

Restaurant – Management and Marketing Checklist

**Use This Self-Assessment Guide to Identify
Strategies that will Increase Sales and
Improve Profitability for Your Restaurant**



**Over 1,425 tactics and
strategies for bringing
your restaurant to the
next level of growth
and profitability**

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The

Nitty Gritty, Down N' Dirty, Savvy Strategies®

RESTAURANT

Self – Assessment Checklist

Over 1,425 tactics & strategies
for bringing your Restaurant
to the next level of growth & profitability

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RESTAURANT

Self - Assessment Checklist

This checklist is designed for use as a self-assessment management tool for conducting an operational evaluation of your restaurant. The evaluation process contained on the following pages is quite thorough, and the end result will be a careful, thoughtful analysis of your restaurant's operations. This self-assessment tool is designed for the serious owner or restaurant manager who truly wants to evolve their restaurant to the next level of growth and profitability. The time invested in conducting this self-assessment will pay large dividends in the form of operational efficiencies and profitability.

In every business, opportunities abound for improvement. Increasing revenue, improving customer relations, and reducing costs are three critical elements for improving long-term profitability. A comprehensive self-assessment process, such as this one, will help keep you focused on your mission and on maintaining your profitability. It is envisioned this checklist can be used in one of five ways:

1. You could utilize this tool to personally conduct a self-assessment of your restaurant.
2. You could assign one of your managers (or a key employee) the task of conducting the assessment as part of an overall employee development process.
3. You could have a Board Member, a Management Advisory Committee Member, or a trusted advisor conduct the assessment.
4. You, or a key employee, could conduct a partial assessment of your restaurant by using one, two, three or more of the major categories in this document to focus specifically on a problem(s) previously identified by yourself, an employee, or a customer.
5. You could utilize an independent consultant to conduct this assessment. However, that would defeat the purpose of a self-assessment program. A "do-it-yourself" process can save you many thousands of dollars in consulting fees. Once you have identified a problem area(s), you may then want to engage an experienced consultant on a short-term basis to help with these specific areas.

While many of the tactics and strategies described herein can be applied toward most any type of restaurant, all of them do not apply in all business or marketing environments. Some are for small restaurants, some are for large restaurants, and some of them may apply only in very specific situations. Some tactics and strategies are free, many have minimal cost, and others may require a substantial investment. Some require only an attitudinal change while others may require a change in a process or a procedure. And, some strategies may be in conflict with other suggestions depending upon either your competitive environment, or how you have positioned yourself in the marketplace. However, all these topics merit your consideration as you begin to develop a strategy for implementing a "continuous improvement process" for your restaurant.

Helpful Hint: The assessment process is quite thorough and can require a considerable amount of time. However, it is important to emphasize that it is not necessary to complete the assessment in one sitting, in one day, in one week or even in one month. Selecting one, two, three or more of the major categories in this document as a priority on which to focus can be a more practical approach than trying to “do it all” at one time. Also, you may want to consider a methodical process whereby you and/or your management team (or a key employee) conducts the assessment using a different module each week. Remember, this checklist is a reference manual that can be utilized time and time again on an as needed basis on your personal timetable.

Each module has a simple, two-part process. The first part of the assessment process entitled “ASSESSMENT” will rapidly isolate any problem areas and identify opportunities for quickly improving your operations. This process will no doubt generate much discussion among the senior management team. The second part entitled “IMPLEMENTATION” is a management process for prioritizing and managing the implementation of any benefit or strategy as well as identifying the strategies that will make the biggest impact on your profitability.

Conducting the self-assessment process on a quarterly or semi-annual basis will keep you focused on revenue, costs, customer service, and profitability. Sharing the results of this self-assessment process with your employees and assigning them a specific problem to address can be a valuable training exercise and/or employee development tool. If a number of problems have been identified, it will be important to prioritize your actions based upon the highest and best return that can be achieved for the amount of investment you can make at this time. Additionally, comparing the results of previously conducted assessments with current performance will determine the rate of progress you have made in each area. Committing to conducting such an assessment on a regular basis will result in a continual improvement process that in turn will result in a higher level of customer satisfaction and restaurant profitability.

The “Keys” for conducting the self-assessment is as follows:

NA	=	This tactic or strategy is <u>Not Applicable</u> to your business at this time.
Y	=	<u>Yes</u>, this is currently being done at a satisfactory level.
N	=	<u>No</u>, this tactic or strategy is not being used.
NI	=	This area <u>Needs Improvement</u> and a timely strategy must be developed.
Priority	=	On a scale of 1 to 5 with “1” having the highest impact on image, customer service, employee satisfaction, ease of implementation, and profitability. The highest impact items should obviously be addressed immediately.
Responsible Person	=	The <u>Person Responsible</u> for improving or implementing this benefit or strategy.
Due Date	=	<u>Due Date</u> for completion of this strategy.

Like yourself, your competitors are also looking for opportunities where they can find either a marketing or cost advantage. If you don't take pre-emptive action to improve your business on a regular basis, your competition will leave you behind in the marketplace. Revenue, profitability, and customer satisfaction will then suffer. However, implementing one or two minor improvements based on this self-assessment process could possibly result in 10X, 20X or 100X return on both the time and money you have invested in this process. You have made an investment by purchasing this document. Now conduct the assessment! Your customers will be glad you did. And, when the results show on your bottom line, you will be glad you did also.

