

What is a Cloud Kitchen & How Does It Function?

A cloud kitchen is primarily a restaurant kitchen that accepts incoming orders only through online ordering systems and offers no dine-in facility. Cloud kitchens are also known as dark kitchens, ghost kitchens, virtual restaurants, and satellite kitchens. Cloud kitchens are typically located within operational restaurants or separately.

Cloud kitchens can have their online ordering website and online ordering app, or they can accept orders through the various food delivery platform. Since the primary source of revenue for these internet restaurants is through the different food ordering platforms, such as Swiggy, Zomato, etc., it is essential to have a Point of Sales software that accepts orders from multiple sources. This saves the hassle of manually adding and calculating orders from different ordering services at the end of each day.

Faasos by Rebel Foods, Hoi Foods, Biryani By Kilo, are some of the famous examples of Cloud Kitchens.

All You Need To Know About How To Open A Cloud Kitchen In India

In this article, we will take you through the investments, licenses required, type of location, and everything else you need to know about how to open your very own cloud kitchen.

1. Deciding The Location Of The Cloud Kitchen Restaurant

The primary reason behind the low investment needed to open a cloud kitchen is the real estate cost. Location is the biggest differentiator that reduces the cost of opening a cloud kitchen as compared to a traditional dine-in restaurant.

In the cloud kitchen model, the location doesn't have to do anything with footfalls, parking space, and high-end site. However, it does have a lot to do with proper sanitation and water supply with low rentals.

Also, the location should be chosen based on the customer demography and the type of food product that you are selling. The cloud kitchen should be located where there is a high demand for the food that you'd be offering.

2. Implementing The Online Food Ordering

Once you have decided on the location, you need to decide on the technology to accept orders. There are many online ordering and delivery platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato,

Foodpanda, etc. that accept online orders on restaurant's behalf and also deliver the food to customers. These companies usually charge 18-30% of your revenue per order. There is also a one-time integration fee involved for some FoodTech companies.

Since a cloud kitchen relies solely on its online presence to draw in customers, a website with the option to order food online is an absolute must. Various website developers can build a well-optimized website, which also gets integrated with POS software, which further increases efficiency in taking orders and managing customers. Also, customers can track their orders on a real-time basis.

3. Acquiring The Licenses For The Online Kitchens

Licensing is an integral part of setting up a restaurant. Few licenses are essential to procure in the first month of operations for a hassle-free business. **These are FSSAI license, GST Registration, Municipal health trade licenses, fire licenses, HACCP etc.** It is advised to hire an agency for applying for all the permits because it is the most tedious and time taking task. Apart from this rest of the permits would cost around Rs 10,000 (if FSSAI license is applied for one year)

4. Kitchen Equipment, Raw Material, And Packaging Needed For A Cloud Kitchen

The cost of setting up the kitchen will vary depending upon the cuisine and food offering. For example, the cost of setting up a cloud kitchen that wants to serve items like Burger, Pizza, Pasta, and Sandwiches will not cost more than Rs 2,00,000.

If spent wisely on equipment by procuring new electronic items and old equipment such as tables, racks, and storing shelves, one can save up a lot of money. The cost can go up because of the heavy equipment like a chimney, deep refrigerators, and burners. If you are planning to run multiple brands from the same kitchen, you can leverage the same kitchen equipment and resources for multiple brands. This would help you save up on the equipment cost.

Raw materials required to start the cloud kitchen operations depend on the type of food offered. It is important to choose the right vendors at this stage for the raw materials.

You should allocate extra budget for packaging as it plays a crucial role in creating a brand recall for the customers. The packaging must be sturdy to preserve the quality of the food during the delivery.

Since you are no longer able to provide a physical guest experience, packaging should leave a good impression on the minds of the customer. Ensure that the packaging contains your restaurant's logo and reflects the theme and concept of your restaurant.

5. Staff Requirement In A Cloud Kitchen Restaurant

The secret sauce behind a successful restaurant is the team that works for it, with the Chef being the most critical part of the team, as they not only prepare the food but also helps in designing the menu. **In an online kitchen, a minimum of five employees is required.** You'd need at least two chefs, two helpers, and one housekeeper. The salary of the staff depends on their experience. The average salary of the Chef at Commis level 1 is Rs 14000- Rs 15000, while that of helpers and other staff salary range between Rs 6000- Rs 8000 based on their work. Apart from the kitchen staff, two employees at the delivery and one at the counter for receiving online and telephonic orders are required. Here we would also like to recommend you to partner with the third-party delivery services which work on a per order basis.

6. Staff Uniform For Cloud Kitchen Employees

For a cloud kitchen, one may feel that a staff uniform is not required. However, it is still heavily recommended to have a dress code for maintaining discipline, cleanliness, and hygiene. **Also, provide your cloud kitchen staff with essential hygiene and safety standards equipment such as masks, hair caps, and gloves.**

7. Point Of Sale Technology Needed For A Cloud Kitchen

The entire online food ordering and delivery system are heavily dependent on the proper acceptance of food orders. **It is also essential to keep track of the number of orders incoming from the various online ordering platforms. Tracking of orders and detailed reporting is essential for the smooth functioning of restaurants.** Select a POS that is customized to suit the requirements of the online ordering website. One can use any web-enabled device such as a computer, laptop, tablet, or even to generate the bills.

8. Mobile Phones And Other Miscellaneous Items

An online kitchen requires a board line, mobile phones, high-speed internet, stationery, small counters, and chairs. Apart from that Cloud Telephony subscription that ensures that no call gets missed. You can also record the call for training purposes.

Pros and Cons of a Cloud Kitchen

Pros

- ← Streamlined order process
- ← Low operational cost
- ← Easy Expansion

Cons

- ← No personal touch to build customer relation
- ← Limited audience: only tech-savvy customers to reach out to
- ← Limited brand presence compared to traditional outlets

POSist

UNIT 2

Equipment (QPF)

Quality of equipment used.

Specification of equipment

Heat and cold generating equipment

Maintenance of equipments

Modern developments in equipment manufacturing

Introduction

The term equipment refers to all machinery tools, crockery, cutlery and furniture that may be used for preparation services and storage of food. Catering equipments

range from simple brat pans, steamers, ovens, grills and temperature controlled fryers. Correct use of equipments and proper control will ensure that the food is cooked as close to the time of service as is possible, optimum freshness and quality are thus assured.

If one could design equipment, what would it be like?

Factors to be considered in careful selection of volume feeding equipments are as follows:-

- Cost Effective
- Efficiency in use both in production and service
- Multiple use or multipurpose use.
- Low operational costs
- Safe and convenient to handle or user friendly.
- Good quality materials have been used in manufacturing such equipments
- Equipments should have a simple design
- A good brand name in the market like Hobart, Electrolux etc
- Ease of installation and maintenance
- Safety of the equipment while in operation and economical in use
- Appearance of the equipment should match the policy of the equipment
- Subject to easy availability in the market
- Easy cleaning and servicing
- Equipments should be strong and durable in use and can withstand with maximum wear and tear
- Equipment must save operational expenses as well as labor cost.

Quality of equipments

The selection of the metal used in large or small equipment is of utmost importance. Apart from the aesthetic appeal and costs, there are many factors that should be kept in mind while choosing the metals needed for cooking. Metals used to make equipments are non stick coat material, iron,

copper, Cast Iron, Brass, Bronze, Plastic, Ceramics, wood, clay rubber, clay and earthenware steel, aluminium and galvanized steel. Of which the steel is the costliest. The equipments must be easy to clean, nontoxic, non absorbent, corrosion resistant and stable. All the corners of the equipment should be rounded and sealed to give a finished smooth surface. When designing equipment, it is important to keep in mind with a heavy gauge should not be too heavy to handle.

The following are a few of the most important criteria to be kept in mind:

1. Degree of Conductivity
2. Whether the metal will be toxic when it comes in contact with the food.
3. Durability in the industrial kitchen(should withstand the usage and cleaning)
4. Resistance to high heat without damage or danger to the equipment.
5. Rust resistant wherever possible.

The equipment with heavy gauge should not be heavy to handle and move around..

Specifications of equipments

The specifications put forth to the supplier when purchasing equipment are as follows:-

1. Installation:-of the heavy duty equipments will be by the supplier.
2. Clean up:- and disposal of the debris should be done by the equipment manufacturer.
3. Detail drawings:-The drawings should be sent to the owner or the consultant or architect or the consultant for the approval so that corrections can be made. Pts to be kept in mind while correcting the designs:-

Overall Dimensions

Weight, moveable

Drainage

Fuel supply

Water requirement

Capacity usefulness

Time consumption

Easy procedures (Handling)

Maintenance

Attachment required

Extraction –Does it requires for like smoke and fumes

Noise –does it have an acceptable noise level

4. Construction-Sturdy.

5. Guarantee/Warrantee

6. Qualifications - for the quotations to be got for large quantities or big equipments. Call for catalogues, journals and spec sheets.

7. Installation Instructions-For e.g., should there be a cabinet, fixed or removable, perforated...How to mount the shelves—sliding or on the bracket.....

8. Cost-The general idea of the cost of the equipments makes one consider the budget within which it can be purchased. Cost involves-Freight cost +installment +standard operating cost+ Cost of servicing cost of downtime ,any trade in –replacement value.....

9. Payment terms....plus the discounts to be asked for.

Modern developments in equipment manufacturing

New trends and technology

Planning ahead means keeping up with new trends in the food service equipments and technology. Constant development in the field of science and technology has resulted in various sophisticated equipments that have become indispensable part of the kitchens. They are more user and environment friendly. At the same time they ensure hygiene, in the kitchen and reduce food contamination. Time management becomes easier.

Example- Induction cooking, Sous- vide or vacuum cooking, Automated Fryers, Quick disconnect options on the appliances so they can be rearranged and cleaned more easily

Microprocessor controls can be programmed by the manufacturer or operator to control on cooking time and sequences. Display cooking, menu merchandising and cook to order kitchens have opened up the doors for new inventions in equipments like grills, salad bars....Today's equipments feature touch screens, instead of buttons, plastic shields prevents grease and dust entering. Symbols are used instead of words that are not fluent in English.

The factors affecting these trends:-

Ever changing needs of the customers

Growth strategies of the different types of food service facilities.

Environmental and food safety concerns and legislation

Availability and skill levels of the workers

Recent trends in the industry

1. Oriental cooking ranges

Chinese and Thai cuisines use high pressure burners which are powered by air thrust to bring the flame out of the cooking pit, so that the food can be tossed into the flame for the char grilled effect.



2. Solar Cookers

Using sunrays for cooking food has gained importance in the world. Solar cookers, Solar driers, Solar ovens and Solar Parabolic spheres are some of the equipments used in small as well as in bulk quantity. Solar cooked food retains most of the nutrients and is tastier. It is most hygienic way of cooking food without disturbing the nature.



3. Sous Vide: The food is sealed in air tight plastic bags in a water bath or in temperature controlled stem environment.



4. Infra red ovens/ Grillers/ Infra red cooking:

Here infra red radiations are used in cooking tender meat . These rays have a high frequency of heating. Here food cooks very fast and retains most of the food nutrients intact in the food. It seems to be the future of modern grilling.



5. Micro –Ovens or micro cooking:

It uses electromagnetic waves for cooking by disturbing the internal molecules, due to which constant rubbing takes place which generates heat and food is cooked. This method of cooking is excellent for reheating or rechauffing as now day's frozen foods have great demands.



6. Buffalo chopper:

It is a machine which does help the garde manger to produce excellent galantines and terrines. It minces food very finely and within a fraction of second.



7. Bone saw machine:

uses to cut the joints as per the desire of the garde manger.



8. Meat thermometer

Is used to determine the internal temperature of roasting and grilling meat.



9. Trio peeler:

It is three in one tool has rotating blades that peel hard skins, soft skins and cuts the vegetables into juliennes



10. Meat smoker:

It helps smoking meat and improves flavor.



Modern Developments in Utensils

Recent technologies have contributed a lot in the production of convenience foods in mass catering.

Cook-Chill

Cook-chill is catering system based on normal preparation and cooking of food followed by rapid chilling storage in controlled low-temperature conditions above freezing point, 0-3°C (32-37°F) and subsequently reheating immediately before consumption. The chilled food is regenerated in finishing kitchens which require low capital investment and minimum staff.

The cook-chill system is used in volume catering, in hospitals, schools and in social services. It is also used for banquets, in conference and exhibition catering, in vending machines where meals are dispensed to the customers, in factories, hospitals and service outside of main meal times.

The purpose of Chilling Food

The purpose of chilling food is to prolong its storage life. Under normal temperature conditions, food deteriorates rapidly through the action of micro-organisms and enzyme and chemical reactions. Reduction in the storage temperature inhibits the multiplication of bacteria and other micro-organisms and slows down the chemical and enzymatic reactions. At normal refrigeration temperature reactions are still taking place but at a much slower rate, and at frozen food storage temperature, -20°C (-4°F) approximately, all reaction nearly cease. A temperature of 0-3°C does not give a storage life comparable to frozen food but it does produce a good product.

In a properly designed and operated cook-chill system, cooked and prepared food will be rapidly cooled down to 0-3°C as soon as possible after cooking and portioning and then stored between these temperatures throughout storage and distribution until required for reheating and service. Food prepared through the cook-chill system should be portioned and transferred to a blast chiller unit within 30 minutes. This will reduce the risk of the food remaining at warm incubation temperatures and prevent the risk of contamination and loss of food quality.

Finishing kitchens consist of purpose built regeneration plus refrigerated storage. Additional equipment, such as a chip fryer, boiling table and pressure steamer for chips, sauces, custard, vegetables, can be added if required to give greater flexibility.

Cook-Freeze

Cook-freeze is a specialized food production and distribution system that allows caterers to take advantage of the longer life through blast freezing at -18° to -20°C (0° to -32°F) and stored at that temperature until required for resale or consumption for up to 3-6 months. It also enables economies to be introduced into the staffing of dining rooms and restaurants.

The Cook-Freeze process

Cook-Freeze uses a production system similar to that used in cook-chill. The recipes are modified, enabling products to be freezer-stable. The freezing in the Blast-freezers must be carried out very rapidly to retain freshness and to accelerate temperature loss through the latent heat barrier, thus preventing the formation of large crystals and rupturing of the cells.

Vacuum Cooking (Sous-Vide)

This is a form of cook-chill, using a combination of vacuum sealing plastic pouches, cooking by steam and then rapidly chilling in an ice-water bath. The objective is to rationalize kitchen procedures without having a detrimental effect on the quality of the individual dishes. As there is no oxidation or discoloration it is ideal for conserving fruits, such as apples and pears. When preparing meats in sauces the meat is pre-blanching then added to the completed sauce.

Classification of Volume feeding equipments

A wide range of equipments is used in all catering kitchens ranging from small hand tools to large pieces of equipments. It can be classified according to the function of the equipment.

- Hand tools
- Cooking Appliances
- Moulds
- Preparation Equipments
- Dish washing Equipments
- Refrigerator Equipments
- Service and Holding Equipments

Classification

Large Equipment -Ranges, steamers, boiling pans, fryers, sinks, table etc

Medium Equipments or Mechanical equipment -dishwasher, peelers, mincers, mixers, refrigerators

Utensils and small equipment-Pots, pans, Whisks, bowls, bowl and spoons etc.

Large Equipment:-

Stoves, Higher Pressure Burners

A large variety of stoves are available operated by gas, electricity, solid fuel, oil, microwave or microwave plus convection. Solid tops should be washed clean, or wiped clean with a pad of sacking. When cool the stovetops can be more thoroughly cleaned by washing and using an abrasive.

Convection:

Forced air convection oven

Microwave oven

Induction tops

All electric models are fitted an on-off switch which operates the entire oven. These will be linked to an individual indicator light in some models which lights up when the oven is switched on.

On gas oven an on/off switch will also be fitted to operate the electricity driven fan the interior light and ignition system is fitted. Remove all the removable shelves of the rack for separate cleaning.



Steamers:

- Atmospheric steamer
- Pressure steamer
- Pressure less convection steamer.

Cleanliness of steamers is essential, trays and runners should be washed in hot detergent water. The water –generating chamber should be drained cleaned and refitted and inside of the steamer cleaned with the detergent water and rinsed. Steamer door controls should be lightly greased occasionally and the door left open slightly to allow air circulate when the steamer is not in use.



Tilting pans:

Ensure that the pan is tightly fitted by moving the handle of the pan.

Switch on the main and then switch on the operating switch, turn temp control on high.

Start gas connection.

Press the ignition switch for 29 seconds. Put fat or oil then use according to the preparation.

The equipment should be cleaned thoroughly after use. Normally washing with hot soapy water and rinsing with clean water.

If the pan has been used for frying, care should be taken to remove all oil film build up.

Grease the tilting handle occasionally.

Boiling pans/Steam jacket Kettle:

After use, the pan and the lid should be thoroughly washed with a mild detergent solution and then well rinsed. Any moving part should be greased occasionally and checked to see that they are in moving order.

Deep fat Fryers:

Deep fat fryers should be cleaned after use-Turning off the heat and allowing the fat to cool.

Draining off and straining the fat.

Closing the stopcock, filling the fryer with hot water containing detergent and boiling for 10-15 min.

Draining off the detergent water, refilling with clean water plus 1/8th lt of vinegar per 5 lit of water and re boiling for 10-15 min.

Draining off the water, drying the fryer, closing the stopcock and refill with clean fat.

Hot cupboards and Bain-marie:

The doors of the hot cupboards should be greased occasionally and the steel tops should be cleaned thoroughly after each service.

After use the heat should be turned off, the water drained off and the bain-marie cleaned inside and outside with hot detergent water rinsed and dried. Any drain-off should then be checked for any blockage and then closed.

Fry plates and Griddle plates:

To clean the griddle plates, warm the plate and scrape of food particles. Rub the

Metal with pumic stone or griddle stone following the grain of the metal.

Clean with hot detergent water, rinse with clean hot water and wipe dry.

Finally rescission (prove) the surface by lightly oiling with vegetable oil.



Mincer:

Remove all the attachments of the mincer. Put soda in warm water and apply on the Mincer and attachments. Remove and wash with soap water .wipe with a clean duster

Always keep the mincer dry

Grease /oil the mincer once a week.

Masala grinder:

Detach belt from the grinding stone. remove all the masalas from stone ,wash

Thoroughly and wipe dry.

Wash the grinder with warm water wipe with dry duster.

Do the overhauling once a month.

Do not put on a stone in grinder and start without putting masala or Idli mixture in it.



Dough mixer:

Put off the mains of the dough mixer

Wash all the attachments.

Check belt of the motor occasionally.

Potato peeler:

Detach upper deck of the peeler. Wash it thoroughly with the scrubber, rinse with Water and wipe dry.

Remove all the potato peels from it and scrub thoroughly.

Fix the upper deck and check for its function.



Tandoor:

Allow the tandoor to cool.

Once a week coat the tandoor with mixture of ash, earth and water.

Season inside of the tandoor with spinach puree, mustard oil.



Pressure Cooker:

Wash the pressure cooker with hot soapy water, wipe dry, keep in cupboard, check Safety valve, rubber rings regularly.

Hand Tools:

Despite all of the development in catering a large portion of all the kitchen activities are performed using hand tools. Whisks, Wooden/plastic spoons and spatulas, Skimmers, Ladle serving spoons, Steak/Grilling tongs, Rolling pins, Kitchen scissors, apple corers, can openers, cutlet bats, chinoise, piping bags etc should be washed and rinsed in hot detergent water and should be wiped dried.

Small equipments:

Sauté pans, frying pans Stockpots, Sauce pans, Boiling pans, Braising pans, Omelets pans, Baking sheets, Pie dishes, Roasting tins Grater moulds etc..Should be washed rinsed in hot water and wiped dried.

Cutting boards made of rubber should be scrubbed with hot water and then dried. Cutting boards, sieve, spatula, rolling pins made of wood should not be scraped with knife but should be scrubbed in hot detergent water, rinsed in clean water and dried.

Casseroles, oval dish, bowls, Soufflé dish, egg cocotte, pie dish, Sole dish, basin made of clay or earthen ware should be scrubbed in hot detergent water and rinsed in clean water and wiped dried.

Heat and cold generating equipments:

Cold generating equipments

Refrigerator, freezer, walk- in, Ice making machines, Chilled water coolers, Bottle

cooling cabinets.

1. **Walk in Coolers** - This equipment is a cold generating equipment, where one can walk inside the fridge and keep perishables inside the shelves of the refrigerated cabinets. Walk in coolers operate above 32degree farenhiet or below 55 degree Fareniet.
2. **Deep freezers**- A deep freezer is used for quick freezing and long term storage of perishables. For mass catering Deep freezers are very important. These are available in different sizes.
3. **3. Blast Chillers**- Is used in commercial kitchens to cool food rapidly by circulating very cold air over it. And the temp is safe from bacterial growth.
4. **Blast freezers**- Is used in commercial kitchens to cool food rapidly by circulating extremely cold air over it. And the temp is safe from bacterial growth.
5. **Refrigerator**- A small amount of perishables can be stored in the refrigerators. Temperature maintained is 2 to 9* centigrade

Refrigerators:

In order to maintain a refrigerator at peak efficiency the following points should be observed:

1. **Defrost weekly.** If the refrigerator is not of the automatic defrosting type the control should be turned to defrost, the racks should be emptied and racks and interior surfaces washed, rinsed and dried, If the refrigerator is not defrosted regularly excess frost accumulates on the cooling system ,acts as an insulator and causes the refrigerator motor to work longer than is necessary, thus shortening the life of the components.
2. The door or the doors should be kept closed as much as possible, otherwise if too much warm air is allowed to enter the refrigerator plant over works and excess frost can accumulate on the cooling system.
3. Food should be stored sensibly and in such a way that the cold air can circulate all round. Excessive packing of the food into the refrigerator should be avoided.
4. A qualified service engineer should be called in at the first sign of any defect in the machinery operating a refrigerator.



