses create 'purchasing power' when synergies through expansion, partnerships, or mergers develop. The purchasing power allows better negotiations for buyers due to an improved 'economy of scale'<sup>22</sup>. To create synergies, Best Western in Germany founded a separate corporation ('prognos'<sup>23</sup>), which operates on a fee-based membership basis. Prognos does not trade goods or operate a fleet of delivery trucks, but negotiates volume discounts with the suppliers on its member's behalf.

Other departments of significance (in a hotel) are reception and banquet offices, providing the forecasts, which facilitate procurement and planning. Besides allowing the ordering of sufficient amounts of produce, the forecast facilitates planning of staffing levels and mis-en-place work for daily operations (breakfast, lunch, dinner), and scheduled events (seminars, banquets, etc.). It too provides the number of guests, which is the most important information, and determining quantities of supplies and staff needed<sup>24</sup>. Minor adjustments of the total number of guests do not greatly affect staffing levels and the amounts of food required. Dynamics are different in a-la-carte operations, because not always is it known how many guests will be visiting the facility. They may reserve a table but sometimes do not, and simply appear at the door. Occasionally guests reserve a table, but choose not to show up. This creates a level of complexity for food service managers, directly affecting staffing and supplies, because a-la-carte

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<sup>22</sup> Economy of scale, put in simple terms, describes that production costs and sales-prices deflate, when the quantity (volume) of the output increases

<sup>23</sup> See website, in German only: <http://www.prognos.de>

<sup>24</sup> The forecast entails additional information about location and host. Granular detail about events is made available through event sheets, which entail details about menu, beverages, timing, contact information etc.

service, per definition, offers a variety of dishes to choose from a menu. However, one never knows which patron will choose which type of dish. Sufficient amounts of base products and supplies have to be maintained in stock to fulfill demands of *multiple potential guests*. If the food service manager generously stocks up on supplies in anticipation of high utilization of the business, but utilization remains low, fresh produce may go bad, affecting the cost/income ratio negatively. In contrast, should a manager act too cautiously when ordering, the kitchen may run out of supplies too early, resulting in lost revenue-generating opportunities. Successful managers use planning and control tasks, and ensure procurement and storage of sufficient amounts of supplies while minimizing the waste of supplies due to low demand.

Planning in a food and beverage service business entails understanding 'the cycle'; there are also notions of a 'weekly' and 'yearly cycle'. Varying levels of demand for products and services are noticeable in the aforementioned forecasts. Periods of high demand alternate with periods of low demand, thus the notion of a 'cycle'. To illustrate: in lodging –and affecting food services businesses also– the cycle results from travel patterns, as (e.g.) congresses or exhibitions lead to an increase of visitors in a city and to periods of high demand. To further illustrate: business travelers travel during weekdays and seldom on weekends, resulting in high demand during the week and decreased demand during weekends. Representative for the yearly cycle are the summer months and December, when consumers reduce traveling for business, but depart for vacations, leading to a period of low demand <sup>25</sup>.

Food service managers should be aware of the benefits of marketing. In larger institutions, a dedicated department often does marketing. However, regardless of its size and industry, a business operates more successful if it promotes itself. At Parkhotel and during my

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<sup>25</sup> The 'cycle' affects tourist destinations vice-versa: high demand prevails and revenues generate during the traditional vacation months

tenure as Marketing Assistant with Best Western Hotels, I gained experience with marketing of hotel and restaurant products and services. In the banquet sales office at Parkhotel, I helped designing menus for catering events, and corresponded with customers. During my tenure with Best Western, I worked with the customer service team at Best Western's conference planning department <sup>26</sup>, which offers assistance to businesses and individuals planning seminars and conferences. The service line entails consultation, providing information about hotel-facilities, and recommending menu offerings. Please refer to appendix-section five, in which you will find certificates of attendance for seminars I attended.

Through creative offerings, such as 'specials' or 'culinary weeks', food and beverage businesses promote their business and attract customers during periods of low demand. By providing alternation, new, or unique products, additional revenues generate. 'Special offers' may also involve a discount, for example during a 'happy hour' <sup>27</sup>. However, discounts lower revenues and profits. While they may create a competitive advantage, food service managers must ensure that the cost/income ratio is not too severely affected, as incurred costs remain the same while offering discounts, and are quite high in food and beverages sales (in comparison to lodging products, for example). Managers therefore often limit the time and quantitative availability of discounts.