Comments, Critique, or Recommendations:

Please direct any comments, critique, or recommendations to Jim O'Donnell of Jaguar Management Consulting Group, Inc. at the address on the cover page or via email. Your comments and suggestions are most welcome, will be carefully reviewed, and will be included in the next published edition. Your critique will help improve this self-assessment checklist for the benefit of all restaurateurs.

To review other self-assessment checklists for bringing your business to the next level of growth and profitability, visit WWW.Checklists4Business.com

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I. A PROFESSIONAL RESTAURANT IMAGE: *(Partial)*



Your restaurant's image is important for creating a good first impression that will attract the right customers. First impressions begin long before a customer arrives in your lobby. They begin when a customer visits your website, when they engage with your business on Social Media platforms, when they drive by and see the condition of your building and parking areas, and when they call for a reservation. Let's start the process of creating a positive image for your restaurant.

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:

1. The restaurant's name is unique and helps to identify the type of food(s) offered.
2. The logo, trademark, and service marks are attractive and distinct.
3. The restaurant's primary color selections are attractive, modern, and coordinated.
4. Theme, motto, or tag lines enhance the restaurant name and logo.
5. A Mission Statement has been developed and is displayed for all employees, customers, and trade suppliers to see.
10. The website, blog, printed brochures, and all social media properties have consistent colors and marketing messages.
22. This restaurant has developed a "reputation" for serving the best _____? (Fill in the blank line).

	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>						



A Wise Old Owl Once Said . . .

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression."

~ Will Rogers

VI. BAR and LOUNGE AREA: *(Partial)*



The Bar and Lounge Area has the potential to be the source of a highly profitable revenue stream. Yet, if not managed profitably, it can be a substantial drain on profits. Keeping your costs in check is the first step, especially your pour costs, and particularly the drinks your bartender overpours, spills, or gives away to family and friends. Following the guidelines in this section of the Restaurant Checklist will help maintain and even improve profitability.

No.	Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
		NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
	A. Lounge Area							
1.	Bar area is partitioned from dining area so as not to disturb dining guests	<input type="checkbox"/>						
15.	Glassware is clean and does not have any "spots".	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	B. Service							
2.	Employees understand the policy regarding serving minors.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
16.	Tables are cleaned thoroughly before the next guest arrives.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	C. Bar Management							
1.	A Bar Management Software System has been evaluated, installed, and employees trained on its proper usage.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3.	Management has established "signature items" for which the bar is well known.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	D. Bar & Glassware Sanitation							
11.	Glasses are inspected daily for chips and cracks.	<input type="checkbox"/>						



Food for Thought:

Every restaurant has a personality and a reputation. The ambience of your bar or lounge is a contributing factor to this persona. The perceived personality will attract individuals that resonate with your business's personality. Every couple of months take a few moments to assess your clientele to ensure you're attracting the "right" customers. If you haven't done so in a while, this is also an opportune time to review the costs of your standardized drink recipes to ensure you are maintaining your profit margin.

VII. GUEST DINING AREA: *(Partial)*



The post COVID-19 environment has made business difficult for many restaurants. Yet customers still expect to have a great dining experience. When guests dine in your restaurant, they are looking for more than just great food. They expect a variety of choices, value-priced options, friendly and personalized service, a comfortable and pleasant atmosphere, and stress-free dining. The little things in this section of the checklist will help contribute to an excellent customer dining experience.

No.	Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
		NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
	A. Dining Area Décor							
1.	All areas are dusted, vacuumed, and cleaned on a regular basis.							
2.	Walls, doors, moulding, and ceilings are “fresh” and are free of stains, smudges, chips, and cracks.							
3.	Window coverings or shades are clean and enhance the restaurant’s décor.							
4.	Décor is consistent with tastes of target market demographics.							
5.	Pictures, art, and wall hangings are tasteful, properly hung, and enhance the restaurant’s décor.							
6.	Gum has been removed from under all tables, benches, chairs, and bar.							
	B. Dining Area Management							
1.	A Restaurant Management Software System has been evaluated, installed, and employees trained on its proper usage.							
2.	Management has established “signature dishes or dessert items” for which the restaurant is well known.							
N.	Floors and tile are well polished on a regular basis.							

IX. COOKING and FOOD PROCESSING AREAS:



This area is the “heart and soul” of your restaurant and presents numerous opportunities for both profits and losses. A successful kitchen is more than just the personnel and the equipment, but also the processes used in food preparation. Efficient management of the strategies below will improve profitability and enhance a guest’s dining experience.