Heat generating equipments:

- 1. Stoves or high pressure burners:** A large variety of stoves are available operated by gas, electricity, solid fuel, oil, microwave or convection.
- 2. Convection ovens:** These are ovens in which a circulating current of hot air is rapidly forced around the inside of the oven by motorized fan or blower to create a constant temperature and which in turn helps in even cooking in any part of the oven.
- 3. Microwave:** is a method of cooking food at a higher frequency power. The waves disturb the molecules or the particles of food and agitate them, thus causing friction thus cooking the food because of the heat generated due to friction.
- 4. Brat pan:** Is the most versatile piece of equipment in the kitchen as it can be used for shallow frying, deep frying, stewing, braising, and boiling.
- 5. Steam jacket kettle/Boiling pans:** available in various sizes 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, Its capacity may be heated by gas, electricity, steam .it can be used for large quantities of stewing food.
- 6. Deep fat fryers:** Are heated by gas or electricity and most incorporate a thermostat to save fuel and prevent overheating. There is a cool zone below the source of heat into which food particles can sink without burning and thus spoiling other food being cooked.
- 7. Hot cupboards:** are used for heating plates and serving dishes and for keeping the food hot. A temp of 60*c-76*c is suitable for hot cupboards and a thermostat helps in maintaining this.

8. **Bain-marie:** are open walls of the water used for keeping foods hot and are available in many designs incorporated in the counters, heated by steam, gas or electricity

9. **Grills/salamander:** heated from above by gas or electricity

10. **Fry plates or griddle plates** are heated below. They are used for cooking individual portions of meat, hamburgers, eggs, bacon etc.

Maintenance of the Equipments

It is important to take care of the equipments so that they go a long way in helping us to perform our duties efficiently and accurately.

The following points to be kept in mind in order to take good care of the kitchen equipment.

Training: Proper orientation should be given to the new staff to make them aware of the correct ways of using the equipment. Operating instructions of the machine should be placed near them so that the staff could refer to the same in case of any doubt.

Maintenance: It is important to have all equipments periodically maintained in order to increase their life efficiency. There are two types of maintenance:

Reactive maintenance: In this a machine is fixed only when it has broken down. The disadvantage is that the work suffers till the machine is repaired. For this a job order needs to be raised from the concerned department to the maintenance department. After the machine is fixed the job card is to be signed by the outlet in charge confirming that the job is done to the required level of satisfaction and the machine is running properly.

Preventive maintenance: This is planned maintenance done by the engineering department in liaison with the concerned department in charge. This is done to ensure the machine runs properly and reactive maintenance is avoided as far as possible. Through this method, the machine parts that have undergone extensive wear and tear can be immediately identified and their spares can be ordered and procured in advance so that the work does not suffer in case of breakdown. Schedules are made for this kind of maintenance and some are followed as per the time agreed upon by the engineer and the user.

Annual maintenance contracts: It is important to sign annual maintenance contracts, also known as AMCs, with authorized companies. Sometimes many parts of the machine are covered in their contracts and these can be replaced without any extra cost to you.

Breakdown insurance: In case it is not possible to have AMCs for all the equipment, one can also choose breakdown insurance for the machines. This would help u to replace the defective parts and then claim for them from the insurance companies. It is important tom read the insurance guidelines of such companies before entering into a contract with them.

Standard Operating Procedures and Equipment Maintenance

1. Light equipments

Clean and wash all the light equipment thoroughly, wipe them and then use.

Care: All light equipments should be cleaned and washed with hot soapy solution immediately after use. All small utensils should be wiped dry.

2) Pressure Cooker

Fill the cooker only 3/4 cover it with lid, check rubber and safety valve. Keep weight (whistle) on and keep it on slow flame. Do not keep cooker on high pressure burner.

Care: Wash pressure cooker with soapy water, wipe dry. Check safety valve, rubber ring regularly.

3) Meat Mincer

- a) Fix attachments i.e., rotating rod, blade, sieve, and rings, tightly with the machine.
- b) Keep tray on, put vegetable dices / boiled potatoes / meat without fat in the tray.
- c) Put on main switch, and then turn mincer's switch.
- d) Slide vegetable or meat little at a time, press with wooden rod.

Care: Remove all the attachments of mincer. Soak in warm water for 10 minutes. Remove and wash with soap solution. Rinse and wipe dry. Keep in clean cupboard. Grease when necessary.

4) Masala Grinder

- a) Wash grinder and stone.
- b) Keep stone in grinder, attach belt to it put the masala ingredients in grinder with enough of moisture.
- c) Put on main switch of grinder.

Care: Detach belt from grinding stone, remove all the masala from stone. Wash thoroughly and wipe dry. Grinder wash with warm water, wipe with dry duster. Do overhauling once in a month.

Do not nut on stone in grinder and start without putting masala or idli mixture etc. in it.

5) Dough Mixer

- a) Wash bowl and dough kneading rod, or creamer or whisk.
- b) Fix bowl on mixer, then attach rod or creamer as per requirement.
- c) Put ingredients in the bowl, lift up the bowl by turning handle anti-clock wise.
- d) Press green switch, increase speed by turning gear-handle clock-wise. After use reduce speed, press red switch lift-down the bowl by turning handle clockwise remove mixing rod and then remove the finished product.

Care: Put off main switch of the dough mixer. Wash all the attachments. Check belt of the motor occasionally.

6) Potato Peeler

- a) Wash Peeler from inside tightly close the door. Put potatoes from top.
- b) Start main switch as well as water supply. After peeling open door of the peeler, let all the peeled potatoes come out of the peeler. Switch off the main.

Care: Detach upper deck of the peeler, wash it thoroughly with scrubber, rinse and wipe it dry. Remove all the potato peels from it, scrub thoroughly with scrubber wash and dry completely. Fix upper deck and check for its function.

7) Griller – Hot Plate

- a) Wipe griller - hot plate with damp duster.
- b) Put on the switch, once it becomes hot, put pre-prepared item on it and cook.

Care: Cast iron grill plates may occasionally need scraping. After every season, it is the best to wash the plates with a mild detergent solution, rinse and dry.



8) Tandoor

- a) Put charcoal in tandoor separately light some coal on gas burner.
- b) Pour live coal in tandoor. Keep the ash-pit half open.

Care: Allow the tandoor to cool. Once in week coat the tandoor with mixture of ash, earth and water. Season inside of tandoor with mustard and oil.

9) Deep Fat Fryer

- a) Clean and wipe deep fat fryer.
- b) Put oil/fat in containers, put on main switch turn temp, control knob, press operating switch.
- c) Once oil reaches desire temp, add frying food to the fryer. When breaded foods are prepared, strain fat frequently.
- d) Load fry basket to one-half and never more than 2/3 of capacity.
- e) Never salt foods directly over the fat. Salt in the fat reduced its life.

f) Discard fat as soon as it tends to bubble excessively before food is added gummy film collects on the frying basket or heating element.

g) Raw, wet foods such as potatoes and oysters, should be drained or wiped dry before frying to extend the life of the fat.

Care: Switch off the fryer and allow to cool. Drain all the oil in normal way. Remove all debris and particle matter from the fryer. Fill the fryer compartment with soap solution. Brush inside using a bristle brush (never use steel wool). Flush with clean water to which vinegar has been added. Dry with cloth.

10) Tilting Pan/ Brat Pan

a) Ensure that pan is tightly fitted by moving handle of the pan.

b) Switch on the main, then switch on operating switch, turn temp. control on high.

c) Start gas connection. Press ignition switch for 20 secs. Put fat or oil and then use according to preparation.

Care: The equipment should be cleaned thoroughly after use. Normally washing with hot soapy water and rinsing with clean water will be sufficient. Wire scoureres or scouring powders are not recommended for models with an all stainless steel finish. If the pan has been used for frying, care should be taken to remove all oil film build up. The tilting mechanism may require occasional greasing with a light non-toxic oil. This will ensure easy and trouble free operation.



11) High Pressure Burners Range

a) Start main connection of gas. Slightly turn the operating knob towards left and light the gas with help of match-stick or gas lighter.

b) Do not increase gas pressure before lighting the burners.

Care: - Immediately wipe up all the spillings and boilers. If during cooking periods, spillings are left to bake and harden on hot surfaces the cleaning becomes much more difficult.



12) Convection Oven

- a) Switch on oven, set the temp, once it reaches desire temp.
- b) Always load the lower compartment first. Always load each shelf evenly, spacing pan, trays away from each other and the side of the oven.
- c) Never add material to a section after food has already have started to bake. Open doors as seldom as possible

Care: The oven should be switched off. The oven should be allowed to cool until only warm. Remove all removable shelves or rack for separate clearing. Using a clean cloth soaked in hot soap solution, wipe the oven. Rinse the cloth as necessary. The shelves and racks should be cleaned in the same way.

13) Refrigerator / Deep Freezer / Walk-in Coolers.

- a) Once installed, temperature is to be set as required and store food items at proper temperature.
- b) Do not store items that tend to absorb smell from other food items such as eggs near a strongly aromatic food item.

Care: Refrigerating equipments need to be kept clean at all times. Remove spoiled food items regularly and defrost if necessary.

14) Choppers

Question Bank

List equipments used for volume feeding or mass catering?

State at least 5 hot and cold generating equipments that is used in volume feeding or mass catering?

Discuss why care and maintenance of equipment is essential for an organization?

Write a short note on “Modern developments in cooking and equipments manufacture”

Differentiate between reactive and preventive maintenance.

Marks 3

List at least 5 points on care and maintenance of equipments.

Describe at least three refrigerating equipments that are used in volume catering.

Name and describe 3 equipments used in Volume feeding?

Quantity Kitchen Equipment

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Introduction to different Equipment

The 'volume cooking', 'quantity cooking', and 'bulk cooking' are all synonymous and as all three names suggest, these take place extensively in specialized events where there are a large number of people to be fed. Even though the methods of cooking and the selection of ingredients remain the same in volume cooking, what differs is the approach. Such cooking can be done within a premise or even off the premise. The food is prepared in one location and served in another, in some cases.

In early kitchens the equipment consisted of an open fire for cooking, which was generally placed on the floor, the fuel being coal, wood, sun-dried cow dung cakes or balls lighted between two or three bricks on which the cooking vessel is placed. This is still practiced in rural India.

The need for a piece of equipment which could be moved in and out of the house led to the development of the galvanized iron bucket with a grill on the top followed by the smokeless "chullah", the "tandoor" or traditional Indian oven which was followed by the gas and electric stove and finally the cooking range and the solar cooker. This is but an example of one type of cooking equipment, but the last few decades have

seen a complete revolution in the catering equipment industry, which now provides for the modern caterer a range varying from very simple easy-to-use gadgets to extremely complicated automatic devices. This development has been in response to the needs of the different types and sizes of catering units varying from the simple fresh fruit kiosk to the streamlined restaurant, which have sprung up to satisfy the ever increasing demands of people for eating out. Catering equipment for food service establishments is basically not very different from that used for cooking and serving food at home except that, because of the volume of food cooked and served, and the greater degree of handling required, it is constructed for greater quantity, durability, speed, efficiency and economy.

Equipment Required for Mass/Volume feeding---Cooking Equipments

Heat Generating Equipments

a) Range Tops. The range is still the most important piece of cooking equipment in the kitchen, even though many of its functions have been taken by other tools, such as steamers, steam kettles, tilting skillets, and ovens.

b) Ovens. The oven and the range top are the two workhorses of the traditional kitchen, which is why the two are so often found in the same units. Ovens are enclosed spaces in which food is heated usually by hot air or, in some newer kinds of ovens, by microwaves or infrared radiation. In addition to roasting and baking, ovens can do many jobs normally done on the range top. Many foods can be simmered, stewed, braised, or poached in the oven, freeing the range top and the chef's attention for other tasks.

c) Conventional Ovens. These ovens operate simply by heating air in an enclosed space. The most common ovens are part of the range unit, although separate oven units or ovens as part of a broiler unit are also available. Stack ovens are units that consist of individual shelves arranged one above the other. Pans are placed directly on the oven deck rather than on wire shelves. Temperatures are adjustable for each separate unit.

d) Convection Ovens. These ovens contain fans that circulate the air and distribute the heat rapidly throughout the interior. Because the forced air, foods cook more quickly at lower temperatures. Also, shelves can be placed closer together than in conventional ovens, without blocking the heat flow.

e) Revolving Ovens. These large ovens, also called reel ovens, are large chambers containing many shelves or trays on a ferris-wheel type attachment. This oven eliminates the problem of hot spots or uneven baking, because the mechanism rotates the foods throughout the oven. Revolving ovens are used in bakeshops and in high volume operations.

f) Slow-Cook-and-Hold ovens. While the traditional oven is nothing more than a heated box equipped with a thermostat, some modern ovens have more sophisticated features, such as computerized, electronic controls and special probes that sense when a roast is done and tell the oven to switch from cooking temperature to holding temperature. Many of these ovens are designed to be especially useful for low temperature roasting. The sensitive controls make it possible to cook at steady, reliable temperatures of 200oF (95oC) or lower and to hold foods at 140oF (60oC) for long periods. Large cuts of meat take many hours to roast at a low temperature like 200oF (95oC). By setting the controls in advance, the operator can even let meats roast overnight, unattended. These ovens are available as convection ovens and as regular, stationary-air ovens.

g) Combination Steamer Ovens. A relatively new kind of oven is one that can be operated in three different modes: as a convection oven, as a convection steamer, and, with both functions on at once, as a high-humidity oven. Injecting moisture into an oven while roasting meats can help to reduce shrinkage and drying.

h) Barbecue Ovens or Smoke Ovens. Barbecue ovens are like conventional ovens, but with one important difference: they are able to produce wood smoke, which surrounds the food and flavours it while it bakes or roasts. Special woods, such as hickory, mesquite, or various fruit woods such as apple or cherry, must be added to the smoke-producing part of the oven, according to the manufacturer's instructions. This device

is usually nothing more complicated than an electric heating element that heats small blocks or chips of the wood so that they are hot enough to smoke but not hot enough to burst into flame. Depending upon on the model, various cooking features are available. Thus, ovens may have smokeless roast/bake cycles, cold-smoke cycles (with the smoke element on but the oven off), holding cycles, and broiling capabilities.

i) Infrared or Reconstituting Ovens. These units contain quartz plates that generate intense infrared heat. Infrared ovens are used primarily for reconstituting frozen foods. They bring large quantities of foods to serving temperature in a short time. The heat is even and controllable.

j) Microwave Ovens. In these ovens, special tubes generate microwave radiation, which creates heat inside the food.

k) Broilers and Salamanders. Broilers are sometimes called overhead broilers to avoid confusing them with grills. Overhead broilers generate heat from above; food items are placed on a grate beneath the heat source. Broiling is a favourite way of preparing steaks, chops, chicken, and many other items. Heavy-duty broilers produce very high heat and consume vast quantities of energy. Some broilers are said to go as high as 2000oF (1100oC) at the burner. Foods must be watched closely to avoid burning. Cooking temperature is adjusted by raising or lowering the grate that holds the food. Salamanders are small broilers used primarily for browning or glazing the tops of some items. They may also be used for broiling small quantities during off-peak hours. Salamanders are usually mounted above the range.

l) Grills. Grills are used for the same cooking operations as broilers, except the heat source is below the grid that holds the food rather than above it. Many people favour the taste of grilled foods, because of the “charcoal” taste that is actually created by smoke from meat fats that drip into the heat source. Although smoke from meat creates the taste that people associate with grilled foods, actual wood smoke flavours,

such as hickory or mesquite smoke flavour, and can be added to foods if those woods are burned in the grill under the food. In order to do this, you must use a grill designed to burn such fuels.

m) Griddles. Griddles are flat, smooth, heated surfaces on which food is cooked directly. Pancakes, French toast, hamburgers and other meats, eggs, and many potato items are the foods most frequently cooked on a griddle. Griddles are available as separate units or as apart of a range top. Clean griddle surfaces after every use, so that they will cook at peak efficiency. Polish with a griddle stone or griddle cloth until the surface shines. Follow the grain of the metal to avoid scratching. Condition griddles after each cleaning or before each use, to create a no-stick surface and to prevent rusting. Procedure: spread a thin film of oil over the surface and heat to 400°F (200°C). Wipe clean and repeat until griddle has a smooth, no-stick finish.

o) Rotisseries. Rotisserie broilers cook meats and other foods by turning them slowly in front of electric or gas-powered heating elements. Even though classical cooking theory categorizes spit cooking as roasting, these cookers are more closely related to broilers, because the foods are cooked by the infrared heat of the elements. Although they are especially suitable for chicken and other poultry, rotisseries can be used to cook

any meat that can be fastened to a spit. Both enclosed (oven like) rotisseries and open or unclosed units are available. Small units hold about 8 chickens and size range all the way to very large models that can hold as many as 70 chickens. Because the heating elements are on the side (or sometimes above), the fats and juices don't drip into the flames as they do with grills. Drip pans catch juices, which can be used for basting or gravy making.

p) Deep Fryers. A deep fryer has only one use – to cook foods in hot fat. Yet because of the popularity of fried foods, this function is an important one. Automatic deep fryers are powered by either gas or electricity and have thermostatic controls that maintain fat at preset temperatures. Automatic fryers remove food from the fat automatically after a present time. Pressure fryers are covered fry-kettles that fry foods under pressure. Foods cook faster, even at a lower temperature.

q) Tilting Skillet. The tilting skillet, also known as the tilting brazier and tilting fry pan, is a versatile and efficient piece of equipment. It can be used as a griddle, fry pan, brazier, stew pot, stock pot, steamer, and bain marie or steam table. The tilting skillet is a large, shallow, flat-bottomed pot. Or, to look at it another way, it is a griddle with 6-inch high sides and a cover. This skillet also has a tilting mechanism that enables liquids to be poured out of it. Power may be gas or electric. Clean the skillet immediately after each use, before food has time to dry on. Add water, turn on the skillet to heat it, and scrub thoroughly.

r) Steam-Jacketed Kettles. Steam-jacketed kettles, or steam kettles, are sometimes thought of as stockpots that are heated not just on the sides as well. This comparison is only partly accurate, because steam kettles heat much more quickly and have more uniform and controllable heat than pots on the range.

s) Steam Cookers. Steam cookers are ideal for cooking vegetables and many other foods rapidly and with minimum loss of nutrients and flavour. For this reason, they are becoming more common in both large and small kitchens.

Cold Generating Equipment

1. **Walk-in / Cold Storage-** Walk-ins are refrigerated compact areas where one could walk inside, and hence the name 'walk-in'. they can be custom-made to any size suited for an operation. One could have walk-in refrigerators or freezers depending on the requirement. ***Certain companies are now specializing in modular shelving so that the storage of food can be as per food safety norms and HACCP.***
2. **Freezer / Deep Freezer-** Freezers are available in various sizes and are very important for any bulk-cooking operation. As quantity cooking involves planning and advance mise en place, one needs sample refrigerated space to store the same until it is ready for cooking. These are available in various sizes depending on the requirement. ***Now-a-days roll-in trolley style or the ones which have shelving.***

3. **Blast Chilling Equipment-** Blast chillers and freezers are two of the most important equipment used in bulk-cooking operations. When food is cooked quickly, there has to be a process where the food is allowed to cool down to a temperature below the danger zone (below 3dg C). Blast chillers and freezers are the two types of equipment that are used for this purpose. These come in very handy in commercial establishments such as airline catering and cruise lines, as the food cooked needs to be frozen or chilled at a faster rate. The hot food can be chilled or frozen in less than 2 hrs, thereby maintaining food safety and hygiene.

Processing Equipment

a) **Mixers.** Vertical mixers are important and versatile tools for many kinds of food mixing and processing jobs, both in the bakeshop and in the kitchen.

b) **Food Cutter.** The food cutter or food chopper, familiarly known as the “buffalo chopper,” is a common piece of equipment used for general chopping of foods. A variety of attachments make it a versatile tool.

c) **Slicer.** The slicer is a valuable machine because it slices foods more evenly and uniformly than can be done by hand. Thus it is valuable for portion control and for reducing cutting loss.

d) Vertical Cutter/Mixer and Food Processor

The vertical cutter/mixer (VCM) is like a large, powerful, high-speed blender. It is used to chop and mix large quantities of foods very rapidly. It can also be used for puréeing (soups, for example) and for mixing liquids.

Holding & Storage Equipment

a) **Hot Food Holding Equipment.** Several types of equipment are used to keep food hot for service. This equipment is designed to prevent the growth of bacteria that can cause disease. Because food continues to cook at these temperatures, it should be held for as short a time as possible.

