

CHAPTER FIVE

DINING MANAGEMENT

The area of dining management has probably the greatest variation among houses. In some instances, the cook is in charge of all kitchen duties. The house director should then be sensitive in seeing that kitchen operations are unhampered. In other situations, the house director has responsibility for planning menus, ordering food, and supervising the kitchen staff. Regardless of specific duties, the house director should maintain an understanding and friendly relationship with the cook, ensuring that the chapter members show him or her courtesy and consideration at all times. Friction in the kitchen reverberates throughout the entire house. Good cooks are hard to find, so it should be a priority of the house director to keep things running smoothly in the kitchen.

Dining room supplies and maintenance are generally the house director's responsibility. Table linens, silver, and china require periodic inspection and replenishment. Various important repairs will escape the notice of even the most capable student house manager.

While the maintenance of an orderly, neat house is primarily up to the chapter and its members, the house director should let it be known that he or she takes great pride in its condition so that a little "prompting" when necessary will not be resented.

The management of a large house cannot be left to inexperienced young people. It is important that the house director be able to act quickly and on his or her own judgment in an emergency (such as heating problems or defective plumbing) without having to locate the house manager, who may be in class, at home for the weekend, or out of reach.

Again, communication is important, and the chapter should have a clear understanding with the house director as to exactly what the kitchen and dining responsibilities are. Also, if the chapter has given the house director a budget with which to work, he or she must do everything possible to stay within its guidelines. Ideally, the chapter and the house director will work out a budget together.

A job description of the duties and responsibilities of food service and housekeeping might include the following:

1. Plan menus.
2. Supervise the preparation and serving of meals.
3. Coordinate with appropriate chapter personnel to budget for and provide quality food service as well as hire and compensate other chapter employees.
4. Purchase food and household supplies as efficiently and economically as possible.

5. Maintain control over the consumption and utilization of all purchases, establishing and maintaining adequate inventories.
6. Maintain records of expenditures, costs, and cash outlays.
7. Participate in the development of the chapter budget.
8. Coordinate with chapter financial managers and alumni/ae advisors on required house maintenance and on the purchase of major equipment items.
9. Ensure the cleanliness and orderliness of common areas of the house.
10. Train, supervise, and evaluate other employees (e.g. cooks, housekeepers, and serving staff).
11. Monitor utility costs and recommend and/or implement energy conservation measures, etc.
12. Advise and/or consult on purchases of major furniture items and on the overall appearance, tastefulness, and livability of the house.

SUGGESTED JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR KITCHEN EMPLOYEES

MORNING COOK

Employed from 6:00 am to noon,

Monday through Saturday

Set up breakfast

- Cereals
- Juices
- Bread
- Bagels and muffins (Saturday only)
- Toasters
- Omelets
- Milk, coffee, tea, hot chocolate

After breakfast is set up, start setting up lunch

Keep counters clean

Give assistance to salad bar when needed

On Saturday, do miscellaneous chores (wash windows, clean top of stove, clean storeroom, wipe down cupboards, inventory supplies, refill catsup and mustard, refill salt and pepper, etc.)

KITCHEN ASSISTANT

Employed from 9:30 am - 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Wash all breakfast dishes/pots/pans
Put the food away
Make juices for the following day
Set up salad bar for lunch and dinner; replenish as needed
Set up for lunch (plates, cups, silverware, napkins, beverages)
Wash all lunch dishes/pots/pans
As supplies arrive, check off inventory and put things away
Assist cook(s) as needed

SERVERS

Employed from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm, (this may vary depending on the special event)
Monday through Friday, and from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on Sunday

Set tables
Put ice water pitchers on tables (help conserve water)
Place food on tables when serving family style or serve plated meals
Put food away, clean kitchen, wash dishes, empty garbage, mop floor, and secure kitchen
Recycle as many things as possible (consult with the university's recycling office for information)

AFTERNOON DINNER COOK

Employed from noon to 6:00 pm, Monday through Saturday

Prepare evening dinner
Bake as needed (pastries, breads, desserts)
Prepare condiments for Saturday morning breakfast (cream cheese, jam, etc.)
Do routine cleaning as time permits (stove top, counters, cupboards, floors)
Work with house director on menus and food purchasing
Lock kitchen cupboards and kitchen door when leaving

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWING PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEES PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

1. Have a definite time schedule with ample time allowed.
2. Do your homework; review the application and resume ahead of time. Make sure that all dates and names are consistent.
3. When possible, invite a house corporation board member or a chapter member to assist in the interview process. Two opinions are better than one.
4. Have a prepared list of open-ended questions. Making some occasional notes is permitted, but be brief during the interview. Go back after the interview and elaborate

on the notes. Questions and comments must be appropriate. Keep the notes and applications in a safe, locked file.

