



Baristas to the Rescue -- Again!

Moving From Order Takers to Profit Makers

BY THE BRAND COACHES

It seems like yesterday that the American barista stepped out from that ocean of green aprons to prepare and declare themselves true professionals in the art of coffee education and preparation.

You clearly draw a straight line from passionate barista supporter, founder of www.baristaexchange.com and visionary, Matt Milletto. Matt also oversees the Portland, Oregon-based Bellissimo Coffee Info Group's American Barista & Coffee School. Not long after the Barista Exchange site caught on worldwide like a dry brush wild fire, Matt was recognized in the Wall Street Journal for crafting one of the most sophisticated and active social networking sites in America.

In asking Matt about the role of today's barista for this column, he said, "A great barista really needs to be excited about all the products they serve. This, of course, includes a comprehensive understanding of the coffee and espresso beverages, but needs to include other products served in a coffee shop. Items like tea, hot chocolate, pastries, breakfast and lunch items, whole bean coffee, merchandise, etc. can dramatically raise the sagging customer ticket average, as well as weekly, monthly and annual sales."

"As a barista is the 'front line' each day, it is critical to involve them in all menu development, tasting, and brainstorming for additional potential profit centers," Matt concluded.

Now expand your own vision from coffee expert to tasting EVERYTHING your coffee house sells your precious customers. Pick a favorite product. If it doesn't taste great, immediately tell your owner, so it can be reworked to meet the same high standards you set for your coffee.

Once you are as proud of ALL the beverages and food your place serves, your new mission begins:

Every time an order is placed, inspire, not require, that a mention of your favorite breakfast, lunch, pastry, gelato or any other item that compliments the time of day and order can increase sales.

I posted this same message above on Barista Exchange on October 26, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. Pacific

Standard Time. The following is only one of a ton of similar responses:

10 minutes ago

Jesse Bladyka commented on Lon LaFlamme's blog post 'Baristas to the Rescue--again!' This is great. I tell every barista working for me that in order to sell something you have to love and believe in it. Then I challenge them to find one of their products that they love and sell it, no one loves an disingenuous up sell, but if we c...

Now owners of independent retail specialty coffee businesses desperately need you again as marketing associates to help them - and you - survive and thrive.

The Brand Coaches have crafted a point system-based retail specialty coffee store manager/ barista hiring and performance evaluation tool. We know you will find it priceless in helping your team understand the demands on all staff members to weather the profound changes in the economy and traditional coffee house model, from service to menu offerings.

The Brand Coaches are using this as an integral tool during many independent and small chain retreats. This is only a generic foundation tool. You'll want to amend and brand it with ideas of your own to make it as unique as your brand.

So what is so unique about this document?

The first page is dedicated to the professional standards required in beverage preparation to evolve a barista into a true professional. The next two pages provide insight and measurable guidelines on how to ensure no customer enters and leaves a stranger. It also elevates the barista from an order taker to business marketing associate in subtly promoting the sell of all the retail business has to offer in beverages and food.

Visit www.thebrandcoaches.com, where you can download the coffee house audit, as well as the barista job description.

We felt the need to include our new world job description with our column to ensure each of our Tea and Coffee Trade Journal column readers instantly see the incredible value of this tool.

The Brand Coaches suggest the owner/store manager fill this out on themselves, as well as each barista once a month. Have the barista fill one out on their performance once a month as well, until everybody is of a common understanding of new job expectations to become profitable in today's retail specialty coffee house business.

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BARISTA EVALUATION

Barista Evaluation - Drink Making:

- _____ Average time preparing 10 drinks in succession (25)
 - 80-76 seconds = 15 points
 - 75-66 seconds = 20 points
 - 65 seconds or less = 25 points

- _____ Barista knows when and how to adjust the grind (10)

- _____ Barista pulling a shot (15)
 - Ounces (5) _____
 - Time (5) _____
 - Crema (5) _____

- _____ Employee's skill on making hot drinks (25)
 - Foam (5) _____
 - Swirl (5) _____
 - Temperature (5) _____
 - Coffee Flavor (5) _____
 - Syrup Flavor (5) _____

- _____ Employees skill on making iced drinks (15)
 - Temperature (5) _____
 - Coffee Flavor (5) _____
 - Syrup Flavor (5) _____

- _____ Employees skill on making blended drinks (10)
 - Flavor (5) _____
 - Consistency (5) _____

- _____ Barista's knowledge on preparation of all drinks (10)

- _____ Barista recognizes drink sizes and 'lingo' (5)

- _____ Total (out of 115)

Barista Evaluation - Customer Service:

_____ The employee has a sense of urgency for assisting customers (10)

_____ The barista acknowledges the customer within 10 seconds (5)

_____ Employee is consistently friendly, outgoing and happy (5)

_____ Employee makes conversation with all customers (10)

_____ Mistakes are eagerly acknowledged and corrected (5)

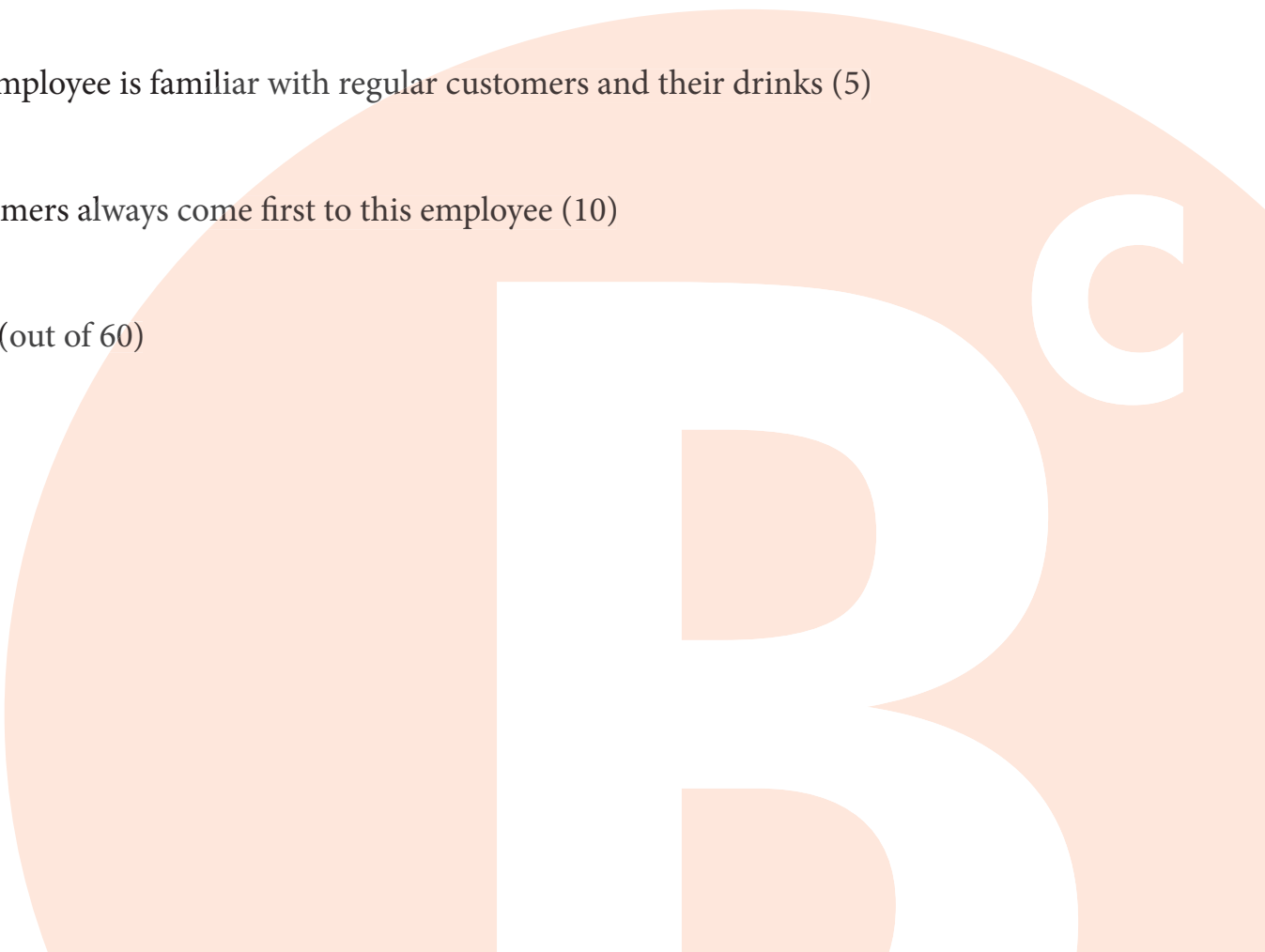
_____ The customer is given a reason to return (5)

_____ The barista is Informative of new items and promotions (5)

_____ The employee is familiar with regular customers and their drinks (5)

_____ Customers always come first to this employee (10)

_____ Total (out of 60)



Barista Evaluation - Teamwork:

_____ Employee assists other employees (5)

_____ If asked, the employee can cover shifts (5)

_____ After a shift, items are stocked as needed (5)

_____ Shift duties are completed each day (5)

_____ When asked, other tasks are completed (5)

_____ The barista is aware of store and shift goals (5)

_____ Total (out of 30)



Barista Evaluation - Paperwork and Policies:

_____ Employee reads and initials all memos (5)

_____ Cashiering policies are consistently followed (10)

_____ Employee arrives promptly and is prepared at each shift (5)

_____ Clean and correct uniform is consistently worn (5)

_____ The work phone is not abused for personal use (5)

_____ Employee is knowledgeable of all discount policies (5)

_____ Deposit procedures are followed with consistency (10)

_____ Total (out of 45)

Total: _____ (out of 250)

Employee must receive a score of _____ or better. If the above total is less than required, the employee has _____ weeks to improve before re-evaluation.