1. **Steam tables** are standard holding equipment for serving lines. Standard-size counter pans or hotel pans are used as inserts to hold the foods. Flat or domed covers may be used to cover the foods.
2. **A bain marie** is a hot water bath. Containers of foods are set on a rack in a shallow container of water, which is heated by electricity, gas, or steam. The bain marie is used more in the production area, while the steam table is used in the service area.
3. **Overhead infrared lamps** are used in service areas to keep plated food warm before it is picked up by the service staff. They are also used for keeping large roasts warm.

b) **Cold Food Storage Equipment.** The quality of the food you serve depends to a great degree on refrigeration equipment. By keeping foods cold, usually below 40°F (5°C), the refrigerator (known in the trade as the ‘cooler’ or the ‘box’) guards against spoilage and bacterial growth. Freezers are used to hold foods for longer times, or to store foods purchased in frozen form.

c) Pots, Pans, and Containers

1. Stock pot. A large, deep, straight-sided pot for preparing stocks and simmering large quantities of liquids. Stockpots with spigots allow liquid to be drained off without disturbing the solid contents or lifting the pot.
2. Sauce pot: Round pot of medium depth, similar to stock pots, but shallower, making stirring or mixing easier used for soups, sauces, and other liquids.
3. Brazier. Round, broad, shallow, heavy-duty pot with straight sides, used for browning, braising and stewing meats.
4. Sauce pan. Similar to a small shallow, light sauce pot, but with one long handle instead of two loop handles, May have straight or slant sides Used or general range-top cooking.
5. Sauté pan, straight sided. Similar to a shallow, straight-sided saucepan, but heavier used for browning, sautéing, and frying, also used for cooking sauces and other liquids when rapid reduction is required, because of broad surface area.
6. Sauté pan, slope sided. Also called fry pan, used for general sautéing and frying of meats, fish, vegetables, and eggs, sloping sides allow the cook to flip and toss items without using a spatula, and they make it easier to get at the food when a spatula is used.
7. Cast iron skillet. Very heavy, thick-bottomed fry pan used for pan frying when very steady, even heat is desired.
8. Double boiler. Lower section, similar to a stockpot, holds boiling water. Upper section holds foods that must be cooked at low temperature and cannot be cooked over direct heat.
9. Sheet pan or bun pan. Shallow (1 inch or 25 mm deep) rectangular pan for baking cakes, rolls, and cookies, and for baking or broiling certain meats and fish.
10. Bake pan. Rectangular pan about 2 inches deep. Used for general baking. Comes in a variety of sizes.
11. Roasting pan. Large rectangular pan about 2 inches deep. Used for general baking. Comes in a variety of sizes.

12. Hotel pan also called counter pan, steam table pan, or service pan. Rectangular pans usually made of stainless steel. Designed to hold foods in service counters. Also used for baking and steaming, and foods can then be served from same pan. Also used for storage.

13. Bain marie insert, usually called simple bain marie. Tall, cylindrical stainless steel containers. Used for storage and for holding foods in bain marie (water bath).

14. Stainless steel bowl. Round bottom bowl. Used for mixing and whipping, for production of hollandaise, mayonnaise, whipped cream, egg white foams. Round construction enables whip to reach all areas.

Measuring Devices

1. **Scales:** most recipe ingredients are measured by weight, so accurate scales are very important. Portion scales are used for measuring ingredients as well as for portioning products for service.

2. **Volume measures** used for liquids have lips for easy pouring. Sizes are pints, quarts, half gallons, and gallons. Each size is marked off into fourths by ridges on the sides.

3. **Measuring cups** are available in 1-, $\frac{1}{2}$ -, $\frac{1}{3}$ -, and $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup sizes. They can be used for both liquid and dry measures.

4. **Measuring spoons** are used for measuring very small volumes: 1 tablespoon, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon. They are used most often for spices and seasonings.

5. **Ladles** are used for measuring and portioning liquids. The size, in ounces, is stamped on the handle.

6. **Scoops** come in standard sizes and have a lever for mechanical release. They are used for portioning soft solid foods. The number of the scoop indicates the number of level scoopfuls per quart (or litre). In actual use a rounded scoopful is often more practical, so exact weights will vary.

7. **Thermometers measure temperatures.** There are many kinds for many purposes:

- a) A **meat thermometer** indicates internal temperature of meats. It is inserted before cooking and left in the product during cooking.
- b) An **instant read thermometer** will give readings within a few seconds of being inserted in a food product. It reads from 0°F to 220°F. Many chefs carry these in their jacket pockets like a pen, ready

whenever needed. Instant-read thermometers must not be left in meats during roasting, or they will be damaged.

- c) **Fat thermometers and candy thermometers** test temperatures of frying fats and sugar syrups. They read up to 400°F.
- d) **Special thermometers** are used to test the accuracy of oven, refrigerator, and freezer thermostats.

Knives, Hand Tools & Small Equipments

a) Knives and Their Uses

1. **French knives or Chef's knife** – Most frequently used knife in the kitchen, for general purpose chopping, slicing, and dicing and so on. Blade is wide at the heel and tapers to a point; blade length of 10 inches (260 mm) is most popular for general work. Larger knives are for heavy cutting and chopping. Smaller blades are for more delicate work. This is your most important tool, so you must learn to handle it and care for it well.
2. **Utility or Salad knife** – Narrow, pointed knife 6 to 8 inches (160 – 200 mm) long. Used mostly for pantry work, cutting and preparing lettuce, fruits, and so on. Also useful for carving roast chicken and duck.
3. **Paring knife** – Small pointed blade 2 to 4 inches (50-100 mm) long. Used for trimming and paring vegetables and fruits.
4. **Boning knife** – Thin, pointed blade about 6 inches (160 mm) long. Used for boning raw meats and poultry. Stiff blades are used for heavier work. Flexible blades are used for lighter work and for filleting fish.
5. **Slicer** – Long, slender, flexible blade up to 14 inches (360mm) long. Used for carving and slicing cooked meats.
6. **Serrated slicer**- like a slicer, but with serrated edge. Used for cutting, breads, cakes, and similar items.
7. **Butcher knife**- heavy, broad, slightly curved blade. Used for cutting, sectioning, and trimming raw meats in the butcher shop.
8. **Scimitar or steak knife**- curved, pointed blade. Used for accurate cutting of steaks.
9. **Cleaver** – Very heavy, board blade. Used for cutting through bones.
10. **Oyster knife** – Short, rigid, broad bladed knife with a slight edge. Used for opening oysters.
11. **Clam knife** – Short, rigid, broad bladed knife with a slight edge. Used for opening clams.
12. **Vegetable peeler** – Short tool with a slotted, swiveling blade. Used for peeling vegetables and fruits.
13. **Steel** – Not a knife, but an essential part of the knife kit. Used for truing and maintaining knife-edges.
14. **Cutting board** – This is an important partner to the knife. Hard wood boards are favored by many chefs. Hard rubber or plastic boards are thought to be more sanitary, but there is some evidence that bacteria survive longer on plastic and rubber than wood. Cutting boards must be kept very clean.

b) Hand Tool and Small Equipment

1. **Ball cutter, melon ball scoop, or parisienne knife** – Blade is a small, cup shaped half sphere. Used for cutting fruits and vegetables into small balls.
2. **Cook's fork** – heavy, two-pronged fork with a long handle. Some for lifting and turning meats and other items. Must be strong enough to hold heavy loads.
3. **Straight spatula or palette knife** – A long flexible blade with a rounded end. Used mostly for spreading icing on cakes and for mixing and bowl scraping.
4. **Sandwich spreader** – A short, stubby spatula. Used for spreading fillings and spreads on sandwiches.
5. **Offset spatula** – broad blade, bent to keep hand off hot surfaces. Used for turning and lifting eggs, pancakes, and meats on griddles, grills, sheet pans, and so on. Also used as scraper to clean bench or griddle.

6. **Rubber spatula or scraper** – Broad, flexible rubber or plastic tips on long handle. Used to scrape bowls and pans. Also used for folding in egg foams or whipped cream.
7. **Pie server** – A wedge shaped offset spatula. Used for lifting pie wedges from pan.
8. **Bench scraper or dough knife** – A broad, stiff piece of metal with a wooden handle on one edge. Used to cut pieces of dough and to scrape workbenches.
9. **Pastry wheels or wheel knife** – A round, rotating blade on a handle. Used for cutting rolled –out dough and pastry and baked pizza.
10. **Spoons**- solid, slotted, and perforated – Large stainless steel spoons, holding about 3 ounces. Used for stirring, mixing, and serving. Slotted and perforated spoons are used when liquid must be drained from solids.
11. **Skimmer** – Perforated disc, slightly supped, on along handle. Used for skimming forth from liquids and for removing soled pieces from soups, stocks and other liquid.
12. **Tongs** – spring type or scissors type tools used to pick up and handle foods.
13. **Wire whip** – Loops of stainless steel wire fastened to a handle. There are two kinds of whips:
 - a. Heavy whips are straight, stiff, and have relatively few wires. Used for general mixing, stirring, and beating, especially heavy liquids.
 - b. Balloon whips or piano wire whips have mainly flexible wire. Used for whipping eggs, cream, and hollandaise, and for mixing thinner liquid.
14. **China cap** – Cone shaped strainer. Used for straining stock, soups, sauces and other liquids. Pointed shaped allows the cook to drain liquids thorough a relatively small opening. Fine china cap or chinois (shee-nwah) China cap with very fine mesh. Used when great clarity or smoothness is required in a liquid.
15. **Strainer Round**-bottomed, cup-shaped strainer made of screen-type mesh or of perforated metal. Used for straining pasta, vegetables, and so on.
16. **Sieve Screen**-type mesh supported in a round metal frame. Used for sifting flour and other dry ingredients.
17. **Colander** Large perforated bowl made of stainless steel or aluminum. Used to drain washed or cooked vegetables, salad greens, pasta, and other foods.
18. **Food mill.** A tool with a hand-turned blade that forces foods through a perforated disk. Interchangeable disks have different coarseness or fineness. Used for puréeing foods.
19. **Grater** a four-sided metal box with different sized grids. Used for shredding and grating vegetables, cheese, citrus rinds, and other foods.
20. **Zester** Small hand tool used for removing the colored part of citrus peels in thin strips.
21. **Channel knife** Small hand tool used mostly in decorative work.
22. **Pastry bag and tubes** Cone-shaped cloth or plastic bag with open end that can be fitted with metal tubes or tips of various shapes and sizes. Used for shaping and decorating with items such as cake icing, whipped cream, duchesse potatoes, and soft dough.
23. **Pastry brush** Used to brush items with egg wash, glaze, etc.
24. **Can opener** Heavy-duty food service type can openers are mounted on the edge of the workbench. They must be carefully cleaned and sanitized every day to prevent contamination of foods. Replace worn blades, which can leave metal shavings in food.

CARE & MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENTS

‘**Prevention is better than cure**’ is a very old proverb and it holds true for the maintenance of kitchen equipment. The following points need to be kept in mind in order to take good care of kitchen equipment:

Training – Proper orientation should be given to any new staff to make them aware of the correct ways of using any equipment. Operating instructions of machine should be placed near to them so that the staff could refer to the same in case of any doubt.

Maintenance- It is important to have all equipment periodically maintained in order to increase life and efficiency. There are mainly two types of Maintenance:

- **Reactive Maintenance-** Machine is fixed only when it is broken down and immediately maintenance is required so that work will not suffer.
- **Preventive Maintenance-** This is a planned Maintenance that is done by the engineering department in liaison with the concerned department in-charge.
- **Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMC's)-**Yearly Basis

All equipment large or small, heavy or light requires care in handling, use and storage in order to extend its life to the maximum, minimize depreciation and maintain it in a reasonably attractive and efficient condition while in use. In small catering establishments the care and maintenance is generally entrusted to those who operate the equipment as the types invested on are generally small or medium duty pieces. In larger establishments where heavy-duty equipment predominates, a maintenance department performs this function.

In the case of small pieces like cutlery, some metals need less care than others do. Stainless steel is the most non-corrosive and easy to-care for material, while plated cutlery tends to get scratched easily and with time requires replacing. With kitchen tools like the chef's knives, choppers, etc. care is limited to preventing

the blades from rusting in the case of iron blades, by keeping them dry and covered. It is also common practice to rub them with a little cooking oil to protect them from rusting through contact with air. With whisks and beaters it is the rotating parts or the wiry ends which need special attention. It is good practice to prevent food materials from drying on the rotatory parts and posing a cleaning problem. Money, time and effort spent on care helps to maintain equipment in continuous working order, while that spent on repair can mean interruption in work causing unnecessary strain on staff, in addition to extra costs.

It is beneficial to keep records of all amounts spent on care and maintenance of every large equipment. This helps to estimate the depreciation every year. Excessive costs shown through records for a particular year can help to draw attention to high maintenance costs, which weighed against the cost of the equipment may result in a decision to change the model for a more efficient one. Records can also help to detect inefficient in operation, or defects in design or manufacture. Thus, if equipment is cared for systematically and proper procedures followed, maintenance follows on its own to prolong the life and optimum usage of the equipment.

Hospital Catering

Introduction

Hospitals are now the most complex organizations providing services to patients. Hospitals provide a highly personalized services to all the patients. The Dietary department is considered as one of the major departments of the hospital, managed by the dietician. Here the main motto of hospital catering is to assist the nursing staff to get the patient better as soon as possible. So in order to achieve this it is necessary to provide good quality food, to cook it with minimum loss of nutrients and to provide it to the patients in an appetizing manner. Diet food plays a pivotal role in treatment, as it is the only food that supplies energy to the patients.

Highlights on Hospital Catering for Patients

- Hospital Catering (HC) is considered as one of the most important catering dealing with nursing staff, visitors and the focus being on the patients.
- Special diets are prepared for those who are not medically fit or are not allowed to eat certain food items.
- The kitchen has a receiving area, proper storage facilities, pre-preparation room and the main kitchen. Cold storage and cold kitchen is also a part of hospital kitchen.
- Menus for patients depend upon the type of illness or medication prescribed by the doctor.
- Hospitals offer different menus for the relatives of the patients.
- Diet cooks are specially recruited
- Rapid turnover of the patients permits use of shorter menu cycles, including standard portion size and method of food preparation, shows the uniqueness of hospital catering.
- Hospital Catering is a specialized catering coming under welfare catering.
- The main factor which is important in hospital catering is nutrition. A strict process of hygiene is essential and mandatory for hospital catering; preferably HACCP is a must for all hospitals catering to the patients.
- Here the dietician's job is to formulate the menus and to determine the nutritional requirements of the patients. Catering managers role is to plan the menu and supervises the diet cooks while food is prepared.
- Since immunity level of the patients is quite low, major emphasis should be given to health, hygiene and food safety.
- Kitchens are centralized or decentralized as per the management policy. A requirement of diet varies from patient to patient, so diet cooks prepare special therapeutic diet for different patients.

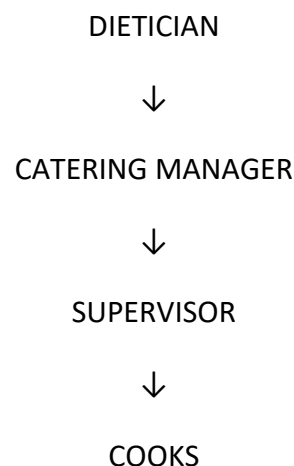
Highlights of Hospital catering for staff and visitors.

Staffs and visitors are also catered along with patients in hospital catering.

- Generally cyclic menu if followed.
- Some Hospitals have staffs dining halls and visitor's cafeterias which cater to the needs of the staffs and visitors.
- The main purpose is to provide palatable and nutritious food both to the staffs and visitors.
- In some hospitals staff cafeterias makes a good amount of profit.
- In future hospital catering will be one of the profitable businesses for hospitals.
- Here the food is simple yet nutritious and economically priced, so that everybody can afford it.
- When planning the kitchen for hospital catering the work flow, sufficient spacing between work stations and the presence of various equipments must be considered.
- General menus are planned for hospital staffs and visitors. A clean and hygienic food is the need of the hour. A good food with nominal price for staffs and visitors will increase the name and fame of the hospital.

Scope of hospital catering:

Staff – The staff in a hospital cafeteria is very different from that in hotels. The concept of the hierarchy is limited to the line of cooks.



Dietician: In most big hospitals, qualified dieticians are appointed to determine the nutritional requirements of patients. This is quite a tedious task and involves knowledge of various food commodities, however now a day's computer software makes the job easy as one can adjust recipes to arrive at a particular nutritional requirement. Dietician's liaison with catering managers on the possibilities of the production of such meals as there could

be a limitation with regards to availability of food commodities, skill of the staff, etc. The dietician will be able to see the food in a different perspective from the chef's point of view, who finally has to cook the meal as per the standard to arrive at the determined nutritional levels.

Catering Managers: Catering managers are responsible for planning menus, procuring the produce and supplies, and maintaining hygiene and upkeep of the food premises this is one of the most crucial aspects of the kitchen. They could be assisted by the supervisors who would be in charge of the food production along with the line cooks.

They are also responsible for the training and development of the kitchen staff. They also visit patients and advise the nurses on how to serve the food. Catering managers also ensure cyclic menus for doctors and nurses who would be eating while on duty. The food served to the hospital staff is generally on the lines of industrial catering and many hospitals have cyclic menus changing every month.

Supervisors: Supervisors are experienced staff members who have moved up in the hierarchy as a result of their performance and hard work. Apart from working hands on as staff, they also assist catering managers in planning menus and in other managerial aspects of business.

Cooks: Cooks are graded according to their yrs of service and their technical competencies. A head cook is in charge of the kitchen production operations for both staff and patients and is assisted by prep cooks.

Different types of diet served in the hospitals:

A therapeutic diet is a must for patients. The diet is prescribed to meet medical or special nutritional need. It is a part of clinical treatment. The normal diets may be modified to change the consistency as in fluid and soft diets or increase or decrease the energy levels or modified to increase or decrease any one or more nutrients like high protein, low sodium etc or increase or decrease the fibre content or to include or exclude specific foods as in allergic conditions.

Menus are planned 5 days a week in advance. The dietician plans the menus for each separate meal, specifying the foods to be served in a suitable form. In almost all diets given to the patients in the hospitals have 1800, kilo calorie along with no more than 80 gms of proteins and 4 gms of sodium. A std main meal should provide 300 k cal per meal.

Different types of diets are as follows:

1. **Regular diet:** This diet should provide approximately 1,800 kilocalories on a daily basis with no more than 80 gm of protein, and 4 gm of sodium. The quantity of fiber varies for the patients, depending on their condition.
2. **High fiber diet:** This diet should provide approximately 1,800 kilocalories on a daily basis with no more than 80 gm of protein, and 4 gm of sodium and 25 gm of fibers. There can be an emphasis on no use of certain products, such as nuts, seeds, or hulls for some patients.
3. **Soft diet:** This diet should provide approximately 1,800 kilocalories on a daily basis with no more than 80 gm of protein, and 4 gm of sodium. The quantity of fibres varies with kinds of patients. This food is made soft so that it is easy to chew.
4. **Mechanical diet:** This diet should provide approximately 1,800 kilocalories on a daily basis with no more than 80 gm of protein, and 4 gm of sodium. The quantity of fibres varies depending upon their condition. This diet is specified to people who have chewing problems. The food could be in chopped, pureed or grounded form.
5. **Pureed diet:** This is same as mechanical diet but pureed to a baby food texture. Dry foods are omitted from this diet or are cooked into a slurry form.
6. **Clear liquid diet:** This diet is similar to mechanical diet but nutrition is supplied through clear broths and liquids.
7. **Dysphasia diets:** These diets are for patients with swallowing problems. Speech pathologist suggests the safest diet after discussing with the dietician and the catering manager.
8. **Transition diet:** This is given to a patient who is proceeding to a regular diet from a strict diet programme. Thus, it is important that the body gets used to the regular diet and the patient is given smaller portions of low fiber diet. With no caffeine, citrus or fatty and gas forming foods. Such diets are supplemented with adequate amount of liquids, but sugar and lactose containing food are avoided.
9. **Fibre restricted diet:** This diet is usually supplied to patients with diarrhoea, ulcerative colitis and diverticulitis.
10. **Consistent carbohydrate diet (CCHO):** This diet provides a consistent level of carbohydrates with each meal. Sugar and sweets may be calculated into diets. The emphasis is on low sodium diet and cardiac healthy fats.

11. Low cholesterol diet: This diet excludes animal protein and sodium. The quality of fat in the diet does not exceed 50 gm.

Hygiene:

Hygiene is the most critical factor while preparing food for the patients. Since we know that the immunity levels of patients are quite low, Hence emphasis on health and food safety is of prime importance. Maintenance of hygiene in the Indian hospitals is guided by the principle of hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP). This ensures zero defects right from the purchase, to cooking, to holding, and finally serving to the patients.

Separate hand wash sinks are equipped with sanitizers and germicidal soaps and staff is trained to wash their hands frequently. The use of gloves and thermometers to check the temperatures during hot and cold holding is recorded by the supervisors and entered in the log book. Required amount of paper work is mandatory to keep records for present and future audits.

Hygiene is a study health and prevention of disease and because of the dangers of food poisoning, hygiene requires particular attention from everyone in the catering industry. It is of utmost importance that everyone who handles food or who works in the place where food is handled should know that the food must be both clean and safe. There are germs everywhere, particularly in and on our bodies, some of these germs if transferred to food can cause illness and in some cases death. These germs are so small they cannot be seen by naked eye, and so food which looks clean and does not smell or taste bad may be dangerous to eat if harmful germs have contaminated it and multiplied. The duty of every person concerned with food is to prevent contamination of food by germs and to prevent these germs or bacteria from multiplying. **Failure to prevent it may be due to:**

1. Ignorance of the rules of hygiene
2. Carelessness, thoughtlessness or neglect,
3. Poor standards of equipment or facilities to maintain hygienic standards,
4. Accident.

Food poisoning can be prevented by:

1. High standards of personal hygiene.
2. Attention to physical fitness Maintaining good working conditions

3. Maintaining equipment in good repair and in clean conditions
4. Adequate provision of cleaning facilities and cleaning equipments.
5. Correct storage of food stuffs at the right temperature.
6. Correct reheating of food
7. Quick cooling of food prior to storage
8. Protection of foods from vermin and insects
9. Hygienic washing up procedure
10. Food handlers knowing how food handling is caused Food handlers not only knowing but caring out procedures to prevent food poisoning.