5. Select a comfortable setting for the interview where the candidate will be at ease and able to concentrate on the questions. If you, as the interviewer, sit back, it will help present a relaxed atmosphere.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Do not allow phone or personal interruptions.
2. Explain the selection procedure to the candidate, including the timetable for notifying him/her of the decision. Always let the candidate know the status of the search.
3. Ask each candidate the same questions, taking notes for later reference.
4. Don't be uncomfortable or break in with unnecessary comments when a slight pause occurs; wait the person out as he/she will often add a point rather than allow the conversation to stop. Let the candidate answer the questions. The more the candidate talks, the more you will learn about the person.
5. Provide a tour of the facilities. Observe how the candidate interacts when introduced to staff or officers and how many questions he/she asks about the job during the tour. What observations does the candidate make?
6. Note the candidate's appearance, body language, listening skills, and general ability to respond effectively to the questions and comments.
7. Greet the candidate warmly by name to put him/her at ease. Introduce yourself so he/she can call you by name.
8. A few minutes of small talk can be effective in establishing rapport. In going from small talk to the actual interview, bridge the gap with a comment such as, "Let me tell you something about our discussion today."
9. Never show surprise at anything the applicant says, never openly disagree, and never cross-examine. Any of these reactions may cause the person to freeze up.

SUGGESTED OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. You learn little from this type of question.

CORRECT (open-ended)

How have your past job experiences prepared you, directly or indirectly, for this position?

How would you describe your previous supervisor?
Describe an unpleasant work situation in the past and explain how you dealt with it.
What methods do you use to make decisions?
Under what kind of conditions do you feel you learn best?
If you could create the perfect job for yourself, what would it be, and why?
Give some examples of situations in which you have been criticized. How did you react?

WRONG (yes or no answer)

Do you feel you are qualified for this position?
Did you get along with your last supervisor?
Were you able to handle difficult on-the-job situations easily?
Do you consider yourself a good decision maker?
Can you learn quickly under pressure?
Have you ever thought of doing any other type of work?
Can you accept criticism well?

APPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions are appropriate and will provide a great deal of useful information about the candidate.

1. Begin by clarifying any questions resulting from your review of the candidate's resume and application.
2. Do you mind sharing your reason for leaving your previous position?
3. How would your previous employer/supervisor describe your skills and work ethic?
4. Please describe your responsibilities in your previous position.
5. What about this job appeals to you or why are you interested in this position?
6. Please describe the kinds of job responsibilities that you are interested in.
7. Have you worked with college-age students before? Where and under what circumstances?
8. Please describe a situation from your past when you had a task, but were given no explanation of how to accomplish the task? What did you do?
9. What is the best way to approach you when I have a problem with your work?
10. What do you hope to gain from this job?
11. Please describe the worst conflict or hardest task you faced in the past year and how you handled it?
12. If you were a health inspector, describe what you would look for in terms of excellent standards of sanitation.
13. Ask what hours and days the applicant is available to work and determine if there are any possible scheduling conflicts.

INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions are NOT appropriate (according to federal regulations). At no time during the interview and selection process should you ask questions related to the following topics:

1. Length of stay at applicant's current residence
2. Applicant's previous address
3. Name of applicant's church, priest, rabbi, or minister
4. Female applicant's maiden name
5. Number of children he/she has
6. Family planning arrangements
7. Ages of children
8. Age of applicant
9. Childcare arrangements
10. Where applicant's spouse or parents reside
11. If applicant's residence is owned or rented
12. Name of applicant's bank, outstanding loans, bankruptcy status, etc.
13. If the applicant has ever been arrested
14. If the applicant has served in the armed forces
15. If the applicant can read, speak, or write a foreign language (unless it's a job requirement)
16. If the applicant has a disability

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR A COOK

1. Please describe your past job experiences.
2. What did you like most about your last job? What did you like least?
3. How would you describe your ideal job?
4. What accomplishments are you most proud of?
5. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
6. What do you consider to be your greatest weaknesses?
7. What are you hoping to gain from this job?
8. What factors do you consider important for quality food preparation?
9. Please describe the worst conflict or hardest task you faced in the past year and how you handled it.
10. If you were a health inspector, what would you look for in terms of ideal standards of sanitation?
11. Please read this recipe and tell me how you would go about preparing it.
12. Please write down the ingredients of one of your favorite recipes.
13. What are your specialties in terms of food preparation?

LOOK FOR CANDIDATES THAT...