No.	Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
		NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
A.	Food Production and Presentation							
1.	Coats, purses, boots, and other personal articles are kept out of the food production area.							
2.	All products are stored a minimum of 6 inches off the floor.							
3.	Bulk sauces and soups are rapidly reheated to at least 165° F prior to serving.							
4.	Accurate syrup to carbonated water ratio is maintained on the soda dispensers.							
5.	Coffee machine hot water temperature is kept between 190-200° F.							
6.	Cold soups are maintained below 45° F.							
7.	Creamers are held cold in double ice baths or refrigerators.							
8.	Food is served quickly and not allowed to stay under the Glo-ray food warmer too long.							
9.	Food products are maintained at 40° F, or below during the pre-production phase.							
10.	Foods are cooked to the proper degree and color.							
11.	Foods are stored properly to prevent cross contamination.							
12.	Frozen items are thawed under refrigeration and stored according to written storage guidelines.							

IX. Cooking and Food Processing Area Continued . . . NA Y N NI P RP DD

13.	Hot sauces and soups are cooled to below 45° in less than 4 hours if they are not being used immediately.							
14.	Hot soups are maintained consistently at 150-160° F.							
15.	Non-slip mats and sheet pans are used under all cutting boards to catch excess juices.							
16.	Plates are properly assembled for pleasing appearance and presentation.							
17.	Prepared food products are either color-coded or dated for rotation.							
18.	Refrigerated salad bin is at 35-40° F?							
19.	Salad bar has a refrigeration system that maintains product at a consistent 35-40° F.							
20.	Small quantities of food products are kept out during production to ensure freshness.							
21.	Test strips are readily available for monitoring the sanitizer concentration.							

B. Equipment for Food Processing

1.	Water softener salt tank is cleaned regularly and is tightly covered.							
2.	Hot water temperature is maintained at 140-150° F.							
3.								
4.								



Food for Thought:

Assign one of your key employees to use this section of the checklist to conduct an assessment of your cooking and food processing areas. This will serve two purposes. First, it will be an excellent training program and learning experience. Secondly, this is an opportunity to determine if you are still up to local area codes. Identifying any issues today will prevent your restaurant from being shut down by the health

department as well as preventing potential serious fire damage

XI. COLD STORAGE AREA:



Safe food handling methods include properly storing food in your refrigerator and freezer. Correctly operating cold storage equipment, properly dating and rotating food, and using safe food handling methods will help regulate your food and keep it from becoming contaminated. Follow these guidelines to ensure the food you store in the cold storage area remains fresh.

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:

A.

Walk-In Freezer

1. All exterior and interior surfaces are cleaned periodically.
2. All food products are dated and rotated to ensure maximum freshness (FIFO).
3. All products are consistently maintained at 0° F, or below.
4. Security devices work properly and are checked regularly.
5. Compressors are kept clean and free of dust for maximum operating efficiency.
6. Door gaskets are not torn or buckled so as to ensure proper closure.
7. Doors are in good repair and close properly.
8. Drains and drainage lines are clear and working properly.
9. Fan guards cover all fans and are kept clean.
10. Floor is kept clean and dry with no water or ice build-up.
11. Food products are properly wrapped or kept covered to prevent dehydration.
12. Lighting is adequate and light bulbs are shielded to prevent breakage.
13. Products are stored at least 6" off the floor.
14. Storage quantity guidelines are maintained for all products.

	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							

XI. Cold Storage Area Continued . . .

	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
15. There is adequate room around the compressor to provide good air circulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
B. Walk –In Refrigerator							
1. All exterior and interior surfaces are cleaned periodically.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
2. All food products are dated and rotated to ensure maximum freshness (FIFO).	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3. Security devices work properly and are checked regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
4. Compressors are cleaned for maximum efficiency.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
5. Door gaskets are not torn or buckled so as to ensure proper closure.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
6. Doors are in good repair and close properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
7. Drains and drainage lines are clear and working properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
8. Fan guards cover all fans and are kept clean.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
9. Floor is kept clean and dry with no water or ice build-up.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
10. Foods are stored properly to prevent cross contamination.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
11. Opened foods are transferred to covered plastic containers.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
12. Lighting is adequate and light bulbs are shielded.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
13. Products are maintained at a consistent 35 – 40° F.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
14. Products are stored at least 6" off the floor.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
15. Shelves are kept clean, organized, and are in good repair.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
16. Storage quantity practices are maintained for all products.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
17. There is adequate room around the compressor to provide good air circulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Business Anniversary and Celebrations Checklist: This checklist has over 400 ideas to help your business enjoy its important milestones and celebrate its employees and customers. Many helpful marketing and fun activities for restaurants, retail stores, child themed stores and numerous ideas for any other types of business. Have fun!

XVII. HOW TO COMPETE WITH THE FAST FOOD CHAINS: *(Partial)*



Sometimes, to beat the competition you must do just the opposite. The chains may have a bigger marketing budget and a regional or national footprint, but that doesn't mean you can't outmaneuver them. Your ability to be flexible rather than being compliant with the corporate rigidity of the chains, will be the difference in your success. It may take you a while to find the secret recipe that makes your restaurant stand out from the crowd, but you can start implementing the strategies below to see which one(s) work best for your restaurant.