It is recognized that the provision of an adequate diet is just as much a part of the patients treatment as careful nursing and skilled medical attention. So hygiene is all the more important for the wellbeing of the sick and the elderly.

Menus in Government hospitals

In Government hospitals where only a small percentage of patients can afford to pay for special service, so it is unwise to burden either the patient or the hospital with unnecessary expenses.

Breakfast

One cup milk

2 slices of bread

One banana

Lunch/ Dinner

Rice/ chapatti/ dal/ one vegetable

Menu in private hospitals

In private hospitals menus are little elaborate and dishes are more as patient is paying for it. Early morning tea/ coffee/ milk/ is provided to patients regularly. It is seen that most of the

patients have poor appetite. Hence it is necessary to provide good diet to all patients based on the requirement.

Breakfast

2 slices of bread

One bowl of breakfast cereal

Boiled egg

Vegetable cutlet

Mid Morning

Fresh fruit juice

Lunch / dinner

Soup

Rice / chapatti

Dal

Vegetable preparation

Curd

Fruits

Evening

Tea/ Milk, Biscuits

(Sometimes dessert is given in dinner)

Comparison between catering establishment and hospital catering

Aspect	Commercial catering establishment	Hospital catering
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are healthy • People working in institutions • People celebrating events in other establishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are admitted in hospitals for health reasons. • Employees working in the hospitals.

Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lavish buffets • A' la carte • Cyclic menus • Variety of choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The product is patient specific; Each patient has a unique dietary requirement that is to be strictly followed in order to make him,/ her recover from sickness
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent organization with main focus on food and beverage services to satisfy the guests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strict processes with focus to health, hygiene and safety.
Profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These establishments run solely for making profit and expanding their business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea is to provide the basic amenities at subsidized rates or sometimes at own cost.

Question Bank

1. Why hospital catering has gained special importance in today's arena?
2. Write short note on a. Diet menus, b. Therapeutic diet
3. How a normal diet can be modified?
4. State various diets given to patients in hospital catering.

Plan a simple hospital menu followed in a private hospital with their nutritional requirement

PARAMETERS OF QUANTITY FOOD MENU PLANNING

MENU PLANNING IN VOLUME CATERING

In volume catering units, the main factors influencing the planning of menus are as follows :

- 1. Cost :-** This is one of the main considerations in menu planning. The cost of the menu should be within the budgeted allowance of any unit to be economically viable, whether it is run on a profit or non profit basis.
- 2. Ease of preparation :-** Since mass catering units provide for large numbers, ease of preparation of any dish must be considered. Elaborate preparation is time consuming and may result in delays in service of prepared foods leading to bad customer relations and appearance of inefficiency.
- 3. Incorporation of leftovers :-** Menus for mass catering should be planned in such a way that any leftovers from one meal can be incorporated in the next meal so as to avoid abnormal wastage, reduce food cost.
- 4. Cyclic menus :-** Menus should be planned in sets for a fortnight or for a month. This is then repeated all over again for ease in operations. Menus can be changed after such periods and seasonal foods can be incorporated. This will help provide variety economically.

CYCLICAL MENU

These are menus which are compiled to cover a given period of time: one month, three months, etc. They consist of a number of set menus for a particular establishment, such as an industrial catering restaurant, cafeteria restaurant, canteen, hospital or college refractory. These menus must be monitored carefully to take account of changes in customer requirements and any variations in weather conditions which are likely to affect demand for certain dishes.

Things to consider when planning a cycle menu:

- Food characteristics and combinations: Visualize how the food will look on the plate.
- Color – at least one or two colorful foods should be included on the menu.
- Texture – refers to the structure of foods and can be best detected by the feel of the foods in the mouth. A variety of textures should be included in the meal.
- Consistency – is the ways foods adhere together – their degree of firmness, density, or viscosity – may be described as firm, thin, thick, or gelatinous.
- Shape – of food plays a big part in eye appeal, and interest can be created through variety in the form in which foods are presented. One way to add interest is to vary the way in which vegetables are cut. Variation in height of food also aids in eye appeal for the customer.
- Flavor combinations – in addition to the basic flavors of sweet, sour, bitter, and salty, vegetables may be thought of as strong and mild flavored, while chili or other foods may be thought of as spicy or highly seasoned. A variety of flavors in the meal are more enjoyable than duplication of any one flavor. Foods with the same basic flavors, such as spaghetti with tomato sauce and sliced tomato salad, should be avoided in the same meal.

What are the primary benefits of using a cycle menu

Advantages include reducing the total time required for menu planning, improving student acceptability, controlling cost, and improving foodservice operations. Examples include:

- One set of menus allows the operator to feature items rated as highly acceptable by the students within daily choices consistent with the standards.
- Repeated exposures to foods, including fruits and vegetables, improve children's preferences for those foods. Cycle menus offering less-well accepted foods, in addition to preferred foods, provide students with the opportunity to learn to like new or less-well accepted items.
- A 2- or 3-week-cycle menu aids optimizing food procurement, inventory turnover, and daily production quantities, thereby improving foodservice operations and helping control costs. Having a consistent inventory uses less storage space.
- Accurate usage projections can be established, enabling vendors and manufacturers to project their production schedules and needs and often resulting in better pricing.
- Delivery schedules can be easily set up and managed.

Disadvantages of Cyclical Menu

1. When used in establishments with a captive clientele, then the cycle has to be long enough so that customers do not get bored with the repetition of the dishes.
2. The caterer cannot easily take advantage of 'good buys' offered by the suppliers on a daily or weekly basis unless such items are required for the cyclical menu.

INSTITUTIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL CATERING

Introduction

1. In today's arena institutional and industrial catering plays a vital role by supplying clean, fresh and hygienic foods in the premises of institutions and industries respectively.
2. Both institutional and industrial catering is non-profit oriented catering based on the concept better fed workers work best and hygienic food for students in the school / colleges respectively. These caterings run on break even.
3. Here nutritional requirement is of prime concern and mostly wholesome and subsidized meals are provided to the workers and students respectively.
4. Menu is cyclic in nature where choice is very limited. Regular meals are supplied at right time. Special menus are prepared during festivals and occasions.
5. In this catering large meals are prepared in limited period of time.
6. When budget is limited it becomes difficult to meet the expectations of the clientele.
7. Food hygiene is given prime importance.
8. Earlier only restaurants and hotels made food in large quantities but now industrial and institutional catering also prepares food in bulk.
9. Now Government has made it compulsory to serve mid day meals in schools.
10. This acts as a motivational tool for students as attendance % has increased significantly.
11. Sometimes industrial catering acts as a motivational factor for workers in industries.
12. This type of catering uses seasonal vegetables, healthy and nutritious food,. Thus food is a basic need and motivational factor .

13. Planning and forecasting becomes easy as the number of persons is predetermined.

Briefly state different types of institutional and industrial catering in detail?

- **Types of Institutional and Industrial catering**

Mostly institutional catering prepares food not for profit but to provide food to students as a basic need. Mostly in schools it is compulsory to provide mid day meals. So the main customers are the students. Here the meals are provided at a nominal price. Institution catering falls under the following categories those who impart education to students. They are like:

1. School canteens
2. University hostels
3. College dining halls
4. Professional institutions like IIMS, IITs, NISER, BITS etc.

The dining hall or cafeteria provides clean, hygienic food to students. The kitchen is well equipped with basic amenities. The size of the cafeteria and kitchen depends on the no of students to be catered. School canteens provide breakfast and lunch to the day scholars and all meals to the boarders. In University canteens also serve all meals are provided as the timings of the students are different.

In college dining halls usually all meals are provided. In professional institutions like IITS, IIMS, NISER, BITS mostly students are residential so all meals are made in the kitchen and are provided to them in the dining halls. There are committees who manage the food and beverages in professional institutions. In some places the catering can be given on contract. Mostly cyclic menu is provided to overcome the monotony of the same food.

Industrial Catering:

Mostly catering is done for industrial workers in industries. A full balanced meal is provided which is nutritious and wholesome in nature. All meals are prepared and served in dining areas to workers in shifts as in industries shifts are carried out.

Other welfare catering is segregated as follows

1. Defence catering- which includes army, navy and air force caters to soldiers and officers. Sometimes run b y professionals or cooks, waiters are appointed to run the show.
2. Hospital Catering- It caters to patient, staffs and the visitors, who are the relatives of patients accompanying them. Here diet cooks are appointed to cook special diets for patients.

Enlist several problems that is associated with institutional and industrial catering?

Problems associated with institutional and industrial catering

There are lot many problems which are associated with institutional and industrial catering. They are as follows:

1. Budget- As in both the caterings profit is not the motive and hence it runs on breakeven. It is very difficult to manage and give subsidized meals. Within limited budget simple, nutritious food has to be prepared.
2. High price of the commodity- Since price of a meal is reasonable and consistent; it is very difficult to manage the quality keeping in view the high market price of the commodities.
3. Lack of professional manpower- To manage the high demand of meals in institutional and industrial catering, professional manpower is needed, but sometimes it is very difficult to get trained manpower's for this type of operation.
4. Food safety and Hygiene- It is of prime concern in this catering. A lack of food safety may cause food poisoning. The preparation and consumption of food sometimes in institutions have been associated with many outbreak of food borne diseases. Sometimes specific guidelines are lack from health aspect.
5. Menu fatigue- It is difficult to prepare to plan dishes within the limited budget for institutional and industrial catering. Monotony of dishes placed in a cyclic menu is a real headache for the chefs. People get bored eating same kind of food throughout.
6. Lack of interdepartmental coordination- Improper coordination between different departments in industrial and institutional caterings may lead to guest dissatisfaction.
7. Improper infrastructure- May lead to unhappy customer. If the kitchen is not well equipped then it is difficult to cook food. Since it is cooking in Bulk and within a limited period of time many dishes have to be prepared, therefore a well equipped kitchen tools and machineries are essential for smooth operation.
8. Short service time- At times it is very difficult to serve all in a limited period of time.
9. Bad design and Planning of the kitchen- Bad design, poor choice of equipment, furnishing and fittings may lead to difficult in preparation of food in volume feeding. For example in institutions noisy kitchen may disturb students in their work.
10. Food Control- Sometimes catering manager unable to control or supervise a large gathering, as many meals has to be prepared and served simultaneously. Hazard analysis critical control point is a must for all Industrial and Institutional catering, as the nature of this catering is such that food is prepared well in advance before service. Hence a proper control is required for food storage and service. Sometimes training is needed for all food handlers working in this type of catering.

Write a short note on scope for growth and development in institutional and industrial catering?

Scope for growth and development in institutional and Industrial catering

There lies a great scope for growth and development of this type of catering. As This type of catering is booming in the industry as there is a great demand of third type of catering in the market. In today's arena government is also funding for mid day meals for school children. A huge amount of money is involved. Hence when catering for a large mass, good amount of profit can be generated. Similarly in industries food is now a motivational factor among industrial workers, keeping this in mind industrial catering in most industries have gained popularity and achieved pinnacle of success.

A well planed and designed kitchen for this catering is the need of the hour. Here a lot of revenue is collected and hence good margin of profit is earned by the caterer. Now a student before admission into a college or school sees the availability of the facilities in the premises. So in future a good institutional catering will become a motivational factor for students to take admission.

Differentiate between Commercial establishment and Institutional establishment

Comparison between Commercial and institutional establishments

Aspect	Commercial establishment	Institutional establishment
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers, who are often referred to as guests. • Customers pay money for the services, and their requirement is more of luxury than need. • Challenge is to satisfy customers and create such an image that they would want to come again. • Aimed at creating more of an experience for the guest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People attached to an organization such as employers, employees and students. • Pay (monthly or daily) subsidized money for the services, and requirement is more of an basic necessity rather than luxury
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success is directly related to satisfaction of the guest. • Planning of dishes is fairly easy, as not all guests are repeat clienteles. • It helps to create an image of the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success depends on being able to meet needs of the consumers. • Cyclic menu, dishes made from seasonal vegetables, and nutritious food are the main criteria.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent organizations with main focus on food and beverage services to satisfy the guests. • Forecasting number of meals is difficult as consumer volume is not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In institutional catering food is served as staff meal. This could be a part of large organization whose primary purpose could be providing health care, education, etc. Food

	predictable.	only serves as a basic need to feed people working there. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed no of people and so it is easy to plan and forecast.
Profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These establishments run solely for making profit and expanding their business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea to provide basic amenities at a subsidized rates or sometimes at own cost.

1. Briefly state different types of institutional and industrial catering in detail?
2. Enlist several problems that is associated with institutional and industrial catering?
3. Write a short note on scope for growth and development in institutional and industrial catering?
4. Differentiate between Commercial establishment and Institutional establishment

UNIT 1

MENU PLANNING

A menu or a bill of fare is a list of prepared dishes of food which are available to a customer. Menu planning means to compose a series of dishes for a meal. Composing a good menu is an art and it needs careful selection of dishes for the different courses, so that each dish harmonizes with the other.

The planning of meals in commercial catering establishments is based more on economic considerations and reputation than on the desire to provide nutritionally “balanced diets”.

The dishes produced are intended to please the eye and the palate. Menu should provide nutritious food, tempt the appetite and satisfy the guest.

Types of menu

Table d’hote or table of the host: A fixed menu planned at a fixed price. It is a meal of 3 or 4 courses with a limited choice of dishes, and is cooked in advance. It is changed daily or may be used in rotation. Left over food items could be used for this type of menu as it helps to economise.

Carte Du Jour or Daily Card: These are sometimes an insert in an a la carte menu, which comprises of a few special dishes of the day to vary the a la carte menu, for regular customers.

A La Carte or By the Card: To your choice. A la Carte means the presentation of a menu of a long sequence of dishes and courses. Each dish is individually priced. Dishes are cooked to order and the portions are larger than a table d’hote menu. The customer has a wide choice and should be prepared to wait for this service. Many dishes and sauces are prepared in advance except for the final finishing touches and cooking. This type of menu is normally permanent, until either prices or change of management makes it out of date.

Banquet: The menu is composed for a number of people and it is necessary to know the reason for the banquet. It is usually a formal affair and dishes should be compiled to suit the occasion. The menu is elaborate and of a high class quality. It is a fixed menu, with no choice.

Buffets: There are 2 main types of buffets e.g. the light buffet and the fork buffet (lunch & supper). This buffet table is attractively displayed. The food served is colorful and attractive, tastefully decorated. A large variety of dishes is offered, for everyone to choose.

Cocktail: The main ingredients are drinks. Very tiny savoury snacks are served, such as stuffed olives, walnuts, almonds salted, etc

Menu planning principles

Points to consider when Planning Menus

Type of meal :

The different types are – breakfast, luncheon, dinner, supper, etc.

Breakfast:

There are 3 types

Continental: is a light breakfast comprising of breads, butter, preserves and tea or Coffee.

English: is on a larger scale and comprises fruits- fresh or stewed, cereals, bacon and Eggs to order, fish, preserves, breads and beverages.

Indian: Popular breakfast comprises of parathas, dosas, etc.

Luncheon Menus : are usually shorter than dinners with less courses and simpler dishes, but more choice within each each course. Luncheon is a quick affair and dinner taken more leisurely.

Dinner Menu : comprises of highly garnished, classical dishes. Here one has a scope of showing one's skill of compiling menus with a choice of the most esteemed and rarest and exotic of dishes.

Supper : A full buffet is given for supper. All dishes are well decorated, giving a good display.

Type of establishment:

Menus will vary according to the type of establishment:

Hotels

Restaurants

Hostels

Hospitals

Industrial Canteens.

The menus for restaurants and hotels will be a la carte, buffet, banquet, or table d'hote. The dishes will be pleasing to the eye and palate and will be determined by the customers' appetite and pocket.

Type of customer:

Customers can affect the type of food served because of the following factors: age, sex, occupation.

Season of the Year and Seasonal availability of Ingredients: Season is important in the choice of food. Cool, crisp and fresh foods are ideal in summer. For cold weather, richer and heavier foods are welcomed. Although in these days of cold storage, foods are available all the year round, foods in season should be included in menus, as they are fresh, plentiful and the color and flavor are good. They are available at a reasonable price and are easy to obtain.

Occasion : Special dishes for certain days or time of the year should be considered. For e.g. roast turkey for X'mas.

Capabilities of Kitchen Staff :

The staff capabilities have to be seen whether they will be Able to cope with high class cookery, whether they are experienced and have the skill and knowledge. Equally important is the serving staff that should be efficient.

Equipment of the kitchen :

While planning the menu it is important to see that the kitchen is well equipped also be able to cope up with preparation of various dishes.

Price of Menu :

Always give value for money. The food cost should not exceed 40% of the selling price at an average e.g. if the food cost per person is 2 Dnrs then the suggested selling price would be-

$$\frac{2 \times 100}{40} = 5 \text{ Dinars}$$

$$\frac{\text{Cost of food} \times 100}{\text{Gross profit subtracted}} = \text{Selling price of dish from 100} = \text{Food percentage}$$

Balance of Menus :

This depends partly on the following points :

Repetition of ingredients : The basic ingredients on the menu should not be repeated.

Repetition of color : Wherever it is possible this should be avoided to make the menu exciting.

Repetition of words : Avoid the repetition of the same word on the menu, as it seems the planner has limited knowledge and makes the menu less interesting.

Avoid over balance of menu : If many courses are served then care must be taken to ensure that they are neither too light nor too heavy.

Garnishes : Must be correct. Garnish attractively and simply.

Seasoning : Do not overseason food. If strong herbs are used in one dish never repeat them in another dish in the same meal.

Texture of the courses : Some food should be soft whilst other food should require thorough chewing. Avoid menus with the same texture.

Food Value : Special attention be paid to different requirements of different groups of people.

Color : Sensible use of colour will give them an eye appeal. Deep vivid colours should be avoided. Drab looking dishes can be improved by an attractive colourful garnish.

Wording of Menu : When compiling menus, the following points should be considered.

Select language which the customer can understand.

If the menu is in French give an English translation.

Never use a mixture of languages for the courses of a menu.

Spellings of the words should be correct.

MOBILE CATERING

A mobile caterer serves food directly from a vehicle or cart that is designed for the purpose. Mobile catering is common at outdoor events (such as concerts), workplaces, and downtown business districts.

- A food cart is a motor less trailer that can be hauled by automobile, bicycle, or hand to the point of sale, often a public sidewalk or park. Carts typically have an onboard heating and/or refrigeration system to keep the food ready for consumption.

A catering truck enables a vendor to sell a larger volume than a cart and to reach a larger market. The service is similar; the truck carries a stock of prepared foods that customers can buy. Ice cream vans are a familiar example of a catering truck in Canada, the United States and United Kingdom.

A food truck or mobile kitchen is a modified van with a built-in barbecue grill, deep fryer, or other cooking equipment. It offers more flexibility in the menu since the vendor can prepare food to order as well as fresh foods in advance. A vendor can choose to park the van in one place, as with a cart, or to broaden the business's reach by driving the van to several customer locations. Examples of mobile kitchens include taco trucks on the west coast of the United States, especially Southern California, and fish and chips vans in the United Kingdom. These vehicles are sometimes dysphemistic ally called "roach coaches" or "potomaine wagons".

A concession trailer has preparation equipment like a mobile kitchen, but it cannot move on its own. As such it is suited for events lasting several days, such as funfairs. A mobile caterer uses a vehicle or cart in delivering the food.

Types of vehicles are as follows:

1. Street cart - or a food cart is a motor less trailer that often uses a hand, bicycle or automobile that can be seen on public sidewalks and parks. Carts have an onboard heating device or a refrigerator for keeping the food ready for consumption. Beverages and foods include - tacos, hotdogs, and sausages, Mexican food such as burritos, frozen treats like ice cream, doughnuts, sandwiches, bagels and Halal food such as chicken or lamb over rice.
2. Food Truck - the truck carries stocks of prepared foods that enable the vendor sell a large volume. Examples are the ice cream vans.
3. Mobile Kitchen - A large modified van with built-in cooking equipments such as grill and deep fryer. The vendor can prepare food inside the van. Examples are fish and chips vans in UK and taco trucks on United States.
4. Concession Trailer - like a mobile kitchen, it has equipments for preparation but it cannot move on its own. Trailer is suited for lasting events such as funfairs.

Mobile catering services can also be used to feed people in areas of natural disasters and in places where the infrastructure is destroyed.

Requirements for Mobile Catering Vehicles:

Commissary –

It's a place where all mobile units must report for the daily supplies, servicing and cleaning. A commissary approval form must be submitted and notarized if the owner is not present for signing.

Requirements for commissary:

- (1) Facilities must have a storage of food, washing and sanitizing equipments, single service articles, disposal of waste and washing and storage of vehicles.
- (2) Facility must be inspected by the health authority.
- (3) City permits.

Construction –

- (1) Vehicle must be a commercial type with enclosed, smooth, cleanable floors, walls, and ceiling with no carpet inside.
- (2) Proper temperature of equipment must be NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) approved for maintaining hazardous food. Provides and checks thermometer reading for each holding unit of food.
- (3) Liquid waste must be collected, put in a holding tank, and disposed into a sanitary sewerage system at the commissary.
- (4) Firm name, address, and contact numbers must be on both sides of the vehicle.
- (5) Empty vehicles are not permitted.

Operation –

Health code:

- (1) Foods cannot be sold from a mobile catering vehicle, cleaning and good repair of the interior and exterior part of the vehicle, food containers must be stored properly.
- (2) Proper temperature maintenance at all times - cold foods - 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below, hot foods - 140 degrees Fahrenheit
- (3) Transported food must have insulated units and notify the Neighbourhood Services Department for the rented vehicle.

Permit requirements - payment fee for the mobile food permit and vehicle inspection permit.