The objective of successful food and beverage service operations is providing outstanding guest service, a product of value, and a positive experience for the paying consumer. Marketing campaigns and promotions attract customers to a well-defined product or service and advertise its advantage and perceived value for the guest. This leads to a sales transaction, revenue generation, and profits. However, to make new customers *returning* customer, promises

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<sup>26</sup> Link to its website (in German only): <http://www.bestwestern.de/cgi-bin/WebObjects/bw.woa/wa/getDynamicContentPage?lang=de&content=ConferenceService>

<sup>27</sup> It is common by restaurants and bars to offer two drinks for the price of one during happy hours

made have to be met, and a once created expectation must be fulfilled. Key factors to achieving customer satisfaction are:

- Professionalism, courtesy, and respect for the customer and colleagues
- A competitive product offering
- Advance-agreement between food services service provider and consumer regarding expectations, services provided, and the price
- Expectations into quality, quantity, and timeliness are met or exceeded

Consumers desire a product of good quality and quantity, but if the value is perceived negatively or too expensive, they will be dissatisfied and may not return. Additionally, disappointed consumers are more likely to share their experiences with other individuals (this affects most industries, as humans are less vocal about positive experiences than they are about negative). An outstanding product and positive reputation based on customer experience and feedback is a competitive advantage, as customers build their satisfaction based on subjective perception of value, quantity, and quality of the purchase. In the food and beverage *service* industry, the 'littlest things' can make a difference between 'service' and 'wow-service'. Interpersonal skills play a major role, and a smiling and courteous service staff member is often more valued than good product quality alone. Good guest service means as well recognizing and addressing special needs of customers, such as the needs of the handicapped, as well as religious or health-related dietary needs.

Food service managers employ traditional managerial skills and methods, such as planning, controlling, leading, and organizing, as managers in other industries do, too. They are also affected by similar forces, such as a unique organization culture, effects resulting from organization change, and dynamics stemming from an organization hierarchy that migrates from

a more hierarchical approach (much bureaucracy) to a flat organization type (more empowerment). The Managing Director of Parkhotel once decided to increase the hierarchy by hiring a Food and Beverages Director to oversee purchasing, food preparations, banquet sales and operations, as well as the restaurant. Figure 5 illustrates the organization structure and managerial levels after the new position was created:

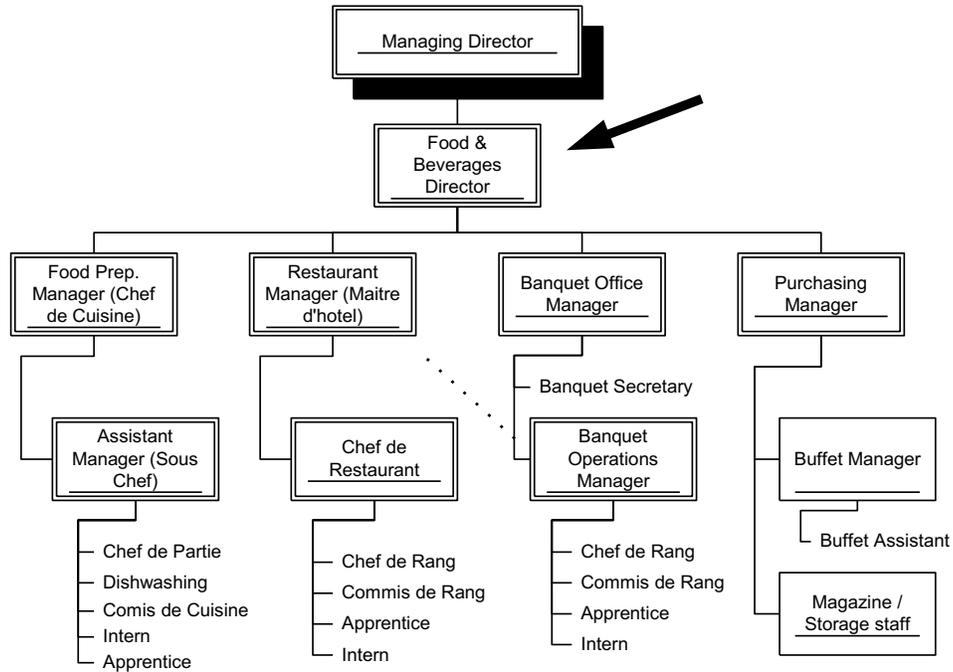


Figure 5: Excerpted organization chart, Parkhotel<sup>28</sup>

Organization design has as much influence on the efficiency and effectiveness of a business and its staff, as managerial skills and personality of the leaders have. A less hierarchical (flat) design with an emphasis on empowerment of staff, allowing to make quick decisions, is often preferred by managers, as it enables rapid responses to changing conditions. For example, should a staff shortage require hiring of temporary labor, but only senior managers have authority to hire, operations were affected due to the additional time needed to receive permission to hire.