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1. Potential weaknesses in a Chain's execution, quality, variety, convenience, and pricing has been evaluated and a strategy developed to exploit these weaknesses.							
2. You have visited their facility to see how they are managing their operation and reviewed their offerings.							
3. You have subscribed to a chain(s) newsletter to see how they are promoting their brand and products items.							
4. An internal assessment of your strengths and weaknesses has been conducted regarding execution, quality, variety, and convenience to the customer and a strategy developed to exploit these strengths and correct the weaknesses.							
13. Menu items that compete directly with the chain's items have been jettisoned (unless they are higher quality or are needed to offer a full complement of dining options).							
21. A reputation has been developed for an intangible, such as service, quality, convenience, delivery, longer hours, unique experience, etc.							
35. Personal attention is provided rather than a "cookie cutter" approach that the chain's offer.							
69. Social Media platforms are used to show the ambience and offerings in a fun and pleasant way.							

XXIII. DIRECT MARKETING TECHNIQUES: *(Partial)*



Itemized below are a variety of Direct Marketing techniques that will help you gain more visibility for your restaurant. Some are no-cost, some have a small cost, while others are long-term programs that may incur a monthly fee. Many are traditional offline techniques while others are online action items. Not all will apply to your restaurant in your market area, but no doubt you will find several techniques you haven't tried before. Choose the techniques that will give you the highest ROI based upon your USP, your target market, and your budget.

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1.							
3. Attractive ads in both subscription and free local area newspapers are used regularly.							
4. Full color ads in both subscription and free local area magazines are judiciously used.							
10. A Vanity License Plate using your restaurant name is purchased.							
24. Circulars/leaflets that include a discount coupon are distributed at special events.							
31. Merchandise Displays and marketing materials that may be available from your product and service vendors are used to your advantage							
32.							
33.							
34.							
35. Attractively designed "Take Home" bags and boxes with your restaurant's logo and tagline are used.							
56. The restaurant's "on-hold" message is pleasant and advertises something special in a low-key manner.							

XXIV. "YOU ARE THE BRAND" MARKETING TECHNIQUES: *(Partial)*



You are your business is a marketing strategy that sells you first and sells your restaurant indirectly. Creating a personal brand influences how potential customers think about you and your restaurant. This strategy may not work for everyone, but if you have an outgoing and engaging personality, this strategy could help supplement your restaurants current marketing programs. Techniques for you to consider when implementing this strategy are:

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1. You become actively involved in community events and take a leadership role.							
7. You appear on local talk shows to discuss business trends.							
9. You write a book and gain publicity from it.							
10. You write articles for a magazine or newspaper about the retail industry, owning a small retail store, etc.							
13. You teach courses/give lectures about managing a store, the retail industry, or owning a small business.							
17. You establish relationships with the press and become a quotable source.							
18. You actively sponsor Little League teams, softball teams, chamber events, robotic competitions, or similar events and personally attend these games or events.							
20. You create your own special holiday, promote it, and host a themed dinner event at a local restaurant.							
21.							
22.							
23. You personally appear in your store's TV advertising.							
26.							

XXVIII. INTERNET MARKETING STRATEGIES: *(Partial)*



Websites, e-commerce, and Social Media are imperative marketing strategies as more customers now rely upon the Internet to look for new and better dining options. This section of the checklist provides numerous guidelines for reviewing your restaurants website functionality, design, search engine marketing strategies, online advertising ROI, and your Social Media activities. Time dedicated to building an online presence for your restaurant that is a positive experience for your customers is time well spent.

No. Strategies and tactics to be evaluated:

A. Get Your Website Launched

1. The primary goal for marketing on-line has been established.
7. The website's identity is consistent with your restaurant's brand.
11. Your website uses "Adaptive" technology to ensure compliance with all search engines, display monitors and mobile devices.
12. A master document is maintained with all login info for the website, hosting account, domain registrar, analytics and webmaster's tools, Social Media accounts, online directories, and other digital properties.
17. One image is used for approx. every 300 - 400 words of text.
18. Your webmaster has added "Alt Tags" that are Keyword rich to your graphic images.
20. Each primary web page has approx. 1,000 words of text.
28. All the links on the website have been checked and verified to ensure they all work if a customer should click on them.
41. Your website has been reviewed for all the latest Search Engine Marketing techniques. Contact WWW.Crevand.com for help with these strategies.

	ASSESSMENT				IMPLEMENTATION		
	NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD
1.							
7.							
11.							
12.							
17.							
18.							
20.							
28.							
41.							

XXVIII. Internet Marketing Strategies Continued . . .

- 138** Pay-Per-Click advertising is used to generate traffic to the website (Google Adwords™, Bing™, Facebook™ (Meta™), or LinkedIn™, for example).
- 149** A fully optimized profile has been created on Google Business Profile™.
- 157** A variety of content has been created ranging from articles to eBooks to tip sheets/checklists to share on social media platforms.
- 158** Images that appeal to a diner's emotions have been used in your content.
- 161** A database of all images you have purchased with image numbers and order numbers has been kept for the purpose of preventing copyright infringement lawsuits
- 169** Your primary social media accounts have been monitored daily and responses have been sent to all inbound messages/inquiries.
- 173**

NA	Y	N	NI	P	RP	DD



Profit Tip:

The technology of the Internet changes almost daily. Google and other search engines update their algorithms on a regular basis and what might have worked with respect to marketing your business online yesterday may NOT work today. The tactics in this section have all worked, yet it is important to reassess their value based upon today's technologies, new database management strategies, Search Engine Optimization and Search Engine Marketing methods. Seek the advice of an innovative online marketing agency such as www.Crevand.com to help your company take advantage of the latest and most effective digital/online marketing strategies



A Wise Old Owl Once Said . . .