Points to be keep in mind: -

1. Use & Application

In addition to being operated as private businesses, mobile catering vehicles are also used after natural disasters to feed people in areas with damaged infrastructure. The Salvation Army has several mobile kitchens that it uses for this purpose.

It is applied to make hot food and carry fuel, food raw materials and water for 80~100 persons each day and personnel portable materials of two cooks and one driver.

2. Working capability

It can make staple and non-staple food for 80~100 persons in one hour.

3. Technical parameters

External dimensions of complete vehicle: 5990×2020×3030mm, External dimensions of vehicle compartment: 3600×2050×2000mm

Internal dimensions of vehicle compartment: 3485×1935×1885mm

4. Characteristics

Equipments and working environment fit in the major Chinese food processing methods and main food raw materials required by field food and drink support. Food processing quality and working environment comply with quantitative standard and sanitary requirement of field food supply.

Mobile Kitchen can be refitted according to the customer's requirements into a vehicle cooking western-style food.

MOBILE CATERING EQUIPMENTS

- Electrical Model Idly Cookers
- Rice & Multipurpose Cookers
- Rice Kettles
- Dosa Plates
- Masala Trolleys
- Display Counters
- Service Counters
- Deep Freezers
- Mobile Salad Bars

- Roti Counters
- Bain Marie Cabinets
- Salamander/Bread Toasters
- Deep Fat Fryers
- Gas Ranges
- Gas / Charcoal Tandoors
- Ovens
- Vegetable Cutting Machines
- Coconut Scrappers
- Wet Grinders Machines
- Flour Kneading Machines
- Potato Peelers
- Halwa Machines
- Oil Shaking Machines ETC.

Branches of Mobile Catering: -

1. Airline catering
2. Cruise/Ship catering
3. Railway catering
4. Automobile catering

SEA CATERING

The catering plays a vital role in the modern era; the catering provides food and beverage services to the people. The people organize parties at their homes, office or nearby banquet hall or hotels. The sea catering is a luxury service which facilitates the person & provides comfort to that extent level. People who are travelling for business purpose or/ & vacations from one country to another, they choose this kind of transport facilities.

There are two types of sea transports, which provide the catering facilities: -

1. CRUISE LINERS: -

In cruise liners, trips are sold as a package included food, accommodation and many other facilities. However, liquor and tobacco are paid individually.

- a. Most of the cruise liners have their own pastry shops, dining halls, bar etc. Hence the menus are best and they may differ to suit international tourist.
- b. Table d' hote menus with wide choice in each course are popular. There is central kitchen known as "galley", in which there are various sectors such as butchery, pastry, raw material are packed up from ports in advance, service could be fine plated buffet.

2. CARGO VESSELS: -

Cargo vessels are the merchant ships which carry foods.

- a. No. of staff is usually limited.
- b. Cyclic menu are prepare to provide meals to the staff.
- c. Hours of operations are pre-decided.
- d. Cost of food should be within budget figure.
- e. Healthy and whole some meal is provided.

AIRLINE CATERING

An airline meal or in-flight meal is a meal served to passengers on board a commercial airliner. These meals are prepared by airline catering services.

The first kitchens preparing meals in-flight were established by United Airlines in 1936.

These meals vary widely in quality and quantity across different airline companies and classes of travel. They range from a simple beverage in short-haul economy class to a seven-course gourmet meal in long-haul first class.

The type of food varies depending upon the Airline Company and class of travel. Meals may be served as "one tray" or in multiple courses with no tray and with a tablecloth, metal cutlery, and glassware (generally in first and business classes).

The airline dinner typically includes meat (most commonly chicken or beef) or fish, a salad or vegetable, a small bread roll, and a dessert.

Caterers usually produce alternative meals for passengers with restrictive diets. These must usually be ordered in advance, sometimes when buying the ticket. Some of the more common examples include:

- Cultural diets, such as French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese or Indian style.
- Infant and baby meals. Some airlines also offer children's meals, containing foods that children will enjoy such as baked beans, mini-hamburgers and hot dogs.

- Medical diets, including low/high fiber, low fat/cholesterol, diabetic, peanut free, non-lactose, low salt/sodium, low-purine, low-calorie, low-protein, bland (non-spicy) and gluten-free meals.
- Religious diets, including kosher, Halal, and Hindu, Buddhist and Jain vegetarian (sometimes termed Asian vegetarian) meals.
- Vegetarian and vegan meals. Some airlines do not offer a specific meal for vegetarians; instead, they are given a vegan meal.

Other non-food items

Condiments (typically salt, pepper, and sugar) are supplied in small sachets. For cleanliness most meals come with a napkin and a moist towelette. First and business class passengers are often provided with hot towels and proper salt and pepper shakers.

RAILWAY CATERING

As the rail is the main transport to travel from one place to another and very convenient transport. The catering facility is provided by the rail staff and the food is prepared at the railway station kitchen. There is a coach in the rail, in which the food and beverage is stored and served time to time. The catering facilities are provided in the limited rails which run on long routes such as Rajdhani, The Palace and Duranto express, Shatabadi etc. there are some points to be keep in mind:

-

1. Cost of food sometimes included in rail ticket or it is payable separate both ways the food cost should be kept in mind within limits.
2. Normally a simple menu is planned which includes dal, vegetables, rice & curd, chapatti's & salad.
3. Mostly table d' hote menu is adopted.
4. Food is cooked and packed at the kitchen at the station and stored in the pantry in train, soft drinks are also kept.
5. Light equipments are used and usually disposable item are used and placed in the pantry.

The Indian Railways, the largest of its kind in the world with a workforce of about 1.5 million employees can be easily described as the lifeline of the nation and its fast growing economy. Railways carry 13 million passengers daily and run 9,000 passenger trains daily. Railways have penetrated the length and breadth of India (62,800 route kms), being so widespread and far flung would have made centralized management for administration both difficult and impractical. It has been therefore divided into 16 zones for efficient administration.

The zones are as follows:

1. Northern Railway (HQ – New Delhi)
2. Western Railway (HQ – Mumbai)
3. Southern Railway (HQ – Chennai)
4. Eastern Railway (HQ – Kolkata)
5. Central Railway (HQ – Mumbai)
6. South Central Railway (HQ – Secunderabad)
7. North Eastern Railway (HQ – Gorakhpur)
8. Northeast Frontier Railway (HQ – Guwahati)
9. East Central Railway (HQ – Hajipur)
10. East Coast Railway (HQ – Bhubaneswar)
11. North Central Railway (HQ – Allahabad)

12. North Western Railway (HQ – Jaipur)

13. South Eastern Railway (Kolkata)

14. Southeast Central Railway (HQ – Bilaspur)

15. South Western Railway (HQ – Hubli)

16. West Central Railway (HQ – Jabalpur)

All these zones enjoy equal status and facilities and fall under the Indian Railways run by the Government of India, Ministry of Railways but their decentralization make them independent as far as management is concerned. The railway ministry and the railway board are responsible for all policies and administration of the railways. In 2001 the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) a public sector company setup and fully owned by the Ministry of Railways was incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and has been formed to act as an extended arm of the Indian Railways to upgrade, modernize, professionalize and improve the existing catering facilities besides launching additional ones. Each railway zone is headed by a General Manager who presents his annual report to the railway board in New Delhi. Due to its immensity each zone is further broken up into divisions each being headed by a divisional superintendent all of whom report to their respective General Manager. The Central Railway zone for example, has the following divisions: 1. Mumbai (CST) 2. Bhusawal 3. Solapur 4. Pune 5. Nagpur. The catering department of the railway is a subdivision of its Commercial Department.

The departmental catering of Indian Railways is now transferred to IRCTC along with commercial staff. Railway catering services are managed by the Indian Railways through (a) its catering department and (b) contracted catering operators/companies with a catering background so that travelers could be more professionally served during long journeys. Food services facilities are used by railway users out of necessity to fulfill their physiological needs while traveling by train.

Rail catering may for the purpose of study be divided into three areas (a) Railways hotels (b) Terminus Catering for food and beverage (c) In-transit catering for food and beverage. Terminus Catering covers 1. Refreshment rooms 2. Staff canteens, while in-transit catering covers mobile catering services in Pantry Cars and Dining cars and authorized vendors.

Railway Hotels: These are usually sited at the station for the benefit of rail travelers. The two biggest drawbacks of railway hotels are noise (due to their proximity to stations which are invariably the hub of a city or a town) and dirt. The noise levels can be reduced by scientific planning and construction while dirt can be avoided by air conditioning and proper housekeeping. The purpose of a railway hotel is to provide boarding and lodging at a reasonable price to the travelling public. Railway hotels provide accommodation in the form of Rail Yatri Niwas currently only at New Delhi and Howrah stations where Dormitory beds, a/c rooms and non a/c rooms are offered. The staff is quite minimal and just suffices to man the reception, housekeeping, kitchen and dining room areas. Services are restricted to the bare essentials and are without frills. The average length of stay of lodgers in Rail Yatri Niwas is quite short and transient in nature. In addition the railways have two heritage property hotels in tourist spots for the benefit of tourists. They are at Ranchi and Puri that offers

luxurious accommodation, excellent cuisine, more personalized service and higher tariffs than the Rail Yatri Niwas mentioned above.

Plans have yet to be firmed up but the IRCTC is looking to start half a dozen budget hotels near railway stations, take over and clean up the two Rail Yatri Niwas set-ups and even run the railway heritage hotels in Ranchi and Puri. This fledgling corporation has done preliminary work on selecting sites for budget hotels in Chandigarh, Bhopal, Mumbai, Pune, Secunderabad and Bangalore.

Terminal catering

Most important stations have vegetarian and non-vegetarian refreshment rooms and light refreshment stalls. The detailed menu and tariff is displayed in the refreshment rooms and at the stalls.

Refreshment Rooms:

These include station refreshment rooms (or restaurants) and stationery stalls. Trains whose journeys do not have facility of meal provision, make planned stops for reasonably long times at stations with refreshment rooms to enable passengers to consume food and drink. Refreshment rooms are provided at all termini and junctions and serve meals and snacks that are vegetarian and non-vegetarian. The size of the refreshment rooms depend on the amount of traffic and while some of these rooms at smaller stations are operated at a loss as a service to the traveling public, those at terminus stations and junctions on the other hand more than compensate on account of their huge turnover. The prices of food and beverage are extremely reasonable and affordable keeping in mind the socio-economic status of the average Indian traveler. For the transfer of stores between stations schedules are carefully worked out and loaded on certain trains at set times for the convenience of suppliers.

The opening and closing times of these refreshment rooms must be coordinated with train timings and service and may be called upon to remain open outside their normal hours owing to delays and unforeseen circumstances. To maintain standards of food and staff should be trained and skilled and frequent inspections are necessary. They should be prominently located, comfortable and have a bright pleasing atmosphere.

Hygiene standards and their maintenance are of great importance as illness due to negligence in the handling of food would prove detrimental to the rail traveler. Cutlery and crockery must be durable to withstand heavy use and turnover. Food should be tasty, appetizing and carefully handled. The best selling item is probably without doubt the cup of tea which must be freshly prepared and reviving. Supervision is a must to keep down pilferage. Not all refreshment rooms are run by the railways; some are run by private contractors. These should be regularly inspected to ensure that there is no fall in standards.

Stalls:

Another point of F & B sale in addition to refreshment rooms there are the stationery stalls located on the platforms especially at junction stations stocking a wide variety of food items (mainly snacks) and non-alcoholic beverages for sale to passengers for immediate or later consumption on the journey. Paper plates, aluminum foil, containers, plastic and Styrofoam cups may be used for dispensing these food and beverage. Not only are they hygienic but are easily disposed off and help in rapid service. Further the vendor need not wait until the passenger has finished consuming the food/ beverage as the containers are disposable. At busy stations where competition is intense, the station restaurant and stalls operation and sales may be supplemented with the help of authorized (badged) attendants who merchandise food and beverage wares in loud tones, parading the platform for the length of the train just outside the windows and even within the compartments of the stationery train, making them more accessible to the passengers. A healthy competitive spirit must be encouraged among the various catering establishments at the different stations. Mumbai is served by a suburban local railway and stalls are extremely popular on local stations. They sell a great variety of food and non-alcoholic beverage products and do an extremely high turnover of business. Contracts for these stalls are tendered each year.

The Railway Minister in his Railway budget 2002-03 has said that the IRCTC has targeted 50 food plazas at railway stations. These multi-cuisine, multi-outlets will not only generate revenues but promote rail tourism. They will be sub-contracted to many private players and offer both self-service and sit-down meal options. Bangalore, Nashik, CST and Dadar-Mumbai, Bhopal, Indore are among the stations earmarked for these future food plaza projects. McDonald's India recently won the tender for setting up an outlet each at railway stations in Mumbai and Jaipur.

In-transit catering

Indian Railways provides pantry car facilities on long-distance trains and on selected important short-distance trains. The details of trains offering Pantry car service is indicated in railway timetables with the letter 'P'. Catering services are also arranged in trains where a pantry car facility is not available. Passengers on short distance train journey routes may have the facility of purchasing snacks and beverages from licensed railway attendants. At times, food (meals) is lifted from various stations along the route. Igatpuri (on the Mumbai-Delhi route) was one such station. These operations were outsourced to catering contractors and often the quality was very questionable. Trains like the Rajdhani/August Kranti have base kitchen where meals are prepared and loaded into the pantry car. It is then portioned for service. Small orders, omelettes etc are prepared in the pantry car.

Mobile Catering Services:

This refers to the service of meals to passengers from a pantry car during the journey. Pantry Cars are compartments normally hooked onto the middle of a train and its personnel may undertake the above tasks of meal preparation and service. The operations are supervised and controlled by an on board pantry car manager. Service of these meals on board the trains relieves the passenger from the problem of carrying his own food and thereby enables to travel lighter. The food is usually Indian

cuisine. Most often the cost of food is not included in the price of the ticket- although on train journeys such as on the Rajdhani Express and Shatabdi Express they are so included and the quality is above average (and includes a bottle of mineral water) offering value for money to the passenger for the price of the ticket paid. The mobile catering service operations may be run by the catering department itself or may be on contract. Out of 200 pantry cars that are currently being ployed only 40 are actually being managed by the Railways whereas the rest are being managed by private operators. With the emphasis on quality and standardization, IRCTC wants to eventually outsource the catering service and management of all the cars.

When meals are offered on a train they consist of a fixed menu and are referred to as casserole meals. Passengers are asked by an attendant whether they wish to order the casserole meal and if so whether a vegetarian or non-vegetarian meal is required. The coach and seat number is noted and payment is taken in cash at the time of order itself.

In the case of department catering the meals are usually cooked at a base kitchen. The number of meals required and their mix are phoned in to the base kitchen from a previous station. When the train arrives at the said station the meals are picked up and loaded into the pantry car from where they are distributed to the passengers who have ordered.

Limited cooking is done aboard the pantry cars for a-la-carte orders (if requested by passengers) and these are relatively higher priced in comparison to the economy offered by the charge of the fixed meal.

When the catering service on a train is committed to a catering contractor the cooking of the entire meal is done in the pantry car itself and subsequently packed and distributed to passengers who have ordered. Contractors may also pick up certain items from a railway base kitchen but this is not common practice as it affects their own profit margins and a large enough catering contractor would have sufficient resources to not having to resort to this. When pantry car operations are contracted out, the IRCTC works on a formula, assuming sale of specified number of meals on the basis of which the contractor has to give a license fee of 14 lakh or 12% of the turnover whichever is higher.

A pantry car would typically have some or all of the following equipment and fixtures in addition to water, gas and power lines.

1. DeepFreezer
- 2.Refrigerator
- 3.hot holding cabinet
- 4.Four Burner gas range (the gas bank is usually one toilet area converted)
- 5.grinder (usually on south bound trains)
- 6.geyser

7. exhaust fan. In addition to a cooking area a pantry car has a non-kitchen area that provides for the accommodation of the traveling catering staff.

The ordertaking and service of food while the train is in motion is possible because the compartments are vestibulated. Passengers in unreserved compartments are difficult to cater to as they do not have a fixed seat number and the crowds in such compartments can be very heavy on some routes. Further such compartments are not vestibulated making delivery of meals possible at a train halt.

Earlier practice was to serve the meals in thalis (with steel spoons) and give the passengers a reasonable time to consume the same. If the total collection and clearance of thalis couldn't be done in the time limit of the train halt at the station they would be returned after uploading at the next prescribed station and taken back by another train to the loading station. Today, meals are packed and served in foil containers (called casseroles) with plastic spoons, both of which are disposable (throwaway) and do not require collection and washing like rotatable serviceware does. On short journeys eg: Mumbai-Pune-Mumbai, vendors will move up and down the compartments selling small snack items, refreshments, bottled water, cold drinks, biscuits etc. These are prepared and accessed from the pantry car. Some do so on a trolley and the quality is fairly good. The pricing is also competitive and passengers very often prefer this to carrying food with them for the journey.

Dining or Buffet Cars: Are not found on regular trains today. But super luxury trains such as the Palace-on-Wheels and Deccan Odyssey have dining cars that are the equivalent of fine dining restaurants on wheels and offer an a la carte menu. Passengers make their way to the dining car where they order and consume the meal. Dining cars obviously have an attached kitchen with a full complement of equipment that can produce all items offered on the menu. A concept called the refreshment car similar to the dining car is available on the Deccan Queen a short run journey.

Authorized Vendors: On short distance trains it is common to find several authorized railway employees vending an assortment of food and beverage items while the train is moving for the benefit of passengers who are hungry and thirsty, thus catering to their requirement between stops as well.

Prices in Railway Catering

Rates of a few items are listed below

Tea with tea bag (150 ml) Rs 4

Coffee (150 ml) Rs 5

Mineral water (1000 ml) Rs 10

Standard Breakfast (veg) Rs17

Standard Breakfast (non-veg) Rs20

Casserole Meal (veg) Rs 30

Casserole Meal (non-veg) Rs 35

Janta Meal Rs 10

Veg thali meal (in refreshment room) Rs 22

Non-veg thali meal (in refreshment room) Rs 27

Packed branded items are sold at M.R.P. (subject to change)

The rates of other prepared items are determined by Zonal Railways

Menu cards and rate lists are available with waiters/bearers

Rate lists are also displayed in pantry cars, refreshment rooms and at stalls.

The railway authorities recommend not to tip the waiters/bearers and request passengers to insist on cash memos/receipts for items/meals purchased.

Drawbacks of Railway Catering:

1. Low-pay scale – as compared to other commercial sectors of the food service industry pay scales are comparatively low leading to disinterest and dodging of duties.
2. Unqualified staff – Low pay scales and seniority as the criterion of advancement make an unattractive option for qualified persons. Hence, even at the supervising level, the staff is unqualified impeding progress.
3. Rigid administration – whenever there are new ideas to be introduced, they pass through so many stages before they are enacted. This bureaucracy kills several ideas and delays several others as they have to pass through so many stages that they are almost outdated by the time they are enacted.
4. Government job – as it is a government job, employers are not interested in raising profits, neither do they try to improve their performance.
5. Lack of promotion due to performance – promotions in the railways are not given on merit, but on seniority. Hence, even when an employee works diligently he is not rewarded with quick promotions. He gets his promotion only when his turn comes, i.e. according to seniority. Hence few employees work sincerely.
6. No action against complaints – as administration is not firm and since it is a government job, there is a lot of red tape involved before an employee can be punished.

7. Low budget – because of a low budget, the raw materials purchased are not of good quality. The equipment is either lacking or of poor standard.

8. Powerful unions with their interference and blind support of members impede progress and do not promote a high morale nor one in which an employee may work honestly and diligently.

MOBILE CATERING

A mobile caterer serves food directly from a vehicle or cart that is designed for the purpose. Mobile catering is common at outdoor events (such as concerts), workplaces, and downtown business districts.

A food cart is a motor less trailer that can be hauled by automobile, bicycle, or hand to the point of sale, often a public sidewalk or park. Carts typically have an onboard heating and/or refrigeration system to keep the food ready for consumption.

A catering truck enables a vendor to sell a larger volume than a cart and to reach a larger market. The service is similar; the truck carries a stock of prepared foods that customers can buy. Ice cream vans are a familiar example of a catering truck in Canada, the United States and United Kingdom.

A food truck or mobile kitchen is a modified van with a built-in barbecue grill, deep fryer, or other cooking equipment. It offers more flexibility in the menu since the vendor can prepare food to order as well as fresh foods in advance. A vendor can choose to park the van in one place, as with a cart, or to broaden the business's reach by driving the van to several customer locations.

Food truck business is a great opportunity for entrepreneurs whose passion is serving food. It is beneficial in many ways like there is no need of buying costly spaces for opening up a restaurant, all you need is a full-fleeced truck, licenses and your passion for catering food in the city. It is a job which requires creativity and innovation with lip-smacking dishes for attracting foodies.

The average cost of starting a food truck business in India is between Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh, depending on what type of vehicle you have and what you are selling.

In India there is no association or regulatory body assigned by the government for establishing a food truck business. Licensing for food trucks in India is highly unorganised and is the most time consuming and burdensome task.

Types of vehicles are as follows:

1. Street cart - or a food cart is a motor less trailer that often uses a hand, bicycle or automobile that can be seen on public sidewalks and parks. Carts have an onboard heating device or a refrigerator for keeping the food ready for consumption. Beverages and foods include – chaat, vada pav, tacos, pav bhaji, tacos, hotdogs, frozen treats like ice cream, doughnuts, sandwiches, bagels and Halal food such as chicken or lamb over rice.
2. Food Truck - the truck carries stocks of prepared foods that enable the vendor sell a large volume. Examples are the ice cream vans.
3. Mobile Kitchen - A large modified van with built-in cooking equipments such as grill and deep fryer. The vendor can prepare food inside the van. Examples are fish and chips vans in UK and taco trucks on United States.
4. Concession Trailer - like a mobile kitchen, it has equipments for preparation but it cannot move on its own. Trailer is suited for lasting events such as funfairs.

