

22 STEPS TO GREAT BARTENDING

1. Always SMILE at newly arriving customers. It makes them feel welcome and relaxed.
2. Formally recognize the newly arrived customer with a greeting, such as, "Good evening, Sir/Ma'am. Welcome to _____! What can I get for you?" (Napkin or coaster accompanies greeting).
3. Introduce yourself - extend a handshake! Learn each customer's name as soon as possible. A person's name is the sweetest sound in the world to him or her. Also, if a patron continues to patronize your bar, you should remember what they drink. In other words, give your customer every chance to start liking you - it's one very good way to build up your clientele. When you build your clientele (more people coming in each day), the tip revenue increases dramatically! The challenge is to get more people to come back each day! The formula is simple = "no people = no money"
4. Your job is to *listen*, not talk. People who patronize bars like to do the talking. They go to bars to have someone listen to *their* thoughts, not yours. Introduce customers to each other. It's the greatest technique going to keep you from having to get involved in time-consuming conversations which sometimes can compromise service to others.
5. Never enter into conversations uninvited - leave people alone who are talking to each other. Don't interrupt.
6. AVOID ARGUMENTS. No customer wants to hear how knowledgeable you are about anything. Even if a customer's opinion or thought about something is wrong, don't correct him. You don't want to do anything to create a negative reaction towards you from a customer - it will hurt your tip. Agree with just about anything. For example, "you're a Democrat - me too. You like the Yankees - me too". Be totally agreeable and friendly in all conversations.
7. Never ignore any ONE customer. Let everyone feel they are getting equal attention. Don't spend all your time with one customer. Spread yourself around.
8. Don't talk about other customers. You never know which customers know each other. Why put yourself in a position of being misquoted?

9. Always be in a good mood - look ALERT, HAPPY, BRIGHT.
10. Always THANK a customer sincerely for his or her patronage,
11. Never mention previous visits, especially when a patron has guests.
12. DON'T GOSSIP. Don't talk about politics or religion or anything socially upsetting/controversial.
13. NEVER complain about your fellow employees, bosses or owners.
14. Try and serve the loner or single person first. Most people in groups of 2 or more usually wait without complaint. The person who comes to the bar alone, male or female, gets impatient faster.
15. Keep your station SPOTLESS. Keep the top of the bar SPOTLESS. Constantly empty and clean ashtrays (with soiled napkin) and make sure there is a fresh napkin or coaster under your patrons' glass.
16. Constantly "eye" everyone's glass on the bar. When the customer's drink gets down to about 1/4 full, politely inquire about a refill. You don't have to verbally say anything - just put your hand in front of the glass and look inquisitively at him with your eyebrows raised. Sign language, or the nod of a head, is normal communication in the bar business. You should REMEMBER what the drink is.
17. When giving change from a \$5, 10, 20, etc., from closing a tab or making a single drink sale, always think TIP CHANGE. Don't assume your customer has the kind of change in his pocket to tip you. You must give it to him in singles and fives.. First, approximate 20% of the tab total, then think TIP CHANGE. For example, a tab of \$13 out of \$20 - give back 7 ones – not 2 Ones and a Five..
18. POUR - SERVE - RING UP. Never take another order from another customer until you have either collected the money from the customer you have just made the drink(s) for, or have rung it up on his tab.
- 19) THE ART OF MAKING CHANGE CORRECTLY. When collecting money in any denomination from your customer, always remind him of the denomination of the bill and the amount of the check (always present the receipt/check *face up* to the customer so he may have an opportunity to review

it. Circle the total amount due). "FLASH THE BILL" the customer gave you in front of the customer *and say out loud, "X out of X"*. Put the bill on top of the register while you verbally count out loud to yourself the change. Then put the bill in the register and close the drawer. Count out loud the change back to the customer as you *fan* it onto the bar top, lower denominations underneath the higher denominations.

20. Never let a customer see you handling ice with your hands. It is best to always use an ice scoop. Always put ice into a glass UNDERNEATH the bar. NEVER SCOOP ICE WITH A GLASS! This will chip the glass or worse yet, it will break in the ice. Then you've got problems.
21. Return each bottle to its proper place in the speed racks or on the shelf after using it, with the label facing forward, so that you can reach for it without losing time looking for that particular bottle. NEVER "go for" the liquor until you are ready for it.

STEP # 22

ATTENTION and RECOGNITION

This is the most important Step. If you understand each customer's need for Attention and Recognition, then you will always be a successful, high-earning bartender.

What makes a bartender successful? Is it the quality of the drink, how it's made, what's in it, how it's served, what glass it's in?

None of the above.