"Without data and testing, Search Engine Optimization becomes a guessing game."

~ Dan O'Donnell

Co-founder and President, Crevand SEO, Inc.

XXXIII. Restaurant & Dining Horror Stories *(Partial)*

Most people, at one time or another, have had an unpleasant dining experience. They may have been treated badly by the host/hostess, wait staff, or even the restaurant manager. They may have had difficulty with their reservation, table location, or inferior food preparation. When something like this happens, the customer may never complain, but they will silently resolve never to patronize that restaurant again. More importantly, they will probably tell many of their friends and relatives about their negative experience.

Described on the next several pages are a number of "Restaurant & Dining Horror Stories". These situations have actually happened and reflect the operational failings of many restaurants. These unpleasant experiences happen in many restaurants, of all sizes, individually owned or franchise owned, upscale, take-out, or deli style and in many towns and cities all over the world. Fortunately, there are many lessons Restaurant Owners can learn through the mistakes of other restaurateurs as described in the following vignettes. Read them carefully and learn the lessons contained therein.

A chilling night! After reading a raving review for a new restaurant in Concord, NH, I made reservations for 5 people approximately two weeks prior to our visit. We arrived promptly and were told we had to wait to be seated. About 15-20 minutes later we were seated in front of the entrance where the door opened directly onto the street, and it was a cold night. I requested better seating and was abruptly told there was nothing else available. We decided to try to make the best of it and stayed (after all, the food was supposed to be fantastic!). Our waitress waited for us to be seated and quickly asked for our drink order. One member of the party asked for iced tea and was informed she'd have to brew the tea and bring a glass of ice. The rest of us asked for a minute to review the wine list. Water was poured and off she went. We did not see our waitress again for more than 30 minutes. After being in the restaurant for about an hour, we had only water on the table. At this point we decided that the restaurant was not going to come close to the reviews that I had read and requested our coats to leave.

My friend commented to the hostess (who is the owner) that they needed to work out some of the kinks and they must be just having a bad night. The hostess very rudely said that we must be the ones having a bad night. But to top it all off, she turned to us and told us she'd get the check for the iced tea!!! I guess she was right about our having a bad night because we did not enjoy her rudeness or her restaurant. And we DID NOT PAY FOR THE ICED TEA!!!

Lesson: I think the biggest lesson is that no matter what is going on in your restaurant you need to make your diners feel welcome and happy. If she had only said I'm sorry for the long wait...how about a drink on the house? I bet we would have stayed and spent our money and come away with positive feelings instead of telling everyone we know that we would not enter the restaurant again!

S. Bouchard, Pembroke, NH

"Well done is better than well said."
Benjamin Franklin

WOW! This stuff is potent! I ordered a salad with the house dressing, which turned out to be honey mustard. Not long after starting to eat the salad, I began to wheeze and cough. Apparently, there was a bit too much mustard in the dressing, a fact that I brought to the server's attention as soon as he reappeared. I drank all the water in my glass to ease the wheezing and coughing. The wheezing finally stopped, but the coughing continued. The server asked if I wanted more water, I nodded yes, and he turned and left. When he came back to refill my water glass, I was still coughing, but not as much as earlier. The server remained silent and unaware. Once again, he turned and left. The coughing finally abated, but the server's careless manner was disappointing. I felt that at least he should have offered to bring another salad with a less toxic dressing.

Lesson: Managers need to train their wait staff to be more observant and attentive in addition to giving the staff the authority to provide compensatory services or replacement servings for diners who may be dissatisfied with some aspect of their dining experience. The wait staff also needs to be aware of potential safety problems with choking or coughing. Indifference and lack of attention will not encourage a diner to return.

W. Evans, Natick, MA

"If we don't take care of our customers, someone else will."

Unknown

Third time never fails... or does it? We had three very poor experiences at a new upscale restaurant in Portsmouth, NH. When it first opened, we tried it on a popular night and discovered they were having a private function. While we found this strange, we found it stranger to have one of the employees practically snarl at us that they were having a private function and we were not allowed in, instead of "Sorry, this is a private function, however, we would love to have you come back on another night." Second experience; we were greeted with apathy, made to wait in the middle of the floor, surrounded by diners (not even invited to the bar) and seated by a very rude hostess (different one than the night of the private function). The wait staff was indifferent and while we were able to enjoy each other's company, there was no ambiance whatsoever. Third time; we went with some friends and were seated with a little more flair for customer care. However, we found the food to be mediocre and very much over-priced.

Lesson: They could easily have posted a sign on the entrance door to announce the private function, or they could have invited us back another night. They could also train their staff to be friendlier and more attentive.

L. Altman, North Hampton, NH

"A smiling face is half the meal."

Latvian Proverb

Editor's Note: This story is personally disturbing to me as I helped the owner develop his business plan and secure financing to start the restaurant. Likewise, I also frequented this restaurant and found the food to be both overpriced and scarce. The primary focus seems to be on "presentation" and not substance.