Mobile catering services can also be used to feed people in areas of natural disasters and in places where the infrastructure is destroyed.

Requirements for Mobile Catering Vehicles:

Decide a menu

For starting a business truck, one should research about the taste of people; what they want to eat on the go. It is important to figure out what type of food trucks are already in the city. How many food trucks specialises in the same menu you are planning to sell? Is there room in the market for what you are selling? Will people want to eat what you are selling?

Global cuisines like Mexican, Lebanese, Thai, Italian and many others are gaining popularity among people.

Choosing the right vehicle

The food trucks are customised commercial vehicles which come in different sizes. The cost of vehicle depends on numerous factors. Entrepreneurs often opt for pre-owned vehicles. The cost of customising a truck lies between Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh depending on the type of vehicle.

Licensing

All food truck owners ask for simplified licensing through a single window approach. However there are certain licenses, required for starting a food truck business, which are similar to those for opening a restaurant.

- **Food License:** For every food business, a license from FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) is required. The standards have to be followed to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. Businesses which have turnover of over Rs 12 lakh per annum require this license.

In India there is no special permit available for food trucks.

- **Fire Department NOC:** The trucks have gas appliances like fryers, boilers and oven which might lead to mishap, a certificate from Chief Fire Officer is compulsory.
- **Liquor License:** If the vendor is selling alcoholic beverages from their trucks, a permit from state government is required.
- **License from local Municipal Corporation:** Permission from local Municipal Corporation is required for locations where vendors serve food to the people.
- **Commercial Vehicle License:** NOC of vehicle ownership and vehicle license issued by RTO of commercial vehicle to sell food from it.

Insurance

Get Insurance of your truck and business to account for risks and liabilities.

Marketing

The vehicle itself acts as a marketing tool as it roams around the city with your brand name. Food trucks require presence on social media for promotions and updating about the location and timings in the city.

Mobile catering equipments

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- Rice & Multipurpose Cookers

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- Masala Trolleys
- Display Counters
- Service Counters
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- Infant and baby meals. Some airlines also offer children's meals, containing foods that children will enjoy such as baked beans, mini-hamburgers and hot dogs.
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Other non-food items

Condiments (typically salt, pepper, and sugar) are supplied in small sachets. For cleanliness most meals come with a napkin and a moist towelette. First and business class passengers are often provided with hot towels and proper salt and pepper shakers.

G Chapter 1

Introduction to Off-Premise Catering Management

Off-premise catering is serving food at a location away from the caterer's food production facility. One example of a food production facility is a freestanding commissary, which is a kitchen facility used exclusively for the preparation of foods to be served at other locations. Other examples of production facilities include, but are not limited to, hotel, restaurant, and club kitchens. In most cases there is no existing kitchen facility at the location where the food is served.

Caterers provide single-event foodservice, but not all caterers are created equal. They generally fall into one of three categories:

Party food CATERERS supply only the food for an event. They drop off cold foods and leave any last-minute preparation, plus service and cleanup, to others.

Hot buffet CATERERS provide hot foods that are delivered from their commissaries in insulated containers. They sometimes provide serving personnel at an additional charge.

Full-service CATERERS not only provide food, but frequently cook it to order on-site. They also provide service personnel at the event, plus all the necessary food-related equipment—china, glassware, flatware, tables and chairs, tents, and so forth. They can arrange for other services, like décor and music, as well. In short, a full-service caterer can plan an entire event, not just the food for it.

Off-premise catering can mean serving thousands of box lunches to a group of conventioners; barbecuing chicken and ribs for fans before a big college game, serving an elegant dinner for two aboard a luxury yacht, or providing food, staff, and equipment for an upscale fundraiser with hundreds of guests. On a “degree of difficulty” scale from one to ten—one meaning “easy” and ten meaning “most challenging”—on-premise catering is a two, and off-premise would rank a ten!

Off-premise caterers meet the needs of all market segments, from the low-budget customer who looks for the greatest quantity and quality for the least amount of money, to the upscale client with an unlimited budget who wants the highest level of service, the ultimate in food quality, and the finest in appointments—crystal stemware, silver-plated flatware, and luxurious linens. Between these two extremes is the midscale market segment, which requires more quality than the low-budget sector, but less than the upscale.

Off-premise catering is an art and a science. The art is creating foods and moods, as the caterer and client together turn a vision into reality. The science is the business of measuring money, manpower, and material. Successful off-premise caterers recognize the importance of both aspects—art and science—and are able to work at both the creative and the financial levels.

In off-premise catering, there is only one chance to get it right. Many events, such as wedding receptions, occur only once in a lifetime. Other events are scheduled annually, quarterly, or on a regular basis, and the caterer who fails to execute all details of such an event to the satisfaction of the client will seldom have another chance.

Unfortunately for some, off-premise catering can be like living on the brink of disaster unless they are experienced. Uninitiated amateurs may not recognize a volatile situation until it becomes a problem, later realizing they should have recognized it earlier.

Catering off-premise is very similar to a sports team playing all of its games away from home, in unfamiliar surroundings, with none of the comforts of home to ease the way. There is no home field advantage, but there is a minefield disadvantage! As caterers plod their way toward the completion of a catered event, there are thousands of potential “land mines” that can ruin an otherwise successful affair. Some examples follow:

- Already running late for a catering delivery, the catering van driver discovers that all vehicle traffic around the party site is in gridlock. The traffic has been at a standstill for more than an hour, the police say it will be hours before the congestion can be eliminated, and the clients and their guests are anxiously awaiting dinner.
- The only freight elevator in a high-rise office building has been commandeered for the evening by moving and cleaning people, thus preventing access to the floor where a caterer is to stage an event scheduled to start in two hours.
- The wrong hot food truck is dispatched to a wedding reception. The error is not discovered until the truck has reached the reception and the bride and groom are ready for their guests to be served. It will take more than an hour to send the correct truck with the food that was ordered.
- A cook wheels a container filled with cooked prime ribs down a pier toward a yacht where the meat will be served to a group of 80 conventioners in half an hour. Suddenly, the cook is distracted, and the prime rib container tumbles over the edge of the pier into 40 feet of water.
- The table numbers have vanished, and the guests are ready to be seated for dinner.

- The fire marshal arrives at a party site 20 minutes before a catered event and refuses to allow guests access to the party site because the space had not been authorized for party use.
- The catering crew arrives at the party site with a van full of food, cooked to order—exactly one week early.
- A new customer places an order and asks that the caterer deliver to a home where family members and guests will have gathered prior to a funeral service. The caterer sends the food and, upon arrival, is told that the person with the check-book is at the funeral home and is asked to please stop back in an hour for the money. The delivery person leaves without obtaining a signature. Upon returning, there is no one home and no one from whom to collect payment.
- While using a garbage disposal in a client's home, the caterer suddenly hears a terrible noise and watches in horror as water and garbage spew from the disposal all over the floor. The irate customer refuses to pay the caterer and threatens to sue for the cost of replacing the garbage disposal that was ruined because of (in the customer's words) the caterer's "negligence."
- After catering a flawless party at a client's home and loading the catering truck to capacity, the caterer is shocked to learn from the client that all 15 bags of trash must be removed from the client's property because of the neighborhood's zoning ordinances.
- The caterer's rental company representative calls the caterer the morning after an event and advises the caterer that the \$600 rented chafing dish is missing. It was there the night before, when the caterer left the client's home.

Get the picture? We could tell horror stories all day! Seasoned off-premise caterers agree, these are only a few of the thousands of obstacles that stand in the way of completing a catered event. This book addresses the various ways to professionally and successfully deal with difficult situations.

With all of these very real potential problems, why are there *more THAN 50,000* off-premise caterers in the United States? Why are more young people studying catering at two-year and four-year colleges and universities? Why are thousands of people starting their own catering companies, risking their savings on their dreams of future success? The reasons are numerous. They may love the adventure of working in new and exciting places. They look forward to the peaks and valleys of the business cycle. They love the intense feeling of satisfaction that comes after successfully catering a spectacular party. They love the myriad challenges of this very difficult profession. Many are their own bosses, with no one to answer to but the client. Many pick and choose the parties they wish to cater. Many make six-figure incomes each year, and others cater occasionally, just for the fun of it.

Comparing Off-Premise and On-

Premise Catering

What are the differences between off-premise catering and on-premise catering?
Let's examine these differences, from both the client's and the caterer's viewpoints.

From the Client's Viewpoint

Most clients fail to consider the cost of the rental equipment such as tables, chairs, linens, china, glassware, and flatware when they consider engaging an off-premise caterer. They think it will be less expensive to entertain in their homes, or at unique off-premise sites, than in hotels. In fact, it can be more expensive, considering not only the cost of the rental equipment, but also other costs such as transportation of food and supplies to the site, the costs of special labor and décor, the need for tenting, air-conditioning and/or heating, and other expenses. Clients may save some money by buying their own liquor, but this can be insignificant as compared with the added costs. For many clients, the additional costs are far outweighed by the benefits of entertaining in the privacy of their own homes or the uniqueness of a special off-premise location such as a museum, state-of-the-art aquarium, antique car dealership, or historical site.

From the Caterer's Viewpoint

Off-premise caterers must plan menus that can be prepared successfully at the client's location. For example, foods to be fried should not be cooked in unventilated spaces, like small kitchens in high-rise office buildings. On-premise caterers are not as limited in this regard, and they are generally supported by built-in equipment that can support a wider variety of menus.

On-premise party personnel are more familiar with the party facilities than those who work at a variety of unfamiliar locations. Off-premise catering generally has greater seasonal and day-to-day swings in personnel needs, which can create a greater challenge for the off-premise caterer, who is constantly recruiting and training staff; turnover is usually high because such work is on an "as-needed basis."

There is definitely a greater potential for oversights in off-premise catering. Backup supplies, food, and equipment can be miles away or even inaccessible when catering, for instance, aboard a yacht miles from shore.

In spite of the uncertainties, off-premise catering offers the opportunity to work in a greater variety of interesting locations. The work is more likely to be different each day, resulting in less boredom and more excitement. For those looking for unlimited challenges and rewards, off-premise catering may be the answer.

G *Advantages and Disadvantages of Off-Premise Catering*

In his book *How to MANAGE A Successful CATERING Business*, Manfred Ketterer mentions the numerous advantages of catering:¹

Advance deposits
Limited start-up
investment Limited
inventories Controllable
costs

Additional
revenues Business
by contract Direct
payment Advance
forecasting
Free word-of-mouth advertising
Selectivity

Let's discuss a few of these items in more detail. First, most off-premise caterers require some form of advance deposit prior to an event. This deposit provides the caterer with some security if the event is canceled and also can be used to purchase some or all of the food and supplies for the party.

There is no need for large amounts of capital to get started, since most off-premise catering operations begin by using the existing kitchen facilities of a restaurant, club, hotel, church, or other licensed foodservice business. (It is common knowledge that many start their catering businesses in their home kitchens, but it is imperative to state that this is in direct violation of most local zoning ordinances.) In addition, all of the necessary catering foodservice equipment such as china, glassware, flatware, tables, chairs, and linens can usually be rented, thus avoiding having to invest in expensive equipment inventories.

Food and supply inventories, as well as operating costs, are much more easily controlled, because clients must advise the caterer in advance as to the number of guests that are expected. Off-premise caterers need buy only the amounts necessary to serve the event, unlike a restaurant where there is a large variation from day to day regarding the number of patrons and their menu selections.

Off-premise catering generates additional revenues for existing operations like hotels, clubs, and restaurants. They can generate even more profit by providing other services—rental equipment, flowers, décor, music, entertainment, and other accessory services.

Both the client and the caterer have expectations regarding the outcome of the party. These expectations should be clearly spelled out in a written contract. Payment for an event is normally made directly to a manager or owner, eliminating a middleman, whether it's a wedding planner, on-site food and beverage director, or one of the caterer's own staff members. This form of direct payment provides for better cash control and fewer folks to share the profit.

Advance forecasting is more accurate for off-premise caterers, because parties are generally booked weeks, months, or years in advance. Moreover, each part of the country has seasonal swings, which make revenue forecasting somewhat easier. For example, in the South the summer months are generally less busy, but in the North these are the busy months.

Off-premise events generate tremendous amounts of free word-of-mouth advertising, which can produce future business without the necessity of advertising. Many off-premise caterers feel that satisfied guests at one party will either directly or indirectly book another party by speaking favorably to

friends and co-workers about the event and the caterer. In other words, one party can create future parties. Caterers also have the advantage of being somewhat selective about their clients. There are no laws that require you to accept every request to cater. If the job doesn't

meet your standards, politely decline. In sticky situations where you've already begun to work with a client but find that your communication styles just don't mesh— or, as sometimes happens with weddings, the client is not heeding your advice and you can't even decide who's really in charge—you can walk away, as long as you do so within the terms of your written agreement.

Off-premise catering does have some disadvantages too: Catering managers, owners, and staff undergo periods of high stress during very busy periods. Deadlines must be met. There are no excuses for missing a catering deadline. Stress is compounded because the workload is not evenly spread throughout the year. For most off-premise caterers, 80 percent of the events are scheduled in 20 percent of the time. For most, weekends are generally busier than weekdays. Certain seasons, including Christmas, are normally busier than others. Of course, caterers must maintain general business hours too!

Many have left the catering field, burned out by the constant stress and high energy demands. The seasonality of the business makes it difficult to find staff at certain times. Revenues are inconsistent, making cash management very difficult, particularly during the slower periods when expenses continue yet revenues do not.

For those caterers who operate hotels, restaurants, clubs, and other businesses, the time away from the main business—spent on the off-premise business—can hurt. It is difficult for even the most well-organized person to be in two places at the same time.

Many hoteliers and restaurateurs find the rigors of off-premise catering too great. Some quit after realizing the difficulty of catering away from their operations. They feel that the financial benefits are insufficient compared with the effort required to cater off-premise events.

Elements of Successful Off- Premise Catering

What does it take to become a successful off-premise caterer? What experience is necessary, and what personality traits are desirable?

Work Experience. Prior experience in the catering profession or the foodservice industry is important. Experience in food preparation and foodservice (both back-of-the-house and front-of-the-house) helps caterers understand the procedures and problems in both areas and how the two areas interface. Those with a strong kitchen background, for example, would be wise to gain some front-of-house experience, and front-of-house personnel should learn the kitchen routine.

Many successful off-premise caterers began by working as accommodators. Accommodators are private chefs who are hired to prepare food for parties. Many assist the client with planning the menu, purchasing the food, and even arranging for kitchen and service staff. The food is prepared and served in the

client's home or facility, eliminating the need for a catering commissary. Accommodators receive a fee for their services. The party staff is paid directly by the client.

Passion. Successful professionals are passionate about their work, and caterers are no exception. They love what they do! Clients and staff members will quickly detect a lack of passion, and it will cost you business and good workers. If you don't love what you do, move on and try something else.

An Entrepreneurial Nature. The desire to be an entrepreneur is a trait that is highly desirable for off-premise caterers. An entrepreneur must be willing to spend extraordinary amounts of time and energy to make the off-premise catering business successful, possess an inherent sense of what is right for the business, have the ability to view all aspects of the business at once rather than focusing only on one or two parts, and demonstrate a strong, incessant desire to be his or her own boss and become financially independent.

Basic Business Knowledge

- Accounting and bookkeeping skills are necessary to understand the financial aspects of operating a catering business. The ability to prepare and interpret financial statements is essential.
- Learn as much about computers as you can. You'll be amazed at how much you can accomplish by using e-mail, having a website, and using specialized programs for everything from budgeting to menu planning.
- It's also important to understand the legal aspects of catering. Laws that affect caterers include regulation of licensing, contracts, liability, labor, and alcoholic beverage service.
- A caterer, like any other businessperson, must have some human resource skills. Knowing how to recruit, train, motivate, and manage personnel is critical.
- Off-premise caterers should be knowledgeable about how to develop and implement a marketing plan.

Ability to Plan, Organize, Execute, and Control. These are the four basic functions of management. To plan, a caterer must visualize in advance all of the aspects of a catered event and document the plans so they are readily understood by the client and easily executed by the staff. Organizing is simply breaking down the party plans into groups of functions that can be executed in an efficient manner. Execution is the implementation of the organized plans by the party staff. Controlling is the supervisory aspect of the event. All well-organized and well-executed plans require control and supervision. The adage is, "It is not what you expect, but what you inspect." The premier off-premise catering firms in the United States insist on excellent supervision at each event.

Ability to Communicate with Clients and Staff. Listening is the key to good communication with clients and prospective clients. Off-premise caterers must listen carefully and attentively to determine what the client needs. A

client who calls and asks, “Are you able to cater a party next Friday?” should be dealt with differently from one who calls and asks, “How much will it cost for a wedding reception?” The first caller is ready to buy your services, whereas the second caller is

shopping. Astute caterers must be able to respond to client requests in such a manner that the client will immediately gain confidence in the caterer.

Communicating with staff is a complex issue. In simple terms, it can be reduced to the ability to tell staff what is expected so that they understand, and the ability to receive their feedback regarding problems, both actual and potential. The result of effective communication is an off-premise catering staff that professionally executes a well-planned party that meets or exceeds the client's expectations.

Willingness to Take Calculated Risks. Off-premise catering is a very risky business. It is not for the fainthearted who are afraid of the unknown. For example, it is more risky catering a corporate fund-raiser at the local zoo under a tent than serving the same group in a hotel ballroom. Off-premise caterers must know when the risk outweighs the gain. In this particular example, catering the event at the zoo without adequate cover in case of rain would probably be too risky. The event could be ruined. The tent makes the risk of rain a calculated one.

Sound Body and Mind. Off-premise catering requires working long hours without rest or sleep, lifting and moving heavy objects, intense pressure as deadlines near, and even long periods of little or no business, which can cause concern. Successful caterers should be in good physical shape, have a high energy level, and be able to mentally deal with seasonal business cycles that range from nonstop activity to slow periods with little or no business.

Off-premise caterers must be self-confident, but at the same time realize that they must always find ways to improve the quality of their food and services. In this profession a fondness for people and feeling comfortable in crowds is important. A "cool head" when under pressure will keep both staff and client calm while potential problems are resolved professionally and efficiently.

Creativity. This is the benchmark of all outstanding caterers. Creative caterers are able to turn a client's vision into reality by creating the appropriate look, feel, menu, service, and ambiance. Those who are not very creative can learn to be, or they can employ those who are creative.

Dependability. Dependability is a major cornerstone of success in off-premise catering. When a caterer fails to deliver what was promised, the negative word of mouth travels fast among clients and potential clients. Even in those situations where circumstances change, making it more difficult to perform as promised, the outstanding caterer will find a way to deliver rather than use the changed circumstances as an excuse not to deliver.

Open-Mindedness. Open-minded caterers read up on catering trends and try new recipes and menus. They are willing to prepare unfamiliar dishes requested by clients, after thoroughly testing and understanding the recipes. They

discover and try new dishes. They are always learning better ways to run their businesses.

Ability to Meet the Needs of Clients. The needs of the client must always come first. Success in this business comes from identifying these needs and satisfying them. Unsuccessful off-premise caterers are those who get lost in trying to satisfy their own needs for money, equipment, and greater self-esteem. They forget that the primary goal is to serve the needs of the client. When a client's needs are met, the caterer's needs for revenues, profits, and positive feedback will automatically be met.

Ability to Project a Favorable Image. Prospective clients hire caterers based on their perceived image of the caterer and what the caterer will provide. In some sense, then, caterers are selling themselves more than their food. Off-premise caterers must be able to project a favorable image to the client, one that is in accord with the client's expectations. For example, a caterer whose image is sophisticated and upscale will be hard-pressed to sell a Little League banquet with a low budget. Successful caterers understand their projected images and target their marketing efforts at those clients who desire that image.

Sense of Humor. In this pressure-packed, deadline-oriented, and stressful business, it is easy to get carried away with the magnitude of the undertakings and become so tense and uptight that work ceases to be fun. Laughter at the right time can relieve that tension and stress, putting a renewed sense of fun into the work at hand.

How do caterers serve shrimps? They bend down!

G *Managing an Off-Premise Catering*

Operation

Even those who possess the qualities that indicate off-premise catering success must know how to put these talents to use effectively. Off-premise caterers should be hands-on managers who are constantly customer focused. They must be able to lead staff and clients alike, while conducting business in a professional manner. They must be able to make timely, ethical decisions, while understanding what makes for a successful event. They must also avoid those situations that cause a business to fail.

Developing a Strategic Plan

Yogi Berra, the zany former New York Yankee catcher, is famous for his many witticisms, such as, "Nobody goes there anymore—it's too crowded." But his best quote may be this one: "If you don't know where you're going, you will wind up somewhere else."

That's the reason you need a strategic plan—a roadmap to help you determine

the direction in which you wish to go, and the specific goals you'll need to accomplish to get there. A strategic plan starts with a statement of core values, which may include things like client satisfaction; ethical business practices; staff satisfaction, training, and motivation; community service; and operating an environmentally conscious business.

From these core values, a caterer can develop a Mission Statement—a succinct sentence that sums up the company’s mission. Here’s an example:

“To meet the catering needs of the corporate community, providing high levels of service and food quality that result in repeat business and vital growth.”

After the Mission Statement comes the Vision Statement—a concise summary of where you want to be in the future. Again, an example:

“Within five years, our company will be the top-ranked catering firm in our area, with continuing sales and profit growth, while giving back to our community.”

