



Restaurant Operations Weekly™

Newsletter Issue #13 Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Welcome to the 13th issue of Restaurant Operations Weekly

Dear Friend,

I hope the last week has gone well for you! Does the time seem to be going by faster this year than normal? Out of curiosity, I checked and July 2 is the middle of the year with 182 days on either side of it, so we still have 27 days until then and 203 days until Christmas so maybe it's just me, but it is hard to shake off that feeling of time speeding by!

Getting back to business, maybe it's time we talked about that "maverick" employee (or manager) you may have on your hands. Most of us have had one and they're special no doubt, so I know this information in the "HR" section will be helpful for many readers.

This week in "Sales" we'll read about how in the year 1732 the recipe for ketchup was discovered. Today, a bottle sits on the kitchen table of 90% of all households in America. Hard to believe but that's what the researchers that do such things tell us. Why does any of this matter? Ketchup, and other food holidays will help you run a more enjoyable business. Stay with me on this and you'll see why!

Lastly, in our feature piece, we're talking about the opportunities that restaurants in small towns (and other independently owned operations) are

missing. This has been on my mind for some time and if you own, operate or manage an independent restaurant, this might just hit home.

Father's Day is coming up soon, so what do you have planned for getting Dad's into your business? There's a link below with some good tips on the bottom of the newsletter. Don't let this day go by without some kind of little gift for every father, no matter how old they are. The old man sitting by himself at the bar or at a corner table is probably a Dad too, so take a minute to say hello. Giving a bit of yourself will make all the difference and that's our job – to serve others.

Let's get started...

HUMAN RESOURCES

"How to Handle Maverick Employees"

From [Performance Management Company](#) Blog, these points wonderfully illustrate the issues with maverick employees:

Here are the eight traits that identify High Maintenance / High Value people:

1. They are NOT great team players. They would prefer to do their own thing and make their own rules.
2. They don't care much for company policy. They know their own value and can't be bothered by structure.
3. They don't like a lot of attention and public praise, for others or themselves.
4. They are there to work, bring value and move on. Office cheers and high fives appear very superficial to them.
5. They are very willing to help others if asked, but do not follow up and maintain a working dialog with the individuals they've helped. It is more of a on-off relationship.
6. They typically create outstanding relationships with their customers, clients, suppliers etc.
7. They have a reputation for getting away with things, going rogue, without recourse, because people are afraid of their emotional, sometimes angry, reaction.
8. They show signs of greatness & creativity, but it is inconsistent, mostly occurring when a problem is brought to them, or when they went on one of their rogue adventures.
9. They probably have notations in their performance reviews that indicate large swings of 'outstanding' to 'needs improvement'. At some point they may have been considered for termination because of it.

Mavericks are those who are willing to take action, step out of their comfort zone and risk doing things a bit differently in pursuit of a goal are the ones who will make a difference. But will this happen within YOUR organization or

somewhere else?

So, how DO you manage a maverick? I have a tool that has proven itself successful over the years and it's a very simple process. Determine if your maverick is "hard-wired" to **GIVE** (selflessly to others) or to **GET** (focusing only on him or herself).

If a person is hard-wired to **give**, then a long-term career in the hospitality industry is possible and likely a good career choice with proper coaching and direction. Alternatively, if the person is mentally wired to **get**, it's probably time to go a separate direction...or isolate this person away from rest of your high performance team, with fear of this person becoming toxic. Who knows...handled properly this person might become the best project or program manager you've ever had!

Mavericks are special – no doubt about it and every one of them requires special attention in order to maximize their potential within – or outside of your organization.

SALES BUILDING

"Today is June 5, National Ketchup Day – Big Deal Right?"

For almost every day of the month, there's a food holiday. Check it out [here](#) and there's a link on the bottom of this newsletter for every month of the year.

In your promotional calendar, you probably have major holidays noted, **but what are you doing that's special or fun right now on Tuesday, June 5?** If you want to bring a little fun into another day, maybe serve some ketchup on the side with every entrée' and at a minimum, your guests should smile. Want a little ketchup history to share with your guests? The first documented recipe was found in 1732... Want a bit more [history?](#) It's actually quite interesting!

Why do people patronize your business? It's probably because what you serve is something that they can't or don't want to cook on their own....or maybe you just provide a little entertainment that makes your place interesting! Pros know that if you can somehow make each day special...even if it's only just ketchup like today...it's worth it to bring a few smiles to the faces of the people that keep you open! And all of that from ketchup - who would have thought!



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FEATURE ARTICLE

"The Curse of Small Town Restaurants"

...and Other Challenges of Being an Independent Operator

Who doesn't like finding a cute little place while on the road? I'm a huge fan and supporter of local independently-owned businesses, but lately I've noticed a very interesting trait that's so significant, I'm convinced it's a "curse."

First, a few numbers. According to the National Restaurant Association® for 2017:

\$799 billion: Restaurant industry sales.

1 million+: Restaurant locations in the United States.

14.7 million: Restaurant industry employees.

1.6 million: New restaurant jobs created by the year 2027.

10%: Restaurant workforce as part of the overall U.S. workforce.

9 in 10: Restaurant managers who started at entry level.

8 in 10: Restaurant owners who started their industry careers in entry-level positions.

9 in 10: Restaurants with fewer than 50 employees.

