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Tip Top Server
Free Ebook

Be a TIPTOP Server!

Written by
J.D. Marshall



**Your Practical and Creative Guide to
Empower Your Staff and Delight Your Guests!**

*Step-By-Step Instruction that
Everyone will Understand and Enjoy*

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Be a TIPTOP Server!

*Learn the truth behind making big tips and
earn what your worth.*

(J.D. Marshall)

I would like to first thank you for taking the time to read this manual. Then I want to thank you for choosing a career that is fulfilling, rewarding, lucrative and challenging. Without you the restaurant server providing excellent service, many a diner would stay home and restaurants would have to close their doors.

Good luck and Great Tips,

J.D. Marshall

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The Importance of Claiming all Your Tips

Or

How do I get that new car loan?

By J.D. Marshall

New employees to the restaurant industry always ask me how much of my tips should I claim and do I have to claim them all. The answer is very easy. “You must claim them all.”

Now I know that many of you will not agree to that statement. Many of us have the misconception that we only need to report 8% of our total sales as tips. The law states that you and I must report *all (100%)* tips we receive, except for the tips from any month that we do not total at least \$20.00. The 8% allocation is a requirement placed on the employer. For more on this go to <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1872.pdf>

Keep in mind that an IRS audit is no fun and you want to avoid the huge fees and penalties involved. Also you need to claim them in order to obtain Social Security and Medicare coverage. We can't stay young forever.

Yes, I know we don't get paid enough, the government taxes me enough already, I have rent to pay, C.D.s to buy and the list goes on and on. So really why should you or I want to claim all our tips?

Well let's see. How many servers or any tipped employees do you know that cannot rent or purchase a home, have to walk, ride a bus or walk to work. Is it because they can't afford the payments? Not in most cases. Most times it is because they don't have any or enough credit. Without credit we are stuck, walking or living with friends or family.

One of the major things creditors look for is proof of income and the ability to repay. That's right, if you can't prove your income, chances are that you will be denied a credit card, the opportunity to get your own living accommodations or that new car you have been dreaming about.

Walking into a car dealership and bragging about how much money you make in tips at that nice new 5 star restaurant will only get you the cold shoulder and blisters on your heels having to walk home. But if you go into that dealership with your current paycheck stub or W4 showing all the mega bucks you earn (from the tips you reported) chances are you will be driving home in a nice shiny car.

Of course there is one drawback to reporting all your tips and owning that nice new car. Your fellow employees and friends will now expect you to be their taxi service.

Report all of your tips and I will be seeing you in the fast lane!

(This article was written by J.D. Marshall and was first published on the Tip20 website. [Http://www.tip20.com](http://www.tip20.com))

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Ok, you're probably wondering why I started out with this article, the simple truth is that "How much of my tips do I have to claim?" is the most frequently asked question by a new server after their first day of earning tips. Not "How can I increase my tips?"

Kind of silly isn't it? But the responses they receive are often confusing, not the complete truth and not what the law says. So please abide by the law and claim all of your tips. (For a free copy of Employee's Daily Record of Tips and Report to Employer call the IRS at 1-800-829-3676 or ask your employer for a copy)

Now there is another reason why you should log and report all your tips and that is so you can see the progress you're making once you start implementing all your new tips on earning more tips.

So continue reading, start practicing and go get that new car loan!

Why another guide on tipping?

There are many different articles, books, ebooks and training guides on tipping. Some are free some are not, some of them are very good and some are just downright ridiculous. So why another one?

To cut through the fat and get right to the meat. You want to know how it works and why it works. You don't want to read my brags and boasts, you don't want to wear silly clown noses or 30 different pins that weigh you down and may fall off into someone's food not to mention having to replace them on your uniform every time you wash and iron your uniform.

These are tried, perfected and true tips used by professional servers around the country and in every type of restaurant you can imagine.

Will they all work for you? Possibly, but not all these tips work for every one and not in some restaurants or with some guests. But if you practice each of them until they are a habit and not forced, you will be able to determine which ones work the best for you.

Practice makes perfect!

Mega Tips!

The first tips you are going to learn are some of the basics. These tips were scientifically tested techniques shown to increase your tips. They were written about and tested by Dr. Michael Lynn, an associate professor of the School of Hotel Administration, Cornell University.

To review all of his studies go to:

<http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/wml3/pdf/megatips.pdf>

These studies are very well written and contain the details of the case studies performed. I want to give credit where credit is due, so please check his article out.