- show interest in the position by asking questions

- have a clean and neat appearance
- can articulate clearly
- have an interest in students, children, and people in general
- have a positive attitude about fraternities and sororities
- look the interviewer in the eye

WHEN CALLING TO CHECK REFERENCES

1. Identify yourself and state the reason for calling
 2. Ask the reference to describe the applicant's:
 - a. Quality of work
 - b. Ability to follow instructions
 - c. Ability to work without supervision and to take initiative
 - d. Problem-solving ability
 - e. Attitude toward work
 - f. Relationship with supervisor and co-workers
 - g. Attendance and punctuality
 - h. Appearance
 - i. Ability to accept criticism and suggestions
 3. Ask the reference whether they would hire the applicant again?
 4. Verify work dates provided on the applicant's resume/application
 5. Thank the person for their time and assistance
- *Always do a background check before hiring

SAMPLE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT FOR HEAD COOK—Page 1 of 2

Be sure the contract is approved in advance by the house corporation and the health department (please refer to the sections about health department rules, etc.).

For the considerations to be received and under the terms stated below,
 _____ agrees

to perform and fulfill the duties of Head Cook for the _____ Chapter of _____.

I. Terms of Employment

From _____	To _____
Vacation Dates _____	
Thanksgiving From _____	To _____
Semester From _____	To _____
Spring From _____	To _____

II. Remuneration

The salary of the Head Cook shall be (\$) per month, payable on the last day of each month following the date employed for _____ months.

Federal and State withholding taxes shall be deducted.

The chapter (will/will not) provide full Social Security coverage based upon a salary and perquisite figure tailored to the employee's situation and (will/will not) provide workman's compensation insurance.

III. Relations with Chapter Residents and Other Employees:

In all contacts relating to employment, the planning of menus, food costs, and complaints, the Head Cook shall confer only with the House Director and persons officially delegated to represent the chapter.

IV. Health Standards

A current food handler's health certificate shall be furnished by the Head Cook to the employer throughout the term of employment. In the event of illness which may become a threat to the health of the living group residents, temporary suspension of duties and/or a statement of adequate health signed by a qualified physician may be required by _____ chapter. A _____ County food service worker permit is required prior to employment.

V. Conditions of Employment

When unable to perform the requisite duties, the Head Cook shall provide a substitute acceptable to the chapter. If absence is due to illness or disability, payment for the substitute shall be borne by the _____ chapter for a maximum of three (3) days per semester. Otherwise, the Head Cook will assume the expense. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of one or more substitutes shall be provided to the House Director by the Head Cook.

VI. Duties of the Head Cook

1. Advise the House Director as to the quantity of food needed and assist with the planning of menus.

2. Prepare planned meals alone except when an assistant is assigned this duty. With the exception of special occasions, meals shall consist of lunches and dinners on Mondays through Fridays plus prepared dinners which can easily be heated or completed by others on Saturdays. Daily number of servings per meal will vary but will average _____ to _____. Monday evenings with new members present will average _____ to _____. Other special occasions with guests will be recruitment events, guest dinners, moms' and dads' weekends, etc.

3. Supervise serving of food. Servers sometimes help in dishing up food for individual servings and will need instructions as to the number to be served as well as the type of silver and dishes needed.

4. Take care of food supplies and leftovers. Under no circumstances shall food be removed from the premises for consumption by employees.

5. Maintain a neat and clean appearance (hairnet is required).

VII. Termination of Employment

Termination of employment shall be effective upon approval of the House Director, the chapter president, and other boards or individuals designated by chapter.

This contract may be terminated with or without cause by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.

APPROVED:

House Director _____ Date _____
Address _____

Chapter President _____ Date _____
Alumni/ae Advisor _____ Date _____
Head Cook _____ Date _____

SAMPLE EVALUATION FOR HEAD COOK

HEAD COOK'S EVALUATION

NAME _____ DATE HIRED _____

FOOD PREPARATION _____ POOR AVERAGE EXCELLENT

Meals are nutritious and "tasty" _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Menus are varied _____ 1 2 3 4 5

New foods are introduced _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Presentation of meals is attractive _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

TIME USAGE _____ POOR AVERAGE EXCELLENT

Employee is punctual _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Food is served on time _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Tasks are organized well _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Employee works efficiently _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

CLEANLINESS POOR AVERAGE EXCELLENT

Personal appearance 1 2 3 4 5

Food handling 1 2 3 4 5

Work stations 1 2 3 4 5

Food storage areas 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

ATTITUDE POOR AVERAGE EXCELLENT

Friendly and cheerful 1 2 3 4 5

Looks for ways to assist students
and staff/advisors 1 2 3 4 5

Leaves family problems at home 1 2 3 4 5

Takes constructive suggestions well 1 2 3 4 5

Maintains professional demeanor 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Head Cook's Signature

House Director's Signature

Date