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## Setting Your Restaurant Up For Success: The Importance of Operating Systems

**Documented operating systems and policies are absolutely critical to the long-term success of any restaurant operation. Reduced turnover, increased morale, improved consistency and enhanced value are only some of the benefits that can be realized.**

By **Michael Beam**, September 8, 2006

Based upon numerous HVS Restaurant Management & Advisory Services audits, most restaurant operators leave money on the table by not standardizing operating processes and putting state-of-the-art systems in place. Often, for hotel and country club operators, food service is an afterthought because in the mind of most managers, restaurants have historically lost money. Although creating operating manuals, writing job descriptions and training guides, along with documenting processes may seem like tedious tasks, having such systems in place is absolutely critical for the long-term success of any restaurant operation.

There are several immediate benefits that a restaurant will realize as a result of standardizing its operation:

<p><b><u>Reduced Management Time</u></b></p> <p>Managers will have more time to devote to building/leading the business instead of working in it (marketing, community involvement and promotions planning are but a few of the things that can be accomplished)</p>	<p><b><u>Enhanced Value</u></b></p> <p>When it comes time to either sell the operation or obtain financing, a new buyer or lender will see that food and beverage success is not dependent upon the owner/manager</p>
<p><b><u>Consistent Service &amp; Food</u></b></p> <p>Repeat performances by both culinary and service staff across all day-parts (weeks and months) will delight your guests and bring them back</p>	<p><b><u>Decrease Turnover/Increased Morale</u></b></p> <p>Strong recruiting and training systems make for a competent and confident staff who will know what is expected of them and are therefore free to focus on guests</p>

In addition to the advantages described above, there are many quantifiable benefits that an operation will realize as a result of standardizing its operation. For example, subsequent to a recent audit a client experienced the following results after implementing a range of recommended improvements:

- Reduced labor costs by more than \$1,200 per month
- Reduced food cost by 4.4%
- Generated an additional \$9,750 in net average revenues per month

If your restaurant requires too much of your time being involved in day-to-day operations, experiences high employee turnover, or delivers inconsistent food or service, taking the time to put organizational and operational systems in place is a step worth considering.