Let's begin then with the basics provided by Dr. Michael Lynn

We have taken the liberty to edit some items in this article and have also added some of our own comments.

Wear Something Unusual

In this study they used female servers, some wearing flowers in their hair, some without. They found that those wearing the flower had an increase in the average tip received.

Will this work for you? Possibly, if you're a female server in a casual restaurant.

The key here is to be conservative. You want to wear something that does not scream "Look at me I'm a clown". Look around at your guests, do you want to earn their respect or to have them laughing at you. (laughing with you is ok but not at you)

Don't go overboard with the bling bling, the flash, the sparkle. A simple brooch, tie tack, performance award pin or a nice tie will do. Make it something that the guest will notice and possibly comment on, but don't have it screaming at them.

When is the last time you asked a server what all those pins they are wearing on their uniform were for?

Introduce yourself by name

Introducing yourself by name is very important, but when should you do it? In this study it was when you first greeted the table, and if done properly, these introductions make you seem friendly and polite. This makes the guest feel more empathy for you.

The approach they used was: Good morning/afternoon. My name is _____, and I will be serving you today. Have you ever been to _____ before?

This approach is ok but is it the right way? Do you think that the guest is going to remember your name right away with this approach. Did you develop any rapport with the guest yet? Of course not.

The initial greeting is very important to developing a rapport with the guest. Try an approach like this. With a big smile on your face “Good morning/afternoon, welcome to _____. It’s so nice to see you here today. How is everyone doing?

With this approach you will get more than just a yes or no answer. The guest may chit chat with you a little more, developing a better rapport. Then you should introduce yourself. My name is _____ and it is going to be my pleasure to serve you today. May I get you folks one of our refreshing margaritas, or a glass of our wonderful house wines?

You will find that more guests will remember your name, when you develop a relationship with them before hand.

Squat next to the table

In this study they suggested that by squatting down next to the table it does at least three positive things: (1) it increases the congruence (an accord, a harmonious relation, an exact coinciding) between your and your guests posture, (2) brings your eye level down to the guests eye level (which facilitates eye contact) and (3) brings your face closer to the guests faces.

They even suggested that in less formal dining situations you may want to pull out a chair and sit at the table with the guest.

Now everyone agrees that making eye contact, being on the same level and being close to your guest is very important. But there is a problem with squatting or sitting at your guests table.

When you squat, where do you put your order pad? On the table! You do not want to lean on the guests table. What was the first thing your mother taught you about dining etiquette? Arms off the table of course.

And what about that linen napkin that many servers have tucked in their apron behind them, dragging on the floor while squatting, would you want your server handling your food with that?

It is much better to bow or bend your knees slightly when talking to your guests. This is much more professional and you are a professional.

Repeat Customer (Guest) Orders

When they researched this they seemed to think that it had to do with mimicking or imitating the guest and that it brought the guest closer to the imitator.

Now being professional servers, we know what it really is for. It puts the guest at ease knowing that what they ordered is going to be correct. They will be able to relax while waiting for dinner. Relaxed guests tip better.

Smile at Customer (Guest)

This is basic server 101. Smile smile smile! Not a tight closed lip smile, but a big opened mouth smile.

Don't just smile while at the table, smile the whole time your on the floor. Your guest and others are watching you. Smile and the world smiles with you.

Everyone loves a person that smiles!

Sell, sell, sell

Again this is basic serving 101. They found that by suggestive selling, you could increase your check average. Therefore your tip average would go up. No kidding!

Then they went on to say: “During a busy shift however, suggestive selling may be counter-productive because add-on sales may increase the customer’s meal duration and slow down table turnover. Your total tips at the end of the shift depend on your total sales. Since entrees are more expensive than appetizers and desserts, you should avoid suggestive selling of appetizers and deserts in favor of turning tables quickly as long as new customers are waiting to be seated. When turning tables is not possible, then sell more appetizers and desserts.”

Wrong! Always suggestive sell, it does not matter how busy you are you always need to suggestive sell. If you make the guest feel like you are trying to rush them out of the restaurant, you will definitely make less money. People tip less when they feel like they are not wanted and your service is lacking. Treat every guest equal and provide the same level of service whether it is busy or not. This is the key to increasing your tips.

Avoid the turn and burn mentality. I do not know of any restaurant owner that wants you to not use suggestive selling at all times. Remember the impression and service you give them, determines whether or not they will be back and the amount of the tip they leave you.

Sell, sell, sell at all times!

