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## Manager's Tip: Professional Development Opportunities

**Statistic:** 79% of hospitality workers say that opportunities for professional development would be most impactful in promoting a supportive workplace environment.

**Problem:** Evidence suggests that hospitality industry training, in general, is “poor,” which poses an array of problems. Inadequate professional instruction “jeopardizes service quality, and can demean and embarrass employees,” and often causes “employees to be disciplined for their inability to perform.”

Due to the industry’s high turnover rate, it is uncommon for hospitality management to:

- be invested in thoroughly training employees
- recognize the professional desires of many employees

However, “training and development affect job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which in turn affect staff retention.” A lack of professional investment in employees increases the likelihood that they will leave, often in search of jobs with more opportunity and consideration for their ambitions.

**manager's tip**  
by healthy hospitality

## Professional Development Opportunities

**79%**  
of hospitality workers say that **opportunities for professional development** would be most impactful in promoting a supportive work environment.

**It can be as easy as offering:**

- **cross-training in the workplace**
- **project responsibilities**
- **ask-me-anything sessions**
- **de-escalation training**
- **food and alcohol safety training**

**Solution:** Gather ideas from your team about professional opportunities they would like and support them in pursuing their goals. Consider providing:

- cross-training in the workplace
- opportunities to be responsible for a project
- de-escalation training for navigating tough conversations with peers and customers
- food and alcohol safety training
- ask-me-anything sessions with management

For resources and more information, visit [healthy-hospitality.org](https://healthy-hospitality.org) or contact UHG at [hospitalityhealth@uhg.com](mailto:hospitalityhealth@uhg.com).

Source: Andrew Baughman

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## Wingstop to Test AI Phone Answering System

Wingstop is testing the use of voice bots to answer the phone.

The 1,959-unit wing chain is partnering with ConverseNow to use its “virtual ordering assistant” in some locations. The bot will be able to take

multiple phone orders at once, cutting down on hold times and dropped calls and freeing up employees.

The bot will also be able to make recommendations based on what a person orders. And it can speak both English and Spanish. Customers can still ask to talk to a human if they want to.

Wingstop is the latest restaurant chain to try voice ordering, which promises to both save time for employees and improve sales with automatic upselling. Del Taco, Domino's, Panera, Checkers and Newk's Eatery are using similar tech either on the phone or at the drive-thru squawk box.

It makes sense for Wingstop, which hopes to one day digitize 100% of its transactions and which still takes a lot of orders over the phone. Digital sales accounted for 60% of its overall revenue in the fourth quarter, an all-time high. Meanwhile, as much as 30% of the chain's volume comes over the phone, then-CEO Charlie Morrison said last year.

"I think there's opportunities as it relates to phone orders that are still in front of us and how can we make that a digital transaction and take pressure off of the front counter," Wingstop CEO Michael Skipworth said in May, according to a transcript on financial services site Sentieo.

Source: Joe Guskowski, Restaurant Business

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## Industry Study Forecasts 2023 Job Growth, Not Major Recession

In their 2023 State of the Industry report, the National Restaurant Association predicts restaurant employment will reach about 12.4 million workers by the end of 2023, compared to roughly 12.1 million at the end of 2022 and roughly 11.4 million workers at the end of 2021. This growth is predicated on the Association's projections that do not foresee a serious recession in 2023.



Despite current employment levels, 62% of restaurants surveyed say they're understaffed. Only in one segment of the industry (coffee & snack) did a minority (49%) of operators feel they were understaffed. All other sectors as classified by the National Restaurant Association saw majorities of operators report short staffing. About 54% of operators expect hiring to be about as difficult this year as last year, while 35% expect it to get more difficult.

One factor that may constrain employment is a weakness in inflation adjusted sales. The association foresees sales growth will be driven significantly by menu price increases necessitated by persistently high costs.

“While nominal food and beverage sales are projected to surpass pre-pandemic levels in 2023, they won’t on an inflation-adjusted basis,” according to the report.

Source: *Aneurin Canham-Clyne*

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## 4 Areas of Your Restaurant You Can Improve with Data

When your purveyor runs out of tomatoes, you know what ingredients you can substitute. When your hostess doesn’t show up, you have a server or bartender on call to fill in. You know your

restaurant and know how to make the best of the tools at your disposal. But when it comes to seeing the big picture, you need something different for your toolbox. Enter point-of-sale reporting.

Accurate, accessible data is essential to your restaurant’s sustainability. It can help you keep up with guest trends and forecast the future. Whether you’re dealing with a sales slump, or the ongoing labor shortage means it’s time to reevaluate your operations, cloud-based reporting can help you make key business decisions with confidence.

Source: *SpotOn*

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## 4 Tactics Restaurant Managers Can Implement Now to Improve Employee Engagement

Today, restaurants’ staggering turnover rates are 70 percent higher than all other sectors. What can restaurant owners and managers do to better engage workers and increase retention in the long run? The current state of employee retention rates can feel dire for restaurant owners, especially after the Covid pandemic. McKinsey [research](#) analysts claim that the retail and hospitality employment sector – a segment that includes restaurant

employees – is up against “a more serious retention challenge” than any other employment sector, with employee exit rates outpacing all other sectors by more than 70 percent.



Keeping staff has long been an issue for the food and beverage industry, but many restaurants now feel it is their

primary obstacle to running a successful business. According to the National Restaurant Association’s 2022 State of the Restaurant Industry Report, 50 percent of operators for both full-service and quick-service restaurants said that recruiting and retaining employees was their top challenge. Seven out of 10 restaurant operators reported they do not have enough staff to support current service demands.

These studies underline restaurants’ biggest challenge this year: Retaining high-performing staff. Some of the most common impediments to employee engagement and retention include insufficient or improper onboarding processes for new staff, ineffective or even chaotic communication with workers, and little or no acknowledgement of great performance at work. These lead to poor employee experience and often frustration among staff.

To start 2023 on the right foot, click Read Full Story below to hear about four tactics restaurant owners can implement now to improve employee engagement at all levels, and subsequently increase long-term retention rates.

*Source: Omri Erel, Modern Restaurant Management*

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The Wisconsin Restaurant Association  
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Madison, WI 53713  
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