<sup>28</sup> Illustrating the management team in 1989/1990

Contemporary management theory is complex and addresses issues such as the span of management, total quality management, delegation, job descriptions, performance reviews, risk management, communications, and many other topics. I have chosen reactive and proactive decision-making (comprising of essential steps, depends on factors, and is affected by forces) and a description of the systems management theory, as explained by Griffin, to illustrate my knowledge. Figure 6 depicts decision-making and the related forces and factors:

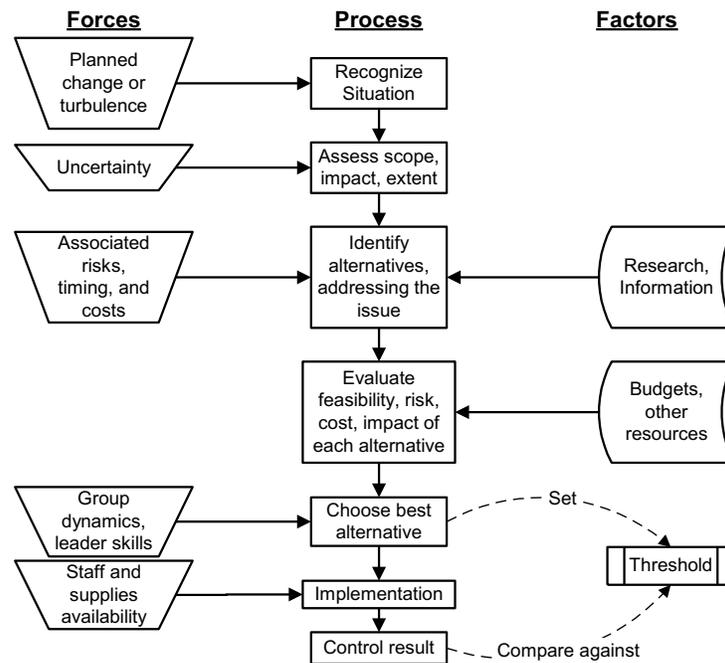


Figure 6: Decision-making illustrated

The systems management theory describes a managerial approach, whose basic components describe "input", "transformation", and "output". In the context of this narrative, required resources, such as financial resources, equipment, facilities, energy (electricity, gas), water, staff, and produce, are "input". The transformation happens when a food service turns resources into a finished product: meat, vegetables and other ingredients are cooked utilizing kitchen utensils, as well as water and energy. The result ("output") is arranged on a plate, and wait-staff serves it to the consumer.

Managers should be aware of three external forces influencing the industry: politics, competition, and technology <sup>29</sup>. Political forces can be of advantage to food service businesses, for example when unions manage to negotiate improved work conditions, but can also lead to negative effects, as the recently announced tobacco-ban in New York City restaurants and bars illustrates. A competitive market usually benefits consumers more than businesses competing in the same segment. In worst-case scenarios, a business may be forced to shutdown operations, should competition through price decrease revenues. The increasing significance of technology has simplified many tasks in lodging, hospitality, and food services (e.g. cash registers linked to a central computer), but has also led to anonymity of the customer, most often noticeable in semi-automated self-service restaurants.

During my career in the lodging industry, I was not confronted with duties related to staff management, recruiting, and compensation. However, I am familiar with these areas of responsibility. Successful supervisors manage, monitor, and motivate employees. Other management tasks performed by the food service manager are:

- Creating the work roster and planning mis-en-place work in advance
- Hiring part-time staff to overcome temporary staff shortages
- Ensuring maximum customer satisfaction through quality control
- Providing guidance and teaching for apprentices and interns
- Providing perspective, leadership and guidance for all staff

Managers use varieties of influencing techniques, and effective situation-based utilization determines overall managerial efficiency. Three of them are: reinforcement, empowerment, and rewards. Reinforcement implies authority and power were given to the manager. It is the least successful method to motivate employees, as reinforcing specific behavior is confrontational per

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<sup>29</sup> Besides: Lobby's, Federal Regulations, Laws, Unions, Competition, Suppliers, Partners

definition. Although a supervisor has the authority to give directives based on the position, and is often required to do so, too much authority and excessive bureaucracy quickly become barriers in an environment requiring flexibility and quick responses to changing customer demands (like in lodging and restaurant operations). Empowerment, in contrast, describes a less bureaucratic management style, when a leader permits employees to participate in and even facilitate their own decision-making. Rewards, finally, are issued through praise, promotion, or compensation.