Professional bartending/service does dictate that the drink is made and served correctly, but *most customers don't come in to your bar for the drink!* They can get the same drink at any bar. Budweiser is Budweiser. Smirnoff is Smirnoff. It's not the drink that makes the customer return to your bar.

The drink simply "occupies" the customer's hand and enables him to stay in the seat he's in – to participate in the environment a little longer. He couldn't, or wouldn't, stay unless he had purchased this "drink". So the first drink sale is an automatic. It remains to be seen how many more drinks you will serve him.

A person who enjoys beverage alcohol doesn't have to go to a bar to get a drink. He can stop off at a convenience store or package goods store and buy a 6-pack of beer for a lot less and drink at home.

So why is he willing to pay extra to have this same drink served at your bar? Why is drinking in bars more popular than drinking at home?

People draw people. "Mammalian interaction", which includes the sharing of food and drink, has been a part of our human lifestyle since the beginning of time. It's more "natural" to share and interact where there are people. It's more fun. Drinking at home by yourself is not fun.

Why is it that these people, or customers, seem to congregate at the same bar, day after day?

We call this customer type a "regular". Is it the décor, the landscaping, the fancy building that brings him back time and again? Is it the price of the drink? As long as the drinks are fairly and competitively priced, and the "Shot" pour is fair, the price of the drink doesn't matter.

The answer can be found in the type of people you have hired that best represent the business – the bartender primarily, and secondly, the wait staff. That's it!

The bartender makes the business successful or not! The bartender has to have the ability to create friendliness. The bartender has to have the ability to get the customer involved in the bar environment. The bartender is the one responsible for the *attention* and the *recognition* that each customer must receive in order to make him feel he is truly a part of the bar!

"Hi, Sam. How you doin' today?" is an example of a greeting which gives attention and recognition to a customer (he was called Sam by name – and he was asked a question that generates a response i.e., "involvement"). This greeting *must* be repeated every day Sam comes in. This type of "attention" and "recognition" is what makes Sam return again and again. Now he's a "regular".

You see, Sam is like every other human being that walks through your door. He must be made to feel comfortable and relaxed, and he thrives on attention and recognition. All of us do, don't we?

If you are not sensitive to the importance of each person receiving attention and recognition at your bar, you won't have many people at your bar, and you won't make

much money. The number of people you have at your bar day-to-day determines the amount of tips you will make. If 10 people came in your bar each day, and they each left you \$1, then you made \$10 dollars. If 40 people came into your bar each day, and they each left \$1, then you made \$40. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out which amount you'd prefer to have.. In other words, NO PEOPLE = NO MONEY! (Not just for you, but the "house" is not going to be too happy with low sales).

It's your "job" to make sure you make regulars out of everyone who steps foot in your bar.

If you understand this basic theory for what makes for success in the bar business, then you know you can't be an "order-taker" type of bartender. You must have an aura of excitement, bubblyness, and high energy! You must have the ability to stick out your hand to a newcomer and introduce yourself. You must get to know a little something about them –their name?, where they're from?, what brings them here?, etc., etc.

The most money-making, successful bartenders are those with great personalities. Technical skills can always be learned – and, yes, they must be mastered. But it's the bartender's super friendly personality that equals dollars for everyone, creates repeat business, and creates a regular customer base that will grow and grow.

It starts with the personality of the bartender – not the drink!

BOB JOHNSON
Beverage Director
HUSTLER

GUEST SERVICE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. THE GUEST IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON EVER IN THIS ESTABLISHMENT.
2. THE GUEST IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON US. *WE ARE DEPENDENT UPON THEM!*
3. THE GUEST IS NOT AN INTERRUPTION OF OUR WORK. THEY ARE THE PURPOSE OF IT.
4. THE GUEST DOES US A FAVOR WHEN HE VISITS OUR BAR. WE ARE NOT DOING THEM A FAVOR BY SERVING THEM.
5. THE GUEST IS NOT AN OUTSIDER TO OUR WORK. THEY ARE A PART OF IT.
6. THE GUEST IS NOT A COLD STATISTIC. THEY ARE FLESH AND BLOOD, A HUMAN BEING WITH FEELINGS, EMOTIONS, PREJUDICES AND BIASES LIKE OUR OWN.
7. THE GUEST IS NOT SOMEONE TO ARGUE WITH.
8. THE GUEST IS THE ONE WHO BRINGS US THEIR WANTS. IT IS OUR JOB TO FILL THOSE WANTS.
9. THE GUEST IS DESERVING OF THE MOST COURTEOUS AND ATTENTIVE TREATMENT WE CAN GIVE THEM.
10. THE GUEST IS THE LIFE BLOOD OF THIS AND EVERY OTHER OPERATION.