The mystery of the Tardy Server: A group of us were working late in Boston one evening and decided to go out for our evening meal at around 9:00 PM. The restaurant was less than half full, and after a twelve-minute wait, our server finally seated us. Two in our group ordered appetizers. The first appetizer arrived precisely thirty-four minutes later. I mentioned this to the server, who replied in a cheerful tone, "Has it been that long?" We were too hungry to argue. In approximately ten minutes, the rest of the

orders arrived, but we all agreed the wait was far too long. Since the restaurant is part of a well-known national chain, I went to their web site and found the name and contact information of the district manager. I wrote a letter explaining what happened and gave all the details I could remember. Three days later, the district manager called to apologize and ask a few questions. He could not offer a reason for the delay, but he did apologize and also sent fifty dollars' worth of coupons.

Lesson: The wait staff needs to be more attentive and offer an immediate apology when things go wrong, even if it is beyond their control. If the customer still appears to be dissatisfied, then summon a manager to make things right for the diner face-to-face. The District Manager acted in the best interests of the restaurant by giving us coupons as an incentive to try the restaurant again, hopefully resulting in a better dining experience the next time.

W. Evans, Natick, MA

"A well-run restaurant is like a winning baseball team. It makes the most of every crew member's talent and takes advantage of every split-second opportunity to speed up service."

David Ogilvy

Editor's Note: I find that it always pays to bring poor service or an indifferent attitude on the part of a server to the attention of a manager. Usually, the problem is resolved satisfactorily. If you don't express your concerns, the owner/manager can only assume their patrons are satisfied and they will never have the opportunity to improve their operations or the quality of their service.

This is only a sample, there are many more stories like this ...

On a less serious note ...

See the next section for Famous (and not so famous) Quotes about Dining and Food

XXXIV. Famous (and not so famous) Quotes about Dining and Food *(Food for thought and entertainment)*

"A Hot dog at the ballpark is better than steak at the Ritz."
Humphrey Bogart

"Old people shouldn't eat health foods. They need all the preservatives they can get."
Robert Orben

"What do snowmen eat for breakfast . . . snowflakes."
Unknown

"Some things you have to do every day. Eating seven apples on Saturday night instead of one a day just isn't going to get the job done."
Jim Rohn

"I will not eat oysters. I want my food dead - not sick, not wounded - dead."
Woody Allen

"The next time you feel like complaining, remember that your garbage disposal probably eats better than 30 percent of the people in the world."
Robert Orben

"This recipe is certainly silly. It says to separate two eggs, but it doesn't say how far to separate them."
Gracie Allen

"Never eat more than you can lift."
Miss Piggy

"VEGETABLES are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie."
Jim Davis

"Part of the secret of success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside."
Mark Twain

This is only a sample, there are many more like this ...

XXXVI. James S. O'Donnell - - Bio

Mr. O'Donnell is a Founding Partner of **Crevand, Inc.** a specialty Online/Internet Marketing Strategy company formed with his son, Dan, in 2008. Crevand's creative strategies uniquely enable businesses of all sizes to leverage their online assets to out-market their competition and effectively manage their marketing campaigns for raising brand awareness, both online and offline. Crevand, Inc. is a trusted SEO agency with an expertise in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) that offers its clients a customized range of proven marketing services that deliver results. With over fifteen years of experience optimizing and ranking web sites for increased search engine presence, online branding, traffic generation, and top rankings, we provide clients with targeted search engine traffic and cost-effective SEO campaigns with a high ROI. Research and data are the backbone of every SEO campaign. In a continually changing search market, testing, data, and knowledge are what drives our client success. As an innovative online marketing agency that emphasizes creative marketing campaigns through SEO/SEM solutions, targeted content marketing, and data driven research, Crevand, Inc. will create a high visibility online presence for your business that will generate quality traffic resulting in increased business revenue. Crevand has two offices, one in Wolfeboro, NH and the other in Boise, ID.

Mr. O'Donnell also founded **Jaguar Management Consulting Group, Inc.** in Kingston, NH in 1995 to counsel business owners and senior management teams struggling with growth and cash flow constraints. He provides practical, cost-effective, traditional marketing and online marketing strategies, business development and growth strategies, financial management controls, and turnaround management methodologies to revitalize and reposition the business for profitability. Although he still consults, his primary endeavors are now focused on Crevand, Inc. In his consulting capacity, Mr. O'Donnell has counseled hundreds of businesses to effectively manage their bottom line, increase revenues, and implement cost control strategies.

Prior Responsibilities and Experience: Mr. O'Donnell has served both the Public and Private sectors and has consulted with companies of all sizes. He has completed a CFO/COO project to turnaround a telecom company where this company was restored to profitability as well as implementing a series of highly successfully Search Engine Marketing Strategies. Previously, he managed an eight-year, part-time consulting contract with the City of Portsmouth, NH Economic Development Dept. with services that included developing and implementing marketing strategies, business development processes, business planning, conducting productivity studies, financing strategies, and conducting business seminars for over 375 businesses. Concurrently, he also fulfilled a three-year, part-time consulting contract with the City of Somersworth, NH Economic Development Dept. providing similar services to over 50 small businesses. Additionally, he proposed and managed a long-term, part-time contract with the New Hampshire State Port Authority counseling fisherman leaving the fishing industry to start new ventures.