It’s not enough to brainstorm about these statements. Writing them down is the first step to making a commitment—to make them a reality. Only after they are put in writing can you develop more specific objectives to increase sales and profits, measure customer satisfaction, size up your competitors, and plan the ways in which you will give back to the community.

Your Mission and Vision Statements lead naturally to the next step—to establish goals for the operation. You may have heard time management experts use the term “SMART” when describing goals. The acronym stands for:

Specific: The goals to be accomplished must be easily understood, concise, and unambiguous.

Measurable: There should be no question about whether one attains, or falls short of, a goal. It may be measured in terms of quality, cost, quantity, or time.

Attainable: The goals may be just out of reach, but they’re not out of sight! The best goal challenges and motivates you and your team. If it’s practically impossible, it may be too frustrating.

Relevant: The goals must fit well with your long-term mission and vision, your objectives, and the results you expect.

Time-bound: There must be a specific deadline for completion of each goal.

An example of a SMART goal might be to increase sales and profits by 20 percent each year for the next five years.

Once a caterer has set goals, there must be certain trade-offs. To increase sales, for instance, may require raising prices, hiring more staff to be able to cater more events, or spending money on advertising. The major goals can be broken into smaller, intermediate steps, with a time line to keep the company on track.

And remember, goals are not just for the owner of a company. The staff and other professionals employed by the company—tax preparer, banker, attorney—should also be well aware of the goals. You’ll need their help to achieve them, and you want them on your side, committed to your goals. Too often, caterers believe they can do everything themselves. They fail to ask for or accept advice from outside consultants and colleagues. It is far more intelligent to ask for assistance when you need it. Someone familiar with your plans and your passion for them is far more likely to be helpful.

Finally, as soon as a goal is set, take some action on it.

The last part of a strategic management process is to reevaluate your mission, vision, and goals periodically. Times change, trends change, and you become aware of new information. Let’s say a caterer’s sales year showed a 50 percent

increase, when he or she had set a 20 percent annual goal. In this case, the next year's goal might be more realistically revised to a 30 percent increase.

Hands-on Attention to Detail Management

The devil is in the details. Have you ever heard that old saying? Another way to put it: We've all been bitten by a mosquito or stung by a bee, but how many of us have been bitten by an elephant? It's always the little things that get us!

In catering, the details are virtually endless, a stream of tiny elements that might go wrong and result in a catastrophe. One thing forgotten, misheard, or misplaced can ruin an event. So it's important to check and recheck and to be prepared for last-minute emergencies.

It is simply not possible to run this kind of business from behind a desk, reading computer printouts and delegating all tasks. Off-premise catering companies must be managed from the center of the action, whether that is with the guests or preparing foods in the kitchen. It comes from checking and rechecking every detail to ensure that it meets the highest of standards. It comes from inspecting for the best and expecting the best. Some call this management style "management by walking around." In one sense that is true, but there is more to it than walking around. Astute off-premise caterers must:

- Obtain feedback from clients and guests regarding the food and service.
- Oversee the catering staff to ensure they are performing as directed and as expected.
- Help out when a table needs to be cleared or when the bar suddenly becomes very busy. Help in the kitchen during critical times such as hot food dish-up, and even help scrape, stack, and wash dirty dishes if that's what is necessary.

It's a roll-up-your-sleeves kind of profession, and you should never be totally satisfied with the way things are. Always look for new ways to present food and make it more flavorful, and for better and more efficient ways to do things.

Customer-Focused Management

An off-premise caterer's full-time mission must be to satisfy the needs of clients. Mike DeLuca, editor of *RESTAURANT HOSPITALITY* magazine, puts it this way:

Companies that are 100% customer focused make the customer's satisfaction their only goal. They do not have as goals, increasing sales by a certain percentage, raising a profit margin, or reducing debt. They believe . . . that if you strive to sell only the highest quality product and strive to please every customer, sales, profit and success will follow. This is a difficult concept for many of us to grasp. It means letting go of a financial accounting structure passed down from generation to generation of Harvard MBAs who've instilled in us that the only way to build your bottom line is to raise your top line and squeeze the middle. . .

. That can work . . . but wouldn't you rather make the quality of your food, the dining experience and your customer's satisfaction your primary concern?²

The moral is simple: If you satisfy your customers while charging a fair price and controlling costs, profits will follow.

Managerial Decision Making

Off-premise catering managers must make decisions that keep their operations running smoothly. They realize that some decisions will be better than others, that there is no perfect solution to every problem, and that the best decision-making goal is to find the best possible solution with the least number of drawbacks.

Connie Sitterly, a management consultant and author, states that to be a good decision maker you should “plan ahead so when problems crop up, you’re prepared to act, not react. Control circumstances, instead of allowing them to control you. Take the initiative by anticipating and solving business problems.”

Although hundreds of books have been written about decision making, the following tips from Ms. Sitterly should be helpful. They’re paraphrased from an article she wrote back in 1990 in *The Meeting MANAGER*, but they are still up-to-the-minute when it comes to making tough decisions successfully.

- Remember that there’s seldom only one acceptable solution to the problem. Choose the best alternative.
- Make decisions that help achieve the company objectives.
- You need to consider feelings whenever people are involved. Even if you must make an unpopular decision, you can minimize repercussions . . . if workers know you have taken their feelings into account.
- Allow quality time for planning and decision making . . . pick a time when you are energetic and your mind is fresh.
- Realize that you’ll never please everyone. Few decisions meet with unanimous approval . . . the appointed authority, not the majority, rules.
- Make time for making decisions . . . in business, delaying a decision can cost thousands of dollars.
- Put decision making in perspective. Every executive feels overwhelmed at times by either the enormity or the number of decisions made during a business day. . .

For peace of mind accept that you are doing the best job you can with the time, talent, and resources you have.

- Don’t wait for a popular vote. Rallying your colleagues around your decision before you take action or waiting for their vote of confidence before deciding anything may cost too much in time. There are times when you just have to *do* something.³

Leadership

There are major differences between those who lead and those who manage. Catering companies need both types of executives, and some who can do both. If a catering company is earning seven- and eight-figure annual revenues, it is most

definitely being led by people with leadership skills.

Leaders are able to get people to do things they don't necessarily like to do, but they do them and even enjoy them. You might say:

A MANAGER . . .

A LEADER . . .

Maintains

Develops

Administers

Innovates

Relies on systems

Relies on people

Counts on controls

Counts on trust

Does things right

Does the right

things Works within the system

Works on the

system Manages things

Leads people

A leader is more like a thermostat than a thermometer. A thermostat sets the standard temperature for the space it's in. A thermometer simply records the temperature; it can't change anything. And one more important trait: Leaders take a little more than their share of the blame and a little less than their share of the credit.

Professionalism and Common Business Courtesy

Off-premise caterers who are not professional in their business practices will never reach the pinnacle of success in the field. Before we address the technical aspects of catering in the succeeding chapters, it is of utmost importance that we define professionalism. The following guidelines are adapted from an article by Carol McKibben in *SPECIAL Events* magazine:

- Become known for doing what you say you are going to do.
- Give price quotes and commitments only when you know everything about the event.
- Treat clients and staff members with respect.
- Build relationships with clients. Do not look at them as accounts or projects.
- Be on time, or a bit early, for appointments. Be prepared for an appointment.
- Be honest; don't play games.
- Stand behind your work. If it is wrong, make it right.
- In the face of abuse from others, don't respond by becoming abusive. Try to detach yourself from it emotionally and handle it logically. Of course, do not use your position of power to abuse others.
- Dress professionally.
- Enjoy your work as an off-premise caterer. When work ceases to be enjoyable, it is time to quit and find a new career.⁴

Ethics in Management

The Roman philosopher Publilius Syrus said, “A good reputation is more valuable than money.” This is as true today as it was in ancient times. And yet, lack of ethics is perhaps the most widely discussed topic in today’s business world. We read and hear of illegalities, scandals, and other forms of questionable behavior bringing down some of the nation’s largest corporations. Off-premise caterers are in no way exempt from ethical concerns. Even the smallest caterers deal in issues of fairness, legal re-

quirements, and honesty on a daily basis. Examples include truth in menu, misleading advertising, unexpected and unjustified last-minute add-ons to the party price, and even underbidding a competitor when the client has disclosed your competitor's price.

The truly ethical caterer will assume responsibility for the host to ensure that the host plans an event in the best interest of the guests. A host who wishes to serve alcohol to underage guests or barbecued ribs to a group of elderly people (tough to eat with dentures) is out of line and needs to be advised that this will not work. In fact, an ethical caterer will refuse to cater an event that is clearly not being planned in the best interest of the host or guests.

There are times when a caterer is given a free hand in planning a menu. Perhaps a grieving client calls for food after the funeral of a loved one, saying, "Please send over food for 50 guests tomorrow night. You know what we like!" The ethical caterer will not take advantage of this situation by either providing too much food or overcharging the client.

Another temptation arises when the caterer is pressed to cater more events on a certain day or evening than he or she can reasonably accommodate. The extra money looks good. Unethical caterers will rationalize that they can handle all the events, even if an inexperienced supervisor or staff must oversee these events, or even if the kitchen staff will not be able to prepare the caterer's usual high-quality food because of lack of time and personnel. Caterers who take on more work than they can reasonably accommodate are greedy and are considered by many observers to be unethical.

In the foregoing situation the caterer should decline the work and perhaps recommend another caterer. Some caterers refuse to recommend another catering firm because they feel that if the client is not pleased with the other firm, the caterer who turned down the business will be blamed for the recommendation. Other caterers freely recommend one or more companies when unable to cater events.

There are times when it is very hard not to bad-mouth a competitor, but this is considered unethical as well as rude. Those who are ethical would rather point out their own strengths than downgrade the competition.

It can be very tempting for self-employed caterers to underreport income or overstate expenses. They rationalize that no one will know if they accept cash for a party, then fail to report it as income and pay the associated tax, or that no one will know if they happen to charge personal expenses now and then to the business. Some caterers who are licensed to sell liquor by the drink or by the bottle are tempted to bill clients for beverages that were not consumed. These practices are not only unethical—they are illegal.

Other ethical violations occur when caterers receive under-the-table cash "kick-backs" from suppliers, misrepresent their services to potential clients, or bid on party plans or ideas stolen from other caterers.

Caterers also soon learn that some clients are unethical. A few are masterful at finding fault with a wedding or other important event, then demanding a "discount" based on whatever flaw they feel they have uncovered. Some will refuse to pay for linens that were damaged by candles they lit on them! You'll find people who, mid-

party, will ask you to stay “a couple hours of overtime, just to wrap things up”—then not show up to pay you for the extra time the next day, as agreed. Others will haggle over the tiniest details on an invoice or try to engage more than one caterer in a bidding war to lower prices. Caterers who deal with “middleman” organizations, like destination management firms or production companies, may find that a client of one of these companies will come back later to try to deal directly with you, thus cutting out the middleman who recommended you!

As a catering professional, you need to expect a certain amount of this behavior and must protect yourself if you suspect an ethical question may arise. Insisting on security deposits, having a valid and authorized credit card number on file for unforeseen charges, refusing to look at other caterers’ written bids, and standing firm on your own invoice prices are just a few ways ethical problems can be avoided. And rather than cut out a legitimate middleman-type of vendor, you can either refuse to deal directly with a client who tries such a maneuver or suggest a commission be paid to the middleman.

You will also be put in some sticky situations as—during tough times, and even good times—certain clients will make unrealistic requests. They’ve often been good, regular clients too! But they’ll promise you future business if you’ll cater their party “at cost,” or defer payment for them, or ask some other special favor “just this once.” These requests are unfair, and you’re right to be squeamish about them. Off-premise caterers should be extremely wary when approached in this fashion. As a general rule, clients who do not pay their bills in a professional manner, or who are not willing to pay a fair price for catering services, are not worth the headaches they cause.

The Jefferson Center of Character Education has set forth a list of ten “universal values”: honesty, integrity, promise keeping, fidelity, fairness, caring for others, respect for others, responsible citizenship, pursuit of excellence, and accountability.⁵ These values should provide some solid guidance for any businessperson who considers him- or herself a true professional.

Separating Yourself from the Competition

Great caterers do more than imitate—they innovate. There are distinct advantages for those who offer a unique menu, a unique service, or perhaps a unique location. They may build and improve on someone else’s concept, but they strive to take the idea to the next level. Rather than mimicking another’s success, they imprint their own signature on their menus. To illustrate, let’s take a look at two simple, self-service mashed potato bars:

THE TYPICAL APPROACH

Mashed potatoes
Sour cream
Bacon bits

THE UNIQUE APPROACH

Sweet potatoes
Crème fraîche
Canadian bacon

Chopped chives Chopped fresh
basil Shredded cheddar cheese Crumbled
Stilton

The “Unique” bar may include all the traditional accompaniments too—but what a difference a little imagination makes! There might even be a bit of caviar to top the mashers at the Unique bar, and perhaps they’ll be served in martini glasses. Why not have fun with it?

One of America’s top chefs, Charlie Trotter, looks at food trends differently in his book *Lessons in Excellence*. Says Trotter, “It’s important that you foster a company culture that spurs you and your employees to search for innovative opportunities. Innovations can satisfy needs that are unmet or offer solutions to time-worn problems, or they can be new ways of saving time, space and money.”⁶

Trotter says he and his staff use input from their travels, readings, television, radio, and even hobbies to hit upon trends. They keep up on the latest changes in public opinion and demographics to search for interesting, potentially high-growth markets. Currently, they’ve identified ethnic cuisines such as Pan-Asian and Nuevo Latino as hot areas for menu innovation. The bottom line is that they create their own trends.

Similarly, as with any career, catering professionals need to reexamine their business strategies from time to time. Some caterers do what they do best, are well known for it, and never vary their formulas. Their clients love them and get exactly what they expect.

Other caterers blindly copy everybody else. They ricochet from one recipe to the other, never bothering to see if it meets their clients’ needs. If they read about it in *Food Arts* magazine, they feel they *HAVE* to serve it! But most caterers lie somewhere between these two extremes, blending the successful ideas of the past with new twists. Great caterers also separate themselves from competitors by using the resources around them to build their businesses. In South Florida, for example, one caterer specializes in event planning for doctors, through his hospital foodservice management job. Another has an exclusive off-premise contract for a sports facility; a third was the on-premise caterer for a city club, which resulted in off-premise jobs for the club members. Capitalize on the audience you have—they’re (almost) already yours!

Personal Management

Off-premise caterers must learn how to deal with principles of stress management, time management, and personal organization if they are to manage at peak efficiency. Time is our most precious commodity, and to waste it because of being overstressed or disorganized will inevitably result in less-than-desirable results.

Stress Management

Stress comes from interaction with others, and from having to meet deadlines. A certain amount of stress and tension is necessary to achieve the best results—those who are too laid back generally do not maximize their potential—but too much stress causes chronic fatigue, irritability, cynicism, hostility, inflexibility,

and difficulty in thinking clearly. Catering managers who are overstressed are unable to perform at maximum capability.

Stress can often be controlled through:

- Daily exercise such as brisk walking, running, or other aerobic pursuits that increase the pulse rate. Some folks purposefully take their minds off work when they exercise; for others, the daily walk or run is a time to get their day mentally organized.
- Relaxation techniques, including meditation and yoga.
- Writing down the issues that cause stress. Identify those issues in your life that can be controlled, and simply decide to make the best of those that cannot. List ways to deal with the controllable stress factors.
- Reading articles and books on stress reduction.

It is important to remember that some stress in catering is good. An arrow would not be propelled from a bow if the bow was not stressed. However, too much stress can break the bow, as well as ruin catered events.

Time Management

There are only 168 hours in each week, and the greatest rewards come to those who accomplish the most meaningful things during this fixed amount of time. Off-premise caterers realize that if they can accomplish more meaningful production in less time, they will have more time for things other than work. They also realize that working smarter, not harder, through the effective use of time will produce greater results.

The key to effective time management is to set goals for a lifetime, for five years, and for each year, month, week, and day. (Use some of the tips for putting SMART goals in writing—not just for “big picture” goals, but as part of your daily business.) Without written goals, off-premise caterers cannot effectively manage their time. Because time management involves choosing how to spend time, it is impossible to make proper choices without knowing your desired goals. The captain of a ship without a destination cannot choose the proper course. He will cruise aimlessly at sea, never reaching his port of call.

It is equally important to schedule “downtime” for yourself—for family, friends, hobbies, and interests other than work. You are guarding against burnout when you insist on some personal time.

Off-premise caterers can choose from an array of time-saving techniques and technical advances to help them in the quest to efficiently manage time:

- Make those daily, detailed lists of goals and objectives.
- Use technical advances to speed up paper handling, such as fax machines and computers with word processing, accounting, and menu-planning software.

- For heaven's sake, if you don't have a computer, get one! You can purchase one nowadays for a monthly payment of less than \$40. You can take classes to learn how to use it or hire someone to teach you individually.
- Use cellular phones to stay in touch while away from the office. These are life-savers at off-premise catering locations when emergency and other calls are neces-

sary, and if you have downtime, a cellular phone can make it easy for you to use this time to return phone calls.

- Handle incoming papers only once. Here's the rule: Do it, delegate it, discard it, or file it. (Better yet, hire someone else to file it!)
- Do your most important work at times when you happen to be most alert. Most of us know whether we are "morning people" or "night owls." Take advantage of your peak energy periods to handle your most challenging tasks.
- Sign up for a seminar or course in time management to learn more tips.

One of the biggest time wasters for a caterer is also the source of much business—the prospective client who calls to ask questions—so it's an interruption that cannot be ignored, but can be controlled. Whoever answers the phone at your business should always qualify the incoming call by asking:

- The date of the event
- The location of the event
- The number of guests
- The budget for the event

Why? First of all, time can be wasted talking about an event before you ask the date and discover you're not able to do it in the first place because of a scheduling conflict. Perhaps the number of guests is too small or too large for your particular company, the budget is insufficient, or the proposed location is already booked for another event.

Always focus on results by asking yourself, "Will this activity help me achieve any of my goals?" Prioritize tasks in order of their importance and know when to delegate them to others. Most people waste countless hours, days, weeks, and years chitchatting on the phone, shuffling papers, running errands, and doing other things that are easy enough but offer little or no payoff. Learn to delegate these types of tasks whenever possible. Pay other people to do them, and don't tell yourself you can't afford it—you can always make more money, but you have only so much time. The true achievers—in catering and in other fields—minimize their time on low-priority, low-payoff tasks and turn their attention to those things that will bring the greatest rewards.

These tasks are often difficult to accomplish, take a great deal of time, and involve at least some risk. For example, a caterer could spend the entire day showing prospective clients numerous suitable locations for a major event. The caterer would then spend the next three days preparing a written proposal for an event at each of the locations, with no guarantee that the event will even take place. However, if the caterer is hired, there's a five-figure profit to be made. Worth the risk? Certainly!

Another high-payoff task might be to write a new catering menu. Both this and the aforementioned task require large chunks of time and involve some risk, but more than likely will produce major rewards in increased revenues and profits.

In summary, off-premise caterers who best manage their time in the long run will be the most successful. They become the leading caterers in their

communities, in their states, and in the country.

Getting Organized

When projects, tasks, catering kitchens, and offices are organized, things run much more smoothly and efficiently. The time spent looking for things and jumping from job to job is wasted time that could be put to much better use. Many off-premise caterers have found various methods that work for them:

- Establish a filing system using hanging folders and manila folders. Categories can include upcoming events, projects to do, and projects pending. Files should be stored vertically, rather than stacked atop one another, for greater accessibility.
- Take a tip from event planners who start a separate notebook for each event they are working on. Into this three-ring binder go all notes, contracts, sketches, color samples—anything for that particular job.
- Consider hiring a professional organizer to come to your office and set up a filing and record-keeping system that works for your business.
- Keep those items that are used frequently close by.
- Focus on one project at a time, rather than jumping from one thing to another. This can be easily accomplished by blocking out some time during the day to work on major projects and arranging for no interruptions.
- Whenever possible, try to schedule time to return phone calls and/or e-mail messages. That way, you can handle them all at once, instead of scattering them (and your thoughts) in five-minute intervals throughout the day.
- Either at the end of each day or first thing in the morning, prepare a list of things to do for the day.

Summary of Personal Management

Those off-premise caterers who can effectively deal with stress, who properly manage their time, who learn to delegate and keep things organized will lead their peers into the future. They will set the standards for others to follow. They will accomplish more and will be in a position to receive the greatest rewards as a result.

Looking Ahead—Catering in the Future

What does the future hold for caterers in this new century?

First of all, we know that catering is neither rocket science nor brain surgery. Change is inevitable in this business, but not at the same rate as, say, in molecular theory or medical technology. In fact, in catering, rediscovering foods of the previous century is trendy! Many caterers still feature the signature dishes—honey co-

conut shrimp, beef tenderloin, Caesar salad—that they’ve served for decades. Why? The customers demand, and enjoy, them.

This certainly doesn’t mean things stay stagnant in our industry. Innovative buffet and food station décor will continue to evolve. Most catering companies will continue to build their reputations on elegant, “over-the-top” food presentations, and the healthy competition shows no signs of abating. Other caterers prize research, developing cutting-edge menu items to set them apart from the pack.

More women are entering the off-premise catering field. Paula LeDuc in the San Francisco Bay area, Katherine Farrell in Ann Arbor, Abigail Kirsch in New York, Mary Micucci in Los Angeles, and Joy Wallace in Miami are but a handful of enterprising women who have grown their companies into catering's elite.

Staffing woes will continue to be monumental, as hiring, training, and retraining get tougher. Foodservice has always been a somewhat transient industry. Astute caterers will use preemployment aptitude and personality testing, master online staff scheduling systems, and develop their own training programs. They will also realize, if they haven't already, that they must treat their employees at least as well as they treat their clients. Along the same lines, in a top-tier catering operation, the employees treat *EACH* other as well as they treat their clients.