Managers ensure employee satisfaction through empowerment, recognition, communication, training, promotions, and salary increases. Multiple criteria help determining appropriate compensation: wages common in the industry; average salaries paid in the particular region (which, as a secondary factor, adds 'cost of living' in the region into the mix), as well as the level at which the employee works (for example, first-year assistant versus seasoned midlevel manager). Compensation is a major factor in food-services organization, as cost for labor is high, and food service can be labor intensive, therefore affecting the cost/income ratio.

Possessing adequate recruiting and employee-motivation skills is significant as staff turnover is high. Workers move on to new positions frequently to gain experience, and employers in other industries seek skilled workers too (e.g. food operations in larger corporations, corporate travel departments, or corporate conference-planning). I do understand the recruiting process conceptually: as a position becomes available (due to expansion or turnover), a skilled worker –whose salary requirements are within the budget– is sought. Candidates are referred by colleagues, respond to advertising, or are recommended through a recruiting agency. During pre-screening interviews, a proficiency-assessment of the candidate is completed (nowadays often through a telephone interview as it saves time). Promising candidates are invited for interviews, and an offer is extended if the employee's background

meets the organization's requirements. Technical proficiency, operational skills, and knowledge about foods and beverages are important, but successful candidates also demonstrate their talent in providing outstanding customer service. Food service managers are aware of laws relevant to recruitment and hiring and ensure fair and accurate assessment of candidates based on their technical skills. In the United States, the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission <sup>30</sup>) regulates and monitors employment practices.

Food and beverage management evolved in the 1980's and 1990's, as segmentation, globalization, and cost- and health-awareness of consumers began influencing the industry. Food service 'key market contenders' grew rapidly through acquisitions and developed new profit opportunities through partnerships and expansion. 'Synergy' was the objective when fast food chains began offering their products on the same premises (e.g. a Pizza and Hamburger take-out's sharing a storefront). 'Food Mart's in shopping malls became increasingly popular, too. I do not have personal experience with all facets of segmentation, as suggested in the textbook for this course (other than, being a customer in multiple segments). However, I understand –for example– the concept of franchising, when a business opens under an existing brand, and benefits from advertising, product recognition, and procurement synergies (for example, McDonalds). Another example is 'contracting' which, as I understand it, compares to outsourcing. My current employer, for instance, does not operate the cafeteria in our office building, but has signed a contract with an external service provider <sup>31</sup> who manages the kitchen and service area. Corporations, whose primary business is not to serve foods (e.g. Ford builds cars) but require food service, achieve cost savings through outsourcing and can concentrate on their primary business objectives (relevant to my example: selling cars). 'Segmentation', in

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.eeoc.gov>

<sup>31</sup> Sodexo, <http://www.sodexousa.com>

simple terms, allows meeting the ever-changing demands of customers.

To avoid restating facts from the textbook, I elaborate in this narrative in greater depth only on segments I have personal experience with as an employee, not customer. I do understand, however, that segmentation employs multitudes of methods: division of markets, specialization of operations, targeting a demographic sector of customers, catering to a geographic area, maintaining a specific line of products, or offering tailored service. A few examples are: lunches served in educational facilities, food chains catering to selected neighborhoods, office-delivery lunch-services, vegetarian or health-oriented restaurants, and theme-restaurants, such as 'Planet Hollywood'. A challenge for selected food services operators (usually non-traditional food-serving places such as in community, educational, or government institutions) is that they often do not operate as a profit center, but are considered sole cost centers, which makes them vulnerable to budget cuts during times of economic slowdown.

My entire personal experience with food service operations stems from my tenure at Parkhotel, providing a-la-carte restaurant table-service (another segment, often described as 'fine dining'), the courses at vocational school, and from performing temp-work in restaurants, hotels, and catering businesses <sup>32</sup>. Shortly before my apprenticeship-exams, I participated in a competition for restaurant-apprentices, during which a panel of experienced restaurateurs judge the mis-en-place performance, knowledge about wines, and 'fine dining' table service skills of soon-to-be certified Restaurant Specialists (please refer to appendix-section four <sup>33</sup>). As a 'Commis de Restaurant' <sup>34</sup> (following the apprenticeship), I served during weddings, business lunches, and provided a-la-carte service with my own station, which made me also responsible

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<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately I have no references from business owners I worked for temporarily

<sup>33</sup> The event took place at Schlosshotel Kronberg, see more details here: <http://www.schlosshotel-kronberg.de/english/index.html>.