Mr. O'Donnell was President of a publicly traded computer company that marketed software products and services for managing municipalities. This was a turnaround situation where the company was restored to a break-even position. Additionally, he held a number of senior management positions chartered with the mission of starting new international Consulting Services, Professional Services, and Customer Services divisions where he had complete P&L responsibility for revenue generation, business development, marketing and sales strategy, productizing intangible services, financial

management, and building successful, responsive, and profitable organizations at Prime Computer, Symbolics, Inc., and Applicon, Inc.

Jaguar Consulting has developed a number of **Self-Assessment Marketing and Management Guides and Checklists** whereby businesses can conduct internal assessments for identifying both growth opportunities and areas of inefficiency. These products include a One Month Business Tune-up Checklist, Retail Store Management and Marketing Checklist, Restaurant Management and Marketing Checklist, Business Start-up Checklist, Employee Benefits Checklist, and a Checklist for Selecting an Assisted Living Facility for Yourself or a Loved One.

Mr. O'Donnell has taught several seminars and workshops that include Starting a Small Business, Business Planning, Managing Through a Difficult Economy, Google is Your Friend, and various Internet Marketing Strategy topics.

Education: Mr. O'Donnell holds an MBA from Babson College, a Bachelor of Business Management from Merrimack College where he graduated with the highest Grade Point Average in the Business Administration Program, and an Associate of Mechanical Engineering from Franklin Institute of Boston.

Community: He has served as a Board Member for the Kingston Children's Center for three years, Atlantic TurnKey Corporation for two years, New Hampshire State Port Authority's Fisherman's Revolving Loan Fund for three years and the Society of Professional Consultants for four years as well as Management Advisory Committees for several small businesses, the Advisory Board for the University of New Hampshire's CEO Forum, a member of US Senator John E. Sununu's Small Business Advisory Group, the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce's Business Development and Technology Roundtable Committees, three years as a judge to annually select the Top Ten Best Company's in NH, and four years the New Hampshire State Director for the nationally known FastTrac™ Business Planning and Business Start-Up programs. He also received an "Excellence in Business Counseling" award at the NH Economic Development Conference in December 2000. In May 2017, Mr. O'Donnell was appointed to the Town of Wolfeboro's Economic Development Committee as an Alternate Member for two years.

Personal: Mr. O'Donnell enjoys spending time with his four adult children and his grandchildren. Leisure time activities include traveling, hiking, walking on the beach with his wife, snowshoeing, kayaking, classical music and reading. Recently he has taken up swimming and participated in the swim leg of the NH Granite Man triathlon the past three years. One of his goals is to have a part-time business with each one of his children and grandchildren for both fun and profit.

Jim O'Donnell
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XXXVIII. Other Business Checklists - - Descriptions

Retail Store Management and Marketing Checklist: Retail storeowners and managers can now conduct a thorough "Self-Assessment" of where their operations stand today, and then, based upon the results of this analysis, implement sound business strategies for accelerating growth, reducing unnecessary waste, and improving their store's profitability. This unique management tool features over 1,000 tactics, strategies, and action items for evaluating twenty-five different operational categories ranging from store image to customer service to marketing. The Checklist includes a simple process for helping you identify the highest priority tasks along with assigning responsibilities and due dates for completing each action item. This process is your personal management tool for tracking progress. Bring your retail store to the next level of growth and profitability by using this management Checklist today. To see how your store can benefit from this Checklist, visit [Retail Store Management and Marketing Checklist](#)

Restaurant Management and Marketing Checklist: Restaurant owners and managers can now conduct a thorough "Self-Assessment" of where their operations stand today, and then, based upon the results of this analysis, implement sound business strategies for accelerating growth, reducing unnecessary waste, and improving their restaurant's profitability. This unique management tool features over 1,425 tactics, strategies, and action items for evaluating thirty-two different operational categories ranging from restaurant image to customer service to marketing. The Checklist includes a simple process to help you identify the highest priority tasks along with assigning responsibilities and due dates for completing each action item. This process is your personal management tool for tracking progress. Bring your restaurant to the next level of growth and profitability by using this management Checklist today. To see how your restaurant can benefit from this Checklist, visit [Restaurant Management and Marketing Checklist](#)

Employee Benefits (Employee Motivation) Checklist: Motivating employees and keeping them motivated is one of the most difficult, and most rewarding, activities of a senior manager. Even in the most difficult of economic times, we know employees have choices regarding the company, and the culture, in which they prefer to work. This checklist is designed to be a self-assessment management tool for conducting an evaluation of your company's employee benefits and motivational strategies. Offering over 500 ideas, this guide is designed for the serious management team that truly wants to evolve their business to the next level of growth and profitability via the strategy of employee satisfaction. To see some ideas for what your company could do to improve employee satisfaction, visit [Employee Benefits \(Employee Motivation\) Checklist](#)