7 in 10: Restaurants that are single-unit operations

Based on these numbers above, this means that approximately 700,000 of all restaurants in the U.S are single unit locations. In many cases, these locations (with the exception of single unit, franchised locations) do not have, and I'll name just a few:

- Formal standards of service.
- Setup/breakdown and operating checklists for every position, including management checklists.
- Developmental stages of staff progression (A career ladder).
- Pictures of all menu items posted on the line.
- Formalized recipe books.
- Primary vendor buying relationships with established product standards.
- "Certified" or key people that handle training for all staff in the BOH and FOH.
- A "Mystery Shopping" service that regularly visits and reports on their findings.
- Management bonus programs that include guest feedback/social media as a component of the bonus.
- A 12-month marketing plan.
- Formal financial reporting that provides timely and accurate feedback.

Because of these reasons, the larger chains that DO have these systems, generally produce more consistent output and better financial results than single-unit independents.

This is also one of the reasons that restaurants in small towns are so frequently disappointing....the "Curse" you might call it. Sure, this is not always the case, but I'll give you a few recent personal examples. I've changed the names to protect the innocent parties...

KANSAS: A sign on the road reads, "Great food and Service at Bob's Café Open 7AM to 9PM. Just 5 miles ahead." I'm thinking "Perfect timing, I'm ready for breakfast" and I walk in at 7:05AM. Only one of two front doors is unlocked, loud music is playing, no greeting, the A/C is cranked and coffee is not brewed. This is a harsh unpleasant start for the day.

UTAH: The sign read; "Steaks, Chops, Trout and Breakfast Served All Day." It's been a long day and I'm not in the mood for signage or branding coaching, but I most assuredly am ready for a steak. I ask the server, "How are the steaks and which one is the most popular?" and she replies, "The NY Strip is great." I order it and out comes a ½" thick steak, overcooked, with a side salad (incorrectly served at the same time) with brown lettuce and the lid still on the dressing container. All of this could have been easily avoided.

YUKON: It's a beautiful Sunday morning and I drive by The Log Cabin Café with lots of cars in the lot. If anyplace looks like a winner, it's here, so I pull over and walk in. Place is jammed, but a corner table is suddenly available and I'm seated. I wait forever for a glass of water and cup of coffee. Nice server, but slow as molasses. No juice was offered. Menu is greasy, table is sticky. Small portion that took almost 25 minutes to arrive. I leave thoroughly disgusted in my choice of a place for breakfast.

DAYTONA BEACH, FL. "Pit Smoked BBQ for 20 Years" so I stop by as I'm a huge BBQ fan. Meat is mush, sweet tea is cloudy and undrinkable, bun is stale, restroom is trashed. Surly service and high prices. This is a one-off that will never see me again.

You get the idea. If you own, run or manage an independent foodservice operation (in any size of town), you don't have the tools or resources of a large company, but there's a LOT of things that independents can do BETTER than a chain! How about: Personalized, prompt, caring service. Serving local specialties that the chains can't or won't. Top notch cleanliness with a "touch" of special decoration. On-site ownership. Guest name recognition. A sense of urgency for everyone. Special entrées for those guests who require/ask for it and more. Independent and small-town operators have a real advantage in many cases!

You can beat the odds (against the chains and against being a struggling operation) if you really, really deliver above expectation in all areas.

And this my friends, is how you turn a "curse" into a "blessing."

RECAP

Have a maverick employee? It's up to you to address it. Ignoring a maverick is the worst thing you can do because a maverick will likely hurt your business. Is this person a "giver" or a "getter?" Figure this out and you'll know what to do.

Ketchup is today's featured holiday, but what are you doing tomorrow? Use the link below to design fast, easy promotions to keep your place interesting and fun.

Do you run an independent restaurant or a business in a small town? Don't be complacent because you feel like you're the "small, privately owned place" in town or feel like you're at a disadvantage compared to the chains. It's time to step up to the plate and deliver, really deliver on what guests today expect.

Thanks for reading!



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Development

[Ready to open your own restaurant? Learn how here](#)

[Six ways to combat sexual harassment in restaurants](#)

[How to be a competent & capable manager](#)

[The Manager's Daily Checklist Sample Format](#)

[How to find meaning at work even when your job feels miserable](#)

[Think practice makes perfect? Think again. This article will change how you train everyone from now on](#)

[Predictive scheduling - How to adjust to local labor law changes](#)

[Restaurant Feasibility Studies and Business Plans](#)

[Our complete list of consulting services - PDF](#)

Resources

[Sunday, June 17 is Father's Day! What do you have planned for that weekend? Here's a nice list of ideas for you to consider.](#)

[To Subscribe or Catch up on back issues of Restaurant Operations Weekly](#)

[How to Design Your Beverage Menu for Profit](#)

[Everything You Wanted to Know about Wagyu and Kobe Beef](#)

[The Giant List of 101 Culinary Terms \(from our friends at Toast\)](#)

[50 Restaurant Industry Statistics \(by Toast\)](#)

[Food holidays in June - Great Promotional Calendar](#)

[What it means when a restaurant gets a Michelin Star](#)

[Minimum Wage Laws in the U.S. \(US Dept. of Labor\)](#)

[The World's Greatest Restaurant Systems Checklist](#)

What do you get when you have a low bridge and a tall truck? It's not a shortcut!



"It is not enough that we do our best; sometimes we must do what is required.

- Winston Churchill

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