<sup>34</sup> Junior waiter, mostly assists the Chef de Rang, who is a senior waiter with own 'station' (section, area of responsibility) in the restaurant and who is attending all tables inside this section

for creating the guest checks for each table, collecting the money from guests, billing credit cards, and producing the daily cashier report for my station at the end of my shift.

Consumers became increasingly educated in recent decades, in part due to the 'Information Age' we live in. Price and quality matter, and customers educate themselves, compare products offered, and make more often than not informed decisions. Not only do they desire receiving value through the purchase, but also wish to consume healthy products. Food service managers are aware of these dynamics and respond by adjusting product lines and services. Consumers also became more price-conscious after the economic boom of the late 1990's ended. During the economically strong years, most personal incomes (and employer budgets) allowed maintaining a sophisticated lifestyle. Entertainment, traveling, good food enjoyed with friends or business partners were popular activities. However, this changed in the late 1990's. Unemployment and declining household incomes lead to consumers having less money to spend on food and beverages when dining out (if they dine out at all). Additionally, business and personal travel budgets were reduced, resulting in falling occupancy rates in lodging facilities, which in turn results in falling profits for food and beverage businesses (travelers tend to generate revenues for restaurants, whether they are on premises or in close proximity to a hotel). We also became more family-oriented due to recent world events and prefer spending time at home to traveling.

A sociological factor affecting food service organizations is the increase in diversity of its clientele since the 1980's. First, more women became successful managers in corporations and traveled for business. The industry recognized that special considerations should be given to female guests, for example through considerate seating in a restaurant. Second, globalization and the economic growth led to an increase of international business and leisure travelers, and

therefore to increasing significance and diversity of personal needs and preferences. Successful food service businesses recognize and address those. For example, Düsseldorf in Germany has a significant number of visitors from Japan, year-round. Hotel and restaurant managers therefore provide menus printed in Japanese, but also offer dishes likely to find consumers appreciation. Diversity of the workforce is also a factor. In Europe, the union of eleven of the European countries increased workforce diversity. So-called "guest workers" were key resources already for a long time, not only in key positions in hotels, but also as restaurant owners. With the European common marketplace founded, and less stringent immigration laws in effect, it became much easier for employees to assume a position in a foreign country. To provide contrast: a similar trend for increasing workforce-diversity in the United States is the growing Spanish-speaking population.

The textbook for this course provides much information about distribution channels for food services products. My tenure at Parkhotel and Best Western Hotels limits my hands-on experience to the distribution of food services products and services in traditional restaurant, pub, bar, and catering scenarios. However, I have conceptual understanding of the many facets of distribution. For example, distribution begins with manufacturers delivering produce and goods to food service businesses through 'distribution channels'. En route to the food service business, supplies are handled by wholesalers, transportation agents, and delivery services, and may be transported by truck, airplane, or railway. Once the food service business has been equipped with the necessary supplies and produced its product, it is distributed to the consumer, a process that has many facets, too. For example: table-service in a restaurant, self-service at a cocktail-party, or tray-service in a corporate lunch-cafeteria. These service types influence procurement and staffing directly, as each distribution-method requires different preparations and different

involvement of staff in the production process. For example, table-service in a restaurant will require sufficient staffing of the relevant stations in the kitchen and is often used in a-la-carte cooking. Self-service (or buffet-style service) requires fewer personnel during the service, as food is presented on large platters, in bowls and heated trays, and the guest approaches the buffet to help himself.

During the apprenticeship as well as my tenure as Commis de Rang at Parkhotel, I learned much detail about and gained hands-on experience with beverages such as wine, beer, spirits, and non-alcoholic beverages. One of my teachers in vocational school allowed me to discover wines of the world, and learning about production and quality aspects.

Soil, the type of grape, the year, and the vintner who produces the wine determine quality, taste, and price of the product. Grapes grow on vines in so-called 'vineyards', which is a 'farm', producing wine. Differences in soil such as levels of minerals, type of soil (for example: loess versus sandstone) influence grapes and the wine produced from the grapes. Popular grapes are: Riesling, Portugieser (Germany); and Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Gamay, Syrah (France, United States, Australia). Weather in different regions can affect wine quality too. For example, a region that receives more sun during the months in which the grapes grow will produce wines of distinct character. Weather often also determines if a 'year' is a 'good' or 'not so good' year for wines. This notion describes whether during a specific year the majority of vintners managed to produce wines of superior, standard, or poor quality. The primary factor is weather, which ultimately can affect a region only, a country, and even the worldwide wine-producing industry. The wine production-process comprises the below steps:

1. Vines are planted and grow
2. Grapes are harvested in late summer to early fall

3. Grapes and stems are separated, the grapes are crushed and pressed
4. Grape juice is filled into oak barrels (steel barrels are used too)
5. During the fermentation, sugar turns into alcohol (may take up to a couple of weeks, the wine is called 'must' and yeast aids in this process)
6. Wine and yeast are separated
7. The wine is bottled and sold, or filled into barrels for further refinement

The skins of the grapes determine the color of a wine. When skins of dark red grapes are mixed with the must during the fermentation, the color of the wine will be red. Wines also receive their distinct taste based on the time of harvesting of the grapes and due to the specifics in the production process. Three examples are: Beaujolais Nouveaux, Eiswein, and Barrique. The Beaujolais Nouveaux is a popular and young wine – it hardly spends any time in a barrel and is sold shortly after harvesting. This light red wine has a dry and mildly sour taste. Eiswein, in contrast, is harvested late in the season, when the first frost arrived. The grapes are slightly frozen during harvesting and crushing/pressing, but more importantly, they have received much sun and developed a lot of sugar. Eiswein is a speciality, expensive to produce, and sells at a higher price. Due to the high sugar level, the wine turns out to be higher in alcohol volume content and is very sweet. It is often served with desserts. A Barrique red wine receives its name from the Barrique barrel, which is a specific type of oak barrel. As red wine continues to refine and mature in the barrel, a regular barrel will slightly affect the taste of the wine. However, Barrique barrels often undergo additional treatment, as the wood inside is gently burnt. This treatment influences the taste of the wine quite significantly.

Aged wines may contain small amounts of residue (wine tartar or yeast), which

accumulates over time in the bottle. In upscale restaurants, a sommelier<sup>35</sup> will separate the red wine from the residue through a process of decanting, which is carefully and slowly filling the wine from the bottle into a carafe. The key is, to stop the flow of wine as soon as the residue is reached. To be able to identify that moment, the bottle is held over candlelight. Please refer to Figure 7:



Figure 7: Decanting illustrated

In addition to separating wine from residue, the process also exposes the red wine to air, which enhances its bouquet and taste.

Most wine-producing countries are divided into geographic regions, which are often known to produce distinct kinds of wines, and sometimes use specifically shaped bottles in which the wine is sold. For example, 'Bordeaux' and 'Alsace' in France both are known for their specialties: the 'Bordeaux' region produces white wines as well, but is predominantly known for outstanding red wines. 'Alsace' is famous for its 'Riesling d'Alsace'. Examples in Germany are the 'Franken' and 'Rheingau' areas. They are amongst the premier growing areas and known for their shape of bottles used (Franken) and top-quality Riesling-wines (Rheingau). Other wine-growing areas and some of their characteristics are:

- Oregon: up-and-coming red wines, mostly Pinot Noir. Excellent quality, but expensive
- Champagne (France): only the sparkling wines produced in this region are

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<sup>35</sup> A waiter dedicated to recommending and serving wine

permitted to be labeled as 'Champagne'

- Tuscany (Italy): Chianti red wines are amongst Italy's popular wines

Wine-producing countries use different terms and regulations to classify and rate wines. These ratings do not only provide guidance for a customer, but also determine the price. France and Germany both use similar systems. For example, a French 'Chablis Grand Cru' is different from a 'Chablis Premier Grand Cru': the quality of the grapes as well as the wine itself has been found to be of better quality in a 'Premier Grand Cru'. In Germany, very similar, a 'Qualitätswein bestimmter Anbaugebiete' is of lesser quality than a 'Qualitätswein mit Prädikat'. Additional classifications of wines used in Germany are 'Kabinett', 'Spätlese', and 'Auslese'<sup>36</sup>. These ratings, amongst other wine-production related issues, for example how to label wine, are regulated through federal laws by the governments of most countries producing wine.

The aforementioned ratings refer to medium and high quality wines. Lower quality wines are 'table wines'. Some of them are produced through blending of wines from within a region. For example, when multiple vintners of a region deliver their produced wines to a central purchasing and manufacturing organization, which blends and bottles the wines, and sells them under a label that does not identify the vintners, but the region. A variation of blending is mixing two grapes before the wine reaches the barrel; an example is Pinot Grigio and Chardonnay mixed together.

