

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

THE MORE TRAINING and education an individual has, the better the opportunity to begin employment at a higher level of income and responsibility. This well-known fact applies to every industry, including the restaurant business. However, the restaurant industry subscribes to the adage that experience is a great teacher. Therefore, no one has to drop out of the running because of lack of education or specific training.

More than in many other industries, restaurants offer entry-level career opportunities in great variety. The ambitious, hardworking, and career-minded individual is sure to find a route to the top in this growing industry. Thus, for the recent high school graduate who plans an immediate career start, a restaurant career is well worth considering. It is also ideal for individuals who wish to begin or change careers later in life.

Most restaurant operations are willing to invest time and money in training newcomers to the field. Once an individual has gained

a sound base of knowledge, it is possible for him or her to move upward into jobs with more responsibility and better pay.

Opportunities in High School

Students who are still in high school can accelerate their restaurant career development by taking food-service courses offered in high schools or vocational schools. These courses, depending on the type and number taken, can give the graduate an advantage when seeking employment. Also, part-time work in a restaurant while still in high school can be a valuable aid.

The National Restaurant Association and the American Hotel and Lodging Association formed an educational partnership called the Hospitality Business Alliance (HBA) to create a nationwide system of high school hospitality courses linked with mentored worksite experiences.

Under the HBA/ProStart School-to-Career Initiative, more than twenty-four thousand high school juniors and seniors are now studying restaurant and food-service management at more than six hundred schools in thirty-six states, according to a report by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF).

The ProStart curriculum is a two-year curriculum designed to teach students the management skills needed for a career in the restaurant and food-service industry. The students participate in paid internships where industry managers mentor them. When students meet academic standards and complete a checklist of competencies, they are awarded the ProStart National Certificate of Achievement, which signifies they are well qualified to enter the industry workforce.

The NRAEF offers \$2,000 scholarships to certificate holders to help further their education.

Junior and Community Colleges

One of the richest sources of new management talent in the restaurant industry is found in junior and community colleges that offer associate degrees in various aspects of food service. Hundreds of jobs are open to graduates with this training.

Two-year college programs in food service pave the way for graduates to undertake beginning administrative and supervisory jobs in nearly any type of restaurant operation. There are a wide variety of courses available at junior and community colleges. They include:

- Food purchasing and storage
- Food preparation
- Menu planning
- Equipment purchasing and layout
- Personnel management and job analysis
- Food standards and sanitation
- Diet therapy
- Catering
- Beverage control
- Food cost accounting
- Record keeping

In addition to these courses, a number of general courses, designed to broaden the student's knowledge and outlook on the restaurant industry, may include the following:

- Communication skills
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Economics
- Chemistry

- Nutrition
- Physical education

The advantage of many community and junior college programs is that they are less expensive than other college programs and they combine classroom work with practical job experience in part-time restaurant jobs. Many restaurant owners support local college programs by providing part-time employment for students and also career opportunities for graduates.

Four-Year Universities or Colleges

The restaurant industry's need for graduates of four-year college programs in management has never been filled. A large number of management and management-training positions are open in all segments of the industry, including the following:

- Assistant manager
- Food production supervisor
- Purchasing agent
- Food cost accountant
- Food-service director
- Director of recipe development
- Sales manager
- Banquet manager
- Catering manager

Undergraduate programs include:

- Basic and advanced courses in food preparation
- Specialized courses in restaurant accounting, catering, management, and sanitation

- General courses in economics, law, marketing, cost control, and finance

Many four-year colleges require summer work in restaurants as well. Graduates of four-year programs can receive a bachelor's degree in restaurant management.

Training in the Restaurant Industry

The restaurant industry is a very competitive business. Therefore, restaurant employers offer extensive training to their workers to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction. These training programs improve restaurant business and at the same time help unskilled workers develop career potential.

Workers are trained not only for the jobs they are hired for but also for the positions to which they would like to advance. Through such programs as apprenticeships, internships, mentoring, and management development initiatives, employees have the opportunity to explore their interest in and suitability for careers in the restaurant industry. Programs of this nature offer workers with great potential but limited skills a supportive environment where they can develop the expertise needed to enhance their career options.

McDonald's Hamburger University

McDonald's Corporation, the largest restaurant organization in the world with more than thirty thousand restaurants doing business in 119 countries around the globe, has a worldwide management-training center in Oak Brook, Illinois. It is called Hamburger University, and its main purpose is to instruct McDonald's personnel in the various aspects of its business.

Hamburger University offers a crew development program, where employees learn the basic operations of restaurant performance while always focusing on the customer; a restaurant management course, where students develop key skills to successfully develop a restaurant business plan; a mid-management program where McDonald's consultants, department heads, and franchisees are skilled in the competencies needed to effectively lead and consult with restaurant staff around the world; and an executive development program, where McDonald's officers enhance their leadership skills needed to support employee, owner/operator, and customer growth worldwide.

Nearly six thousand students each year attend Hamburger University, each with the goal of advancing his or her career. By 2003, Hamburger University had graduated more than seventy thousand people who now manage McDonald's restaurants.

The McDonald's Corporation sums up its management training philosophy in this way:

From our employees, we demand enthusiasm, hard work, stick-to-the-basics, and complete dedication to the objectives of the organization. Our company provides training opportunities at all levels from trainee to executive. All of it begins with the knowledge and skills from the operating restaurant level. There is no progress for those who fail to measure up, and there is no ceiling for those who master the successive tasks.

And Burger King, Too

Burger King Corporation also has a training school to help managers advance their careers. Formerly known as Whopper College, it is now called Burger King University (BKU) and is located in Miami, Florida, at the corporation's headquarters.

Assistant managers receive training in restaurants and regional training centers throughout the country. As part of final training,

before becoming a functional regional manager, employees attend BKU in Miami for one or two weeks to gain administrative and financial training. Total training lasts ten to twelve weeks.

Training covers the operational, technical, marketing, financial, and administrative aspects of the industry. Some of the subjects students are taught include:

- Basic bookkeeping and accounting procedures
- Sanitation standards
- How to properly maintain grounds
- How to promote programs
- How to identify problems with machinery
- How to identify viable work applicants
- How to schedule personnel
- How to order inventory
- How many cash registers to have open
- How to delegate responsibility
- How to anticipate patronage
- How to prepare food products to ensure consistency from location to location

Founded with one restaurant in Miami, Florida, in 1954, Burger King and its franchises in 2003 were operating 11,350 restaurants in all fifty states and fifty-seven countries and territories worldwide. Ninety-one percent of Burger King restaurants are owned and operated by independent franchisees.

Pizza Hut's Minority Mentor Program

Pizza Hut, Inc., headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, conducts a year-long program for newly hired minority and women managers. In this program, new managers are placed with personnel two levels

above their rank who serve as role models. Informal contact is made every two weeks during the year to provide indoctrination into the corporate environment and to discuss problems. The mentors guide, counsel, protect, and sometimes promote the development of the junior members. Role models may be in a different department from the new manager in order to provide broader exposure to the corporation.

Pizza Hut was established in 1958. There are a total of 5,901 franchises in the United States and 3,571 in foreign countries. Nearly 25 percent are corporate-owned outlets.