Business Anniversary and Celebrations Checklist: This checklist has over 400 ideas to help your business enjoy its important milestones and celebrate its employees and customers. This Checklist features many interesting marketing and fun activities for restaurants, retail stores, child themed stores and numerous ideas for all types of businesses. This is a great way to build employee morale and connect with your

customers - - show them how much you appreciate them. Have fun at your celebration with some of the ideas featured in the [Business Anniversary and Celebrations Checklist](#)

Personal Readiness To Start A Business Checklist: Am I prepared to be a business owner is the most important question that must be asked? With over 300 insightful questions and action steps, this checklist will help you answer that question. The Checklist is a self-assessment tool that is designed to help you prepare for starting a business. Its primary focus is on determining if you are truly ready to start a business by examining a range of topics that include family considerations, financial resources, personal and professional support systems as well as many other vital subjects. Each module has a simple process that allows you to take an inventory of all the factors and actions necessary for success. This can be done quickly and easily and will rapidly identify areas that will require you to seek additional information or to conduct more research. Beside each question or action item is a space for making notes that will help facilitate the evaluation process and serve as a reminder to follow up on certain items. This is a simple personal management process to help keep you focused. The checklist is based on the author's experience with hundreds of small businesses. To get started now, visit [Personal Readiness To Start A Business Checklist](#)

If, after taking this assessment you believe you are truly ready to start a business, then consider the **Start a Business Checklist – Implementation** described below.

Start A Business Checklist - Implementation: Am I prepared to be a business owner is the most important question that must be asked? The "Implementation" Start A Business Checklist is much more extensive than the "Personal Readiness" Checklist. This Checklist will help you minimize mistakes and prepare you for a successful launch of your business. The same 300+ questions and action items are asked but included is a comprehensive format and process to help you manage priorities, due dates, and the resources required to launch your business. Additionally, there are Summary Charts and Tables showing the various Business Entity Types, a discussion of The 13 Worst Business Start-Up Mistakes, and a chart for Viable Alternatives to Starting a New Business. Also included is the complete Business Planning Guide (described below) that will guide you through the process of writing your business plan. If you purchase this Checklist, then **DO NOT** buy the "[How To Write A Business Plan Guide](#)" as it is included. The Start A Business Checklist is based on the author's experience with hundreds of small businesses. If you are serious about launching your business, this is the checklist for

The **How To Write A Business Plan Guide** is designed to provide a process for creating several variations of a business plan with each variation used for a specific purpose and for a specific audience. This guide features a One Page Executive Summary Format, a Simplified Model for a Business Plan, guidance for Creating a Comprehensive Business Plan, instructions for How to Use the Business Plan Guide, a discussion of The Business Plan creation Process, helpful Tips for Writing the Business Plan, a sample Business Plan Outline, a Business Plan Outline Description, 2 sample Cash Flow Statements that are downloadable for your business plan, 22 Market Research Sources, and 27 possible Funding Options. A comprehensive business plan that is well-written, based upon market research, and is supported by a conservative and thoughtful Cash Flow Statement will provide a structure for helping to make your business successful. This guide is based on the author's experience with hundreds of small businesses. To get started with writing your business plan, visit the [How To Write A Business Plan Guide](#)

Business Plan Review: Would you benefit from having an experienced businessperson review your business plan before you present the plan to potential investors or bank loan officers? Once your business plan has been written, I will spend up to two hours reviewing your business plan or loan proposal for completeness, viability, and to see if it “makes good business sense”. In other words, let’s catch any mistakes now! This review does not include rewriting any part of the plan, conducting market research, modifying the Cash Flow Statement, or commenting on any legalities, but I will review the assumptions, the numbers, the marketing plan, and the overall presentation as well as provide feedback on my general impressions. I’ll give constructive feedback with some brief written comments, ask some questions of clarification, and provide helpful suggestions for improving your Business Plan. Take advantage of this value-priced service by visiting [Business Plan Review](#)

Business Documents Review: Would your business benefit from having an experienced businessperson review your strategic plan, marketing plan, Search Engine Optimization strategy, Search Engine Marketing plan, business plan, expansion and growth strategy, Cash Flow Statement, or any other business initiative? Do your plans need validation or tweaking?, Do you need help identifying areas of improvement or selecting a better option? Are you currently getting the results you want? If not, perhaps having an experienced set of eyes “take a closer look” will provide a new perspective. Our Business Documents Review Services are tailored to fit your needs and budget. For more info visit [Business Documents Review](#)

Custom Checklists and Guides: If you like the content, organization, and format of my checklists, then I can customize an existing checklist (or create a completely new Checklist) for your business or industry. For more info visit [Business Documents Review](#)

Checklist for Choosing an Assisted Living Facility for Yourself or a Loved One: This Checklist features over 650 items to be considered when making this critical family decision. If you have a family member, friend, relative, neighbor, or business associate considering an Assisted Living Facility lifestyle, or a senior living home, for themselves or a family member, this checklist will make the decision-making process much easier. This checklist is based on our family’s personal experience with selecting an ALF for my Mother-in-law, handling several of her medical emergencies at the ALF, and working through several ALF organizational changes. Select the “right” Assisted living Facility for your loved one by visiting [Checklist for Selecting an Assisted Living Facility](#)