While working in the banquet sales office and during classes in vocational school, I also learned how to match wines with foods. This is done whenever a menu is designed, as wine and foods should complement each other. In both scenarios, when creating a catering portfolio as

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<sup>36</sup> Translated: Kabinett = 'Cabinet'. Kabinett wines are premium quality, and better than 'Landwein' (land wine) or 'Tafelwein' (table wine). Spätlese = 'late harvest'. In the literal sense, grapes have been receiving more sun and therefore contain more sugar. Auslese = 'Selection', also to be understood in the literal sense, when grapes are carefully selected and only the best are used

well as in an a-la-carte restaurant, a food service manager should ensure a selection of wines match menu choices offered. A simple rule prevailed for a long time, but has been heavily discussed as long as it existed: white wine goes with white meat and red wine goes with red meat. Taste is unique to the individual and a very personal matter, it therefore cannot really be challenged. Nevertheless, when choosing wine for a food that carries a strong taste (for example: a rack of lamb with a marjoram sauce), a rich wine will complement the dish much better than a mild one. For example, I would prefer a red Chateauneuf du Pape to a Sancerre in this particular case, because the red wine can 'compete' with the flavorful rack of lamb. In contrast would a voluminous wine overpower the taste of a milder dish. For example, if I were to eat a 'Filet of Sole' with a light lemon-sauce and had to choose between a Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, and a Pinot Blanc or Bourgogne Chardonnay, I would choose the Chardonnay. The two red wines are too overpowering and the Pinot Blanc is often too dry for my taste. The Chardonnay, with its mild, medium fruity taste complements the fish best.

During my apprenticeship at Parkhotel, I managed the beverage buffet and its equipment for a limited period. Its function is to provide beverages, as well as clean and polished glasses for a variety of beverages: wine, digestif<sup>37</sup>, water, soft-drinks, beer, and cocktails<sup>38</sup>. The Parkhotel buffet-area is organized as shown in Figure 8:

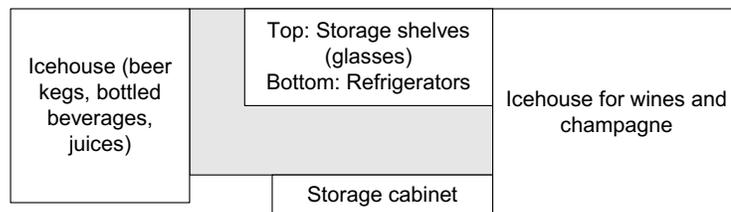


Figure 8: Buffet area illustrated (simplified)

Wait-staff charge beverages ordered by guests to their guest checks in the cashier system

<sup>37</sup> After-dinner drinks such as Cognac, Armagnac, Brandy, Whisky

<sup>38</sup> For example: high-balls and whisky tumblers

and print a so-called 'bon' for each beverage. In exchange for this bon, which evidences that the waiter has properly recorded the sale, buffet personnel provide the beverage, open the bottle as needed, provide clean glasses in sufficient amounts, and hand the beverage to the wait-staff. For most beverages, special glasses are used when they are served. Figure 9 depicts examples of glassware, and for which beverages they are used:

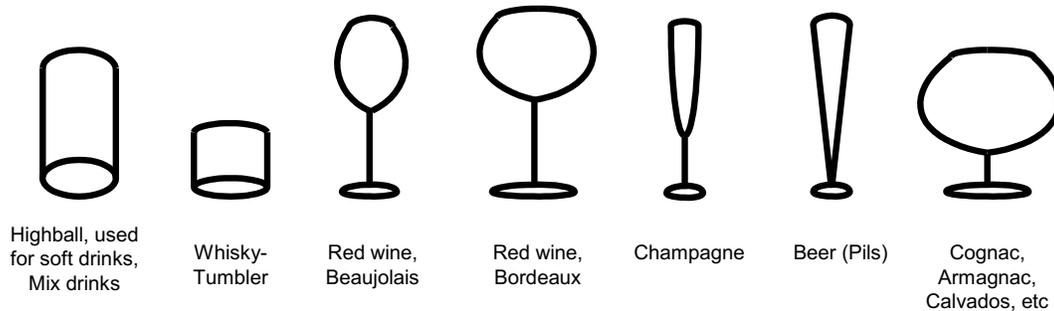


Figure 9: Beverages glassware illustrated <sup>39</sup>

Beer is another popular alcoholic beverage. Its invention dates back many thousand years to the times of the Pharaoh's ruling Egypt. Germany's oldest food law in effect regulates beer production. The 'Deutsches Reinheitsgebot' <sup>40</sup> prescribes that beer can only be made of barley, hops, and water. It is still in effect for two reasons: ensuring quality and protecting domestic markets. Germany, so far, has successfully fenced off all effort of the European Union to soften this regulation, to allow foreign beer producers selling flavored beers in the country. Beer is produced by mixing and cooking the ingredients (malt, water, corn or rice), adding yeast before the fermentation, and filtering the product before an aging process begins (aging happens usually in large steel barrels). A final filtering is done before shipment. Beer comes in large variety of sorts, colors, and tastes. Three variations are:

- Stout: A dark, sometimes bittersweet and creamy beer. Often high in volume of

<sup>39</sup> Illustration does not scale

<sup>40</sup> Translated: German Purity Regulation

alcohol (German relatives are 'Altbier' and 'Bockbier')

- Weizen (Wheat): made off wheat, a traditional Bavarian speciality and slightly sweeter in taste

- Pils: a lighter beer, its color often described as blonde. Also referred to as 'Lager'.