Caterers of the future will come to realize that bigger is not necessarily better. Having a large volume of business is admirable—but only when the quality of your work rises to the same level. A company can grow to the point where quality slips, gross profit margins lag, more equipment is needed, overhead costs expand, and the bottom line shrinks proportionately. The intelligent caterer will downsize, watch margins and profits grow—and overall stress levels diminish—as they become more selective about the clientele they service.

Caterers are realizing that “high tech” will never replace personalized service, or “high touch”—but without high tech, they'll limit their *POTENTIAL* for high touch. In an industry where, amazingly, some caterers still don't accept credit cards, the savvy businessperson is learning to embrace new technology, launching interactive websites and e-mail marketing campaigns. They're creating improved computer-generated proposals, rental orders, packing lists, staffing schedules, and instant financial statements. And they're realizing that computer-savvy business owners have more time to do what they love—which is run their business!

Competition will continue to increase. Sales will grow, but not without some dips, because economic woes, terrorist attacks, and the resulting fears cannot help but impact the catering profession. More caterers were hurt financially by the recession at the beginning of this century than by the September 11 terrorist attacks, but both left their marks on the industry. An increased use of security cameras at high-profile events (and in some cases, to thwart theft) is one result of the heightened awareness.

Mega-event catering is acknowledged as an excellent way to grow business—at golf and tennis tournaments, NASCAR races, air shows, boat shows, and more. In addition to being profitable events, they expose the caterer to a wider range of potential clients. Then again, a caterer from Augusta, Georgia, generates enough revenue from serving sandwiches and beverages at the Masters' Golf Tournament that he need not cater at all the rest of the year! The pressure experienced in servicing huge, multiday events is as big as the events themselves, but the rewards can be significant.

At the end of the 1900s, B. Joseph Pine II wrote *The Experience Economy*, a primer about the “new rules of engagement” for businesses.⁷ Pine asserts that a new economic model is taking shape as we move from a service-based economy into an experience-based economy, where successful vendors literally create an “experience”

for clients by using props and services to engage them in an “inherently personal way.”

Pine claims that Walt Disney was the founding father of the “Experience Economy,” and in today’s restaurant industry there are plenty of examples—Rainforest Café, Planet Hollywood, Hard Rock Cafes, and other themed eateries that combine food, service, and atmosphere to create a more “complete” dining experience. This kind of trend is adaptable for off-premise caterers too, with elaborate themes, staff members who double as costumed performers, team-building events, and imaginative menu items presented in wild new ways to delight and entertain the crowd as well as feed them!

For those who love to have fun, and who are as adventurous as they are practical, it’s a great time to be an off-premise caterer.

G *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful Caterers*

Let’s examine some additional techniques, philosophies, and real-life ways to be successful in the challenging field of off-premise catering.

Habits are things we do automatically, like brushing our teeth, combing our hair, or straightening a tablecloth that’s uneven. We hardly think about them, we just do them. Stephen R. Covey wrote *The Seven HABITS of Highly Effective People*, which has been a bestseller for years—you should read it if you haven’t already. But what are some habits that mark successful caterers? What separates star performers from the rest of the crowd? With a nod to Mr. Covey, here are seven key traits.

Willingness to Take Calculated Risks

One of our favorite sayings is, “A turtle goes nowhere until it sticks its neck out.” In order to succeed, we must be continually growing and improving, and the only way to do this is to leave our comfort zones—and stick our necks out!

If you’re right-handed, you feel quite comfortable writing with your right hand. Try writing with your left hand. You’re definitely out of your comfort zone. But after a while, you’ll find you can actually write with either hand. Successful caterers make things happen by taking calculated risks, whether it is trying new menu items, new buffet display concepts, or accepting a job in a new and challenging off-premise location. Caterers who refuse to take risks fail to grow and learn are left behind.

Sincere Concern for Others

Nobody cares how much you *know* until they know how much you *CARE*. Empathy and genuine concern for your clients and staff are paramount to long-term success. What are their needs, wishes, and desires? What are their concerns and their “hot

buttons”? By putting ourselves in their positions, we can begin to show concern for others and understand them. When we do this, we develop meaningful relationships and, not coincidentally, loyalty. We give them what they want, and we get what we want.

Keeping Up with Current Trends

It’s not just a matter of food and presentation and theme trends. Caterers who are not wired to do business online through the Internet and e-mail are missing out on huge opportunities.

The online catering referral service, Leading Caterers of America (founded by the book’s co-author Bill Hansen), receives 5 to 20 inquiries per day from clients looking for catering services coast to coast, in Alaska, Hawaii, and occasionally overseas. People do shop for catering online, and the companies that lead the way have high-quality websites and diligently reply to e-mailed requests in a timely manner.

Caterers need to get in the habit of responding to e-mail correspondence as soon as possible, as well as providing e-mailed proposals to those clients who prefer to do business via their computers. Event planners who book caterers for their clients love receiving e-mailed proposals, because they are easy to copy-and-paste into their own proposals.

If you’re not in the habit of working online, you’re behind the times.

Excellent Priorities and Time Management

You get 20 percent of your sales and profits from 80 percent of your clients, and 80 percent of your sales and profits from 20 percent of your clients.

None of us ever go home at night thinking that all the work is done—it never is. It’s simply a question of what’s most important, as well as what’s most urgent. Urgent things are never really an issue. There’s no question that if you have a catered event today, it will get done. But what’s most urgent is not necessarily what’s most important. You must understand the difference.

For example, you could spend a day catering three small parties for 25 guests each, but fall behind on preparing a proposal for another job, in three months, for 500 guests—and lose it to a competitor whose proposal was simply submitted on time. Successful caterers spend their time in those areas that generate the biggest pay-backs in terms of money, quality, and other rewards. They make a habit of planning their days, leaving time for the most important, as well as the most urgent. At the start of each day they prepare an agenda that details both short-term objectives and long-term goals. If you’re a student, you should already be using this technique to

accomplish as much as you can in school.

Quality before Quantity

Bigger is not necessarily better. Still, many of us get caught up in that way of thinking. If our sales are \$1 million, let's go for \$2 million. If they're \$2 million, what's wrong with \$4 million? And if \$4 million is good . . .

There's nothing wrong with building sales if quality does not suffer. However, when the quality of our products and services suffers so does the quality of our lifestyle. More business means more hours at work. And doctors will tell you they've never met a man or woman who, on a deathbed, expressed a wish that he or she had spent more time at work.

If we can grow our businesses with no adverse effects on the quality of our lives or our products, then we should go for it! But if we find profits slipping and clients complaining, and we need a letter of introduction when we stumble home at 3:00 A.M., then something's very wrong.

We need to make of habit of continually asking ourselves whether we might be better off with less business and more time for ourselves and for our families. We need to continually examine the quality of our work to ensure that it's not slipping because we've allowed ourselves to take on too much.

Being Detail Oriented

A baseball player who bats .250 gets three hits for every 12 times at bat. One who bats .333 gets four hits for every 12 times at bat. The difference—one more hit for every 12 times at bat—means the difference between an average major league ball player and a Hall of Fame inductee.

Do you make it a habit to continually look for the little things? A good caterer isn't nitpicky, but is forever finding something that needs to be tweaked, adjusted, redone, or improved—little things that most customers won't notice, but that greatly impact the overall professionalism of an event. Being aware of the details in flavors, looks, aromas, and tidiness separates the average caterers from the superstars. And, by all means, check the spelling, grammar, and punctuation in all your written materials, from brochures to contracts—or hire someone to do it. Again, the goal is to present a professional image. Remember? The devil is in the details.

Setting High Standards

If you refuse to accept anything but the very best, you very often get the best. Successful caterers set their standards high and expect excellence from themselves and their staff members. They're never happy with the status quo, always striving to make each party, wedding, or event better than the last. They debrief after an event, asking staff for input and improvements. They know that if they fail to improve, they're leaving the door open for their competitors to capture a good customer or a larger share of the market.

Successful caterers also make a habit of lifelong learning. They're forever reading, attending trade shows, and exploring areas that will help them improve their own businesses with new ideas. They challenge and reward their staff members for having the same attitude.

Vince Lombardi, the late NFL coach, who during his career coached the first team to ever win the Super Bowl, put it this way: “The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.”

G *How Does an Off-Premise Caterer Gauge Success?*

There are a number of signs to look for when evaluating an existing off-premise catering business. Healthy companies rate highly in all of these areas. Those that are unhealthy, or even on the brink of failure, will not rate nearly as well.

- Management thoroughly plans, organizes, executes, and controls each catered event.
- Proper controls are in place for costs, accounts receivable and payable, and liquid assets such as cash and inventories. Theft prevention is also a priority.
- Food and service quality is well-controlled and meets or exceeds clients' approval.
- Pricing for food and services is fair and competitive with other firms in the marketplace. There is a spirit of healthy competition.
- The catering firm enjoys good working relationships with both clients and suppliers.
- Time and attention are given to food safety in storage, preparation, and display. Employees know the local health codes and follow them.
- There is sufficient working capital to operate the business. The firm can make loan payments as they become due. Excessive credit is not extended to clients.
- Budgets are prepared and followed. Business records, insurance coverage, and licenses are kept up to date. The information derived from these records is used to provide data to help manage the business.
- Sales growth is controlled. There are sufficient financial and personnel resources to operate as business steadily grows.
- Market trends are anticipated.
- Management and staff have a good working knowledge of the off-premise catering field.
- There are solid, trusting relationships between management and staff. Staff members are well trained and feel truly appreciated—because they are.
- Management works closely with a qualified accountant to plan for payment of taxes.
- And, finally, management is willing to seek qualified professional assistance if problems arise.

G *The Off-Premise Catering*

Model

Exhibit 1.1 is a diagram of all the factors that enter into the off-premise catering arena. It shows how managerial philosophies and techniques, as well as laws regarding personnel, business, alcoholic beverage service, and sanitation and safety, must all be interrelated to guide the company.

It then depicts how marketing efforts produce clients, which in turn creates needs for *site inspections* and *LOGISTICAL PLANS*, including planning in these specific areas: menus, beverages, equipment, personnel, and any other related services.

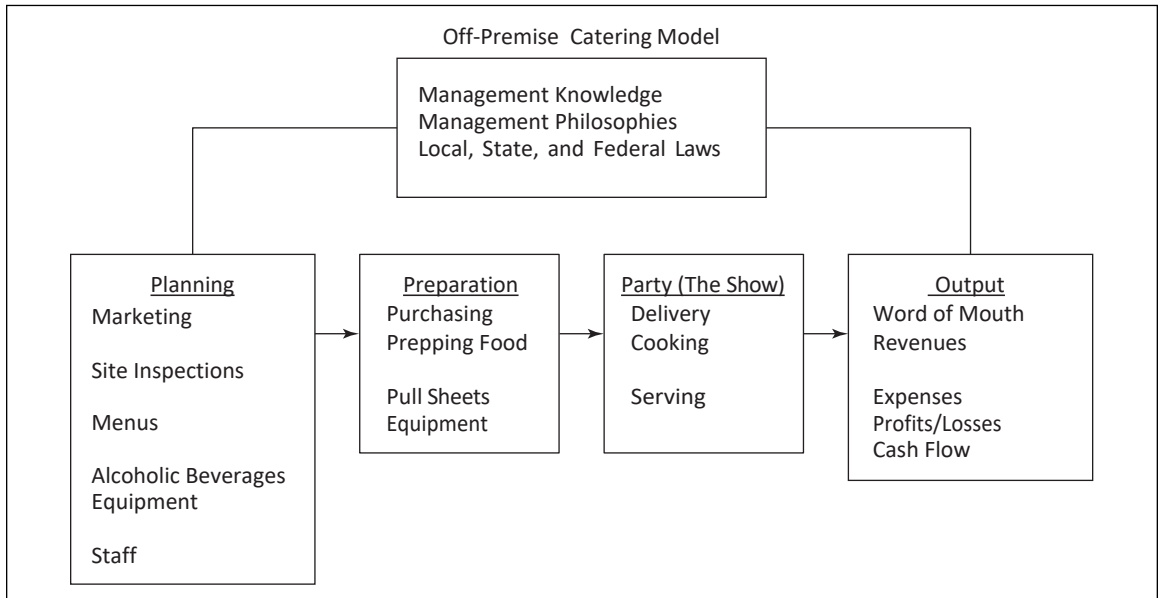


Exhibit 1.1 *Off-Premise Catering Model*

Once the planning is complete, it is possible to provide clients with *written pro- POSALS*, which include all the aforementioned plans along with pricing. Normally, pro- posals are modified somewhat. Once modification is complete and all provisions meet with the approval of both caterer and client, a contract is prepared that contains all the conditions outlined in the proposal.

As the party date approaches, certain *OPERATIONAL elements* are addressed, such as:

- Hiring and scheduling staff
- Purchasing and pre-preparation of menu items
- Ordering equipment as needed from party rental companies
- Obtaining licenses and permits, as needed, for use of the site, serving alcohol, etc.
- Preparing a “pull sheet” that details all items supplied by the commissary to produce the party.
- Coordinating all beverage and accessory services with the client and the vendors.

All the preplanning elements culminate on the day or night of “The Show.” That’s when staff, equipment, food, and other services arrive at the party site, and the event is executed.

After the event, there are certain *outcomes*, which include:

Positive and/or negative word of mouth about the event
Revenues, expenses, profits, and cash

Accounting records

By reading and studying this text, you will gain a thorough understanding of how all these elements combine to produce a successful off-premise event at the hands of a professional caterer.

Conclusion

This book should provide all the necessary information to those who are motivated to start their own companies or to develop an off-premise catering division of an existing foodservice operation. Study hard, and, as an entrepreneurial and motivated student, you should be well on the way to a thorough understanding of the catering field.

We must warn you—catering is not an especially easy way to make a living. But it is an extremely rewarding and interesting field that combines interpersonal and organizational skills, societal trends, and financial acumen. If you do it well, your clients won't be the only ones celebrating at your events!

Notes

1. *How to MANAGE A Successful CATERING Business*, Second Edition, by Manfred Ketterer, John Wiley & Sons, 1991.
2. Mike DeLuca, editor, *RESTAURANT HOSPITALITY* magazine, copyright Penton Publishing, July 1992.
3. Connie Sitterly, president, Management Training Specialists and Sittcom., Inc., Fort Worth, Texas. (www.sittcom.com)
4. Carol McKibben, in *SPECIAL Events* magazine, November 1991.
5. Jefferson Center for Character Education, Mission Viejo, California. (www.jeffersoncenter.org)
6. *Lessons in Excellence*, by Charlie Trotter, Ten Speed Press, 1999.
7. *The Experience Economy*, by James H. Gilmore and B. Joseph Pine II, Harvard Business School Press, 1999.

MODERN DEVELOPMENTS & TRENDS IN EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURE

Recent technologies have contributed a lot in the production of convenience foods in mass catering.

Cook-Chill: Cook-chill is catering system based on normal preparation and cooking of food followed by rapid chilling storage in controlled low-temperature conditions above freezing point, 0-3°C (32-37°F) and subsequently reheating immediately before consumption. The chilled food is regenerated in finishing kitchens which require low capital investment and minimum staff.

The cook-chill system is used in volume catering, in hospitals, schools and in social services. It is also used for banquets, in conference and exhibition catering, in vending machines where meals are dispensed to the customers, in factories, hospitals and service outside of main meal times.

The purpose of Chilling Food: The purpose of chilling food is to prolong its storage life. Under normal temperature conditions, food deteriorates rapidly through the action of micro-organisms and enzyme and chemical reactions. Reduction in the storage temperature inhibits the multiplication of bacteria and other micro-organisms and slows down the chemical and enzymatic reactions. At normal refrigeration temperature reactions are still taking place but at a much slower rate, and at frozen food storage temperature, -20°C (-4°F) approximately, all reaction nearly cease. A temperature of 0-3°C does not give a storage life comparable to frozen food but it does produce a good product.

In a properly designed and operated cook-chill system, cooked and prepared food will be rapidly cooled down to 0-3°C as soon as possible after cooking and portioning and then stored between these temperatures throughout storage and distribution until required for reheating and service. Food prepared through the cook-chill system should be portioned and transferred to a blast chiller unit within 30 minutes. This will reduce the risk of the food remaining at warm incubation temperatures and prevent the risk of contamination and loss of food quality.

Finishing kitchens consist of purpose built regeneration plus refrigerated storage. Additional equipment, such as a chip fryer (deep fat fryer), boiling table (gas ranges) and pressure steamer for chips, sauces, custard, vegetables, can be added if required to give greater flexibility.

Cook-Freeze: Cook-freeze is a specialised food production and distribution system that allows caterers to take advantage of the longer life through blast freezing at -18° to -20°C (0° to -32°F) and stored at that temperature until required for resale or consumption for up to 3-6 months. It also enables economies to be introduced into the staffing of dining rooms and restaurants.

The Cook-Freeze process: Cook-Freeze uses a production system similar to that used in cook-chill. The recipes are modified, enabling products to be freezer-stable. The freezing in the Blast-freezers must be carried out very rapidly to retain freshness and to accelerate temperature loss through the latent heat barrier, thus preventing the formation of large crystals and rupturing of the cells.

Vacuum Cooking (Sous-Vide): This is a form of cook-chill, using a combination of vacuum sealing plastic pouches, cooking by steam and then rapidly chilling in an ice-water bath. The objective is to rationalise kitchen procedures without having a detrimental effect on the quality of the individual dishes.

As there is no oxidation or discoloration it is ideal for conserving fruits, such as apples and pears. When preparing meats in sauces the meat is pre-blanching then added to the completed sauce.

Infra red ovens/ Grillers/ Infra red cooking:

Here infra red radiations are used in cooking tender meat . These rays have a high frequency of heating. Here food cooks very fast and retains most of the food nutrients intact in the food. It seems to be the future of modern grilling.

Oriental cooking ranges

Chinese and Thai cuisines use high pressure burners which are powered by air thrust to bring the flame out of the cooking pit, so that the food can be tossed into the flame for the char grilled effect.

Solar Cookers

Using sunrays for cooking food has gained importance in the world. Solar cookers, Solar driers, Solar ovens and Solar Parabolic spheres are some of the equipments used in small as well as in bulk quantity. Solar cooked food retains most of the nutrients and is tastier. It is most hygienic way of cooking food without disturbing the nature.

QUALITY OF EQUIPMENTS

The selection of the metal used in large or small equipment is of utmost importance. Apart from the aesthetic appeal and costs, there are many factors that should be kept in mind while choosing the metals needed for cooking. Metals used to make equipments are non stick coat material, iron, copper, Cast Iron, Brass, Bronze, Plastic, Ceramics, wood, clay rubber, clay and earthenware steel, aluminium and galvanized steel. Of which the steel is the costliest. The equipments must be easy to clean, nontoxic, non absorbent, corrosion resistant and stable. All the corners of the equipment should be rounded and sealed to give a finished smooth surface. When designing equipment, it is important to keep in mind with a heavy gauge should not be too heavy to handle.

The following are a few of the most important criteria to be kept in mind:

1. Degree of Conductivity
2. Whether the metal will be toxic when it comes in contact with the food.
3. Durability in the industrial kitchen(should withstand the usage and cleaning)
4. Resistance to high heat without damage or danger to the equipment.
5. Rust resistant wherever possible.

The equipment with heavy gauge should not be heavy to handle and move around.

CARE & MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENTS

'Prevention is better than cure' is a very old proverb and it holds true for the maintenance of kitchen equipment. The following points need to be kept in mind in order to take good care of kitchen equipment:

Training – Proper orientation should be given to any new staff to make them aware of the correct ways of using any equipment. Operating instructions of machine should be placed near to them so that the staff could refer to the same in case of any doubt.

Maintenance- It is important to have all equipment periodically maintained in order to increase life and efficiency. There are mainly two types of Maintenance:

- Reactive Maintenance- Machine is fixed only when it is broken down and immediately maintenance is required so that work will not suffer.
- Preventive Maintenance- This is a planned Maintenance that is done by the engineering department in liaison with the concerned department in-charge.
- Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMC's)-Yearly Basis

All equipment large or small, heavy or light requires care in handling, use and storage in order to extend its life to the maximum, minimize depreciation and maintain it in a reasonably attractive and efficient condition while in use. In small catering establishment the care and maintenance is generally entrusted to those who operate the equipment as the types invested on are generally small or medium duty pieces. In larger establishments where heavy-duty equipment predominates, a maintenance department performs this function.

In the case of small pieces like cutlery, some metals need less care than others do. Stainless steel is the most non-corrosive and easy to-care for material, while plated cutlery tends to get scratched easily and with time requires replacing.

With kitchen tools like the chef's knives, choppers, etc. care is limited to preventing the blades from rusting in the case of iron blades, by keeping them dry and covered. It is also common practice to rub them with a little cooking oil to protect them from rusting through contact with air. With whisks and beaters it is the rotating parts or the wiry ends which need special attention. It is good practice to prevent food materials from drying on the rotatory parts and posing a cleaning problem.

Money, time and effort spent on care helps to maintain equipment in continuous working order, while that spent on repair can mean interruption in work causing unnecessary strain on staff, in addition to extra costs.

It is beneficial to keep records of all amounts spent on care and maintenance of every large equipment. This helps to estimate the depreciation every year. Excessive costs shown through records for a particular year can help to draw attention to high maintenance costs, which weighed against the cost of the equipment may result in a decision to change the model for a more efficient one. Records can also help to detect inefficient in operation, or defects in design or manufacture.

Thus, if equipment is cared for systematically and proper procedures followed, maintenance follows on its own to prolong the life and optimum usage of the equipment.