One of the oldest 'Pils' is brewed in the Czech Republic ('Pilsner Urquell').

Beer sells in cans, bottles, and on tap. The latter ensures freshness and is the most popular version. A popular trend in recent years have been 'micro brewers', which are small brew houses (often paired with a restaurant), generating just enough output to sell beer on premises or in the neighborhood (as opposed to large brewers such as Anhaeuser-Busch, who sell beer worldwide). I have been asked frequently if I miss 'the good German beer' since I moved to New York, but have discovered that –besides the micro brews– some larger U.S. breweries produce outstanding quality. Two of them are Samuel Adams and the Brooklyn Brewery <sup>41</sup>.

In most countries, law regulates the sale of beverages and a license is required to sell alcoholic beverages. Additionally, the daytime during which beer and wines can be sold may be restricted, and age restrictions –regulating from which age on individuals are permitted to purchase alcohol– can differ from country to country (sometimes even from state to state). An ethical obligation exists too. For example, alcohol should not be sold to an individual already intoxicated, as it is poisonous in large quantities. A business owner can lose the license and may face lawsuits and jail time if alcoholic beverages are sold to minors or it is determined that he or she is liable for circumstances resulting from alcohol use.

Similar to a Chef de Cuisine, the manager in charge for managing beverages sales in a food service business must decide upon pricing, creates menus, performs inventories, and calculates the cost/income ratio. Most beverages are not labor intensive, as they are taken from

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<sup>41</sup> I am comparing to brands such as 'Budweiser' and 'Coors Lite', who are simply not my *personal* favorites

storage (warehouse or refrigerator), the container or bottle is opened, the contents are poured into a glass or carafe, and the beverage is subsequently served to the consumer. An example is sodas and water, which often have attractive profit margins due to low wholesale prices. However, mix drinks served in bars and restaurants may contain expensive ingredients (champagne, whisky, etc.) and often involve labor-dependent production tasks (e.g. pouring of multiple ingredients, mixing or shaking, garnishing, etc). These factors are considered when beverage menus are created and priced. Additional issues to consider are:

- Storage: cool (requires energy) versus warm, also cost for real estate
- Demand: purchasing expensive wines that are not sellable in the business can lead to higher costs, for which no income will generate
- Service style: Full table service is more labor intensive as 'pub service', when most patrons obtain drinks at the bar, even when they sit at tables

Another category of alcoholic beverages are high-volume beverages, such as Cognac, Whisky, Armagnac, Calvados, Weinbrand, and liquors such as Tia Maria, Baileys, and Grand Marnier. The production process of distilled beverages has in common with wine production, that ingredients are crushed and pressed into juice, and that fermentation turns sugar into alcohol. However, Calvados –for example– is made from apples. Most distilled products age in barrels, which influences color and taste of the beverage. The process of distilling is heating the juice until it boils and evaporates. The vapor is captured by a device on top of the container, and from there directed to a separate container (vapor turns liquid when it cools). Selected spirits are distilled twice, which produces higher quality, as the alcohol volume increases and the taste becomes richer (e.g. Cognac). Further refinement may include adding flavor, blending, and aging in barrels.

Finally, non-alcoholic beverages, such as fruit juices (e.g. orange, apple, pineapple), carbonated drinks (e.g. cola, ginger ale, tonic), as well as water sell in food service businesses. Main ingredients of carbonated drinks are water, carbonic acid, fruit extract, and often a lot of sugar. Fruit juices are distinguished between those made of frozen concentrate (have less taste) and those made of 100% of fresh ingredients. Juices and carbonated drinks are consumed pure, or in mix drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic).

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The syllabus for 'Food Management Theory' suggests that assigned readings of trade articles with subsequent delivery of summaries were required for this course. Please find one article and my 150-word abstract in appendix-section five.

I hope my translation of industry jargon in this narrative is sufficient. Please advise of any clarifications you require. I am positive that my experience outlined is satisfactory to meet the requirements for these courses. Please let me know if you have any questions.

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