Touch Customers (Guest)

Touching is a powerful form of interpersonal behavior that can communicate affection, appreciation, aggression, dominance, social support or other meanings depending on the context in which it occurs.

The positive effects suggest that being touched may also increase the tips that guests leave their servers,

But when and how do we touch a guest? The best time is after you have developed a rapport with the guest. It may have been during the greeting when they shook your hand or it could happen before you leave the table to get their drinks, touching them on the shoulder as you tell them you will be right back with the order. This reassures them that you are going to take care of them. The best time of course is when presenting the check and thanking them for dining with you.

Who do we touch? This should almost always be the host, with some exceptions. A female server should touch the females in mixed sex dining parties and the male servers should touch the men, this is especially true with younger diners (prevents jealousy). With elderly guests you may do it with both, but make sure you do it with both, don't leave one out.

Where do we touch? It is best to touch the guest lightly on the shoulder for no more than one to two seconds. You may touch them on the arm, but you should never touch their hands unless you are presenting the check or shaking hands with them. The guest will find this a lot less intrusive.

Touching is not easy for every one, you may want to try this first with your regular guests before trying it with strangers. This takes some practice as you do not want it to appear to be forced. Learn to do it casually and with confidence.

Entertain Customers (Guests)

Guests love to be entertained along with their fine meal. This could be live entertainment or even a nice clean joke. Take note of the clean joke rule along with no ethnic, blonde, handicapped etc jokes. If telling a joke make it short and simple even a lame or corny joke works.

If the guest is celebrating a birthday or anniversary, sing to them.

A duck and a squirrel are having lunch together.
Who pays?
Why the duck of course, he has the bill.

Forecast Good Weather

Sunny weather puts guests in a good mood and guests in a good mood leave bigger tips than those in a bad mood. Even the prospect of sunny weather tomorrow elevates guests moods. This suggests that servers who live where the weather is highly variable can increase tips by telling their guests that sunny weather is on the way. This also works for servers where the weather may be extremely hot by telling the guests that it is definitely going to be cooler tomorrow.

Always forecast great weather.

Write “Thank You” on Checks

By writing thank you and signing your name on the check shows an expression of gratitude and friendliness. These expressions may also make the guest feel obligated to earn that gratitude by leaving a larger tip.

Your name on the check is also a reminder of your name and if you gave great service, the guest is more likely to ask for you the next time they visit the restaurant.

Draw Pictures on the Check

This research showed that female servers who drew a smiley face on the check increased their tips. Drawing will personalize you to the guest and increase their empathy for you as a person and may communicate to the guest that you were happy to have served them.

On the other hand this backfired for the male servers, decreasing the tips they received when drawing a smiley face. Now guys if you can draw, use a cartoon character, this may help increase your tips.

Start doodling and see what you come up with.

Use Tip Trays with Credit Card Insignia

Although it is not clear why, research has found that simply seeing credit card insignias increases guests' willingness to spend money. It is easier to spend more now with a credit card and pay later than it is to part with the cold hard cash in your pocket.

If your restaurant does not use tip trays or check presenters with the credit card logos, have your manager order them. Most credit card companies will provide these free of charge. Convince them that guests will spend more when they see that they can use a credit card.

Give Customers (Guests) Candy

Guests generally feel obligated to reciprocate when they receive gifts from others. You can benefit from this by giving your guests after dinner mints or candy. Chocolate works great even if you have to purchase them yourself, the price you pay will be a small investment on your returns.

The mints or candy should always be given when you present the check. Don't rely upon the guest grabbing the mint at the host stand on the way out, they are not going to go back and give you a larger tip.

Want to take this a step further? Give them a gift with your name on it. Pens are fairly inexpensive, have some made up with your name and the name of the restaurant. For example your pens could say: It was a pleasure to serve you! Your Name. Name of the restaurant. Every time the guest uses this pen, they will think of you.

Call Customers (Guests) by Name

Calling people by their names tells them that they are considered important. Most people find such recognition flattering and enjoyable. Thus you should get larger tips when you call your guests by name (you can learn this from their credit card or when they give their names while waiting for a table, or also when you introduce yourself).

Friends always tip friends more.

The above tips were adapted from Dr. Michael Lynn, Associate Professor, School of Hotel Administration Cornell University.

I have taken the liberty to add some of my own comments to these. The most important being the changing of the term customer to guest. A customer is a person who expects to be sold something. As we know when you go to buy something, you always want to spend as little as possible. A guest on the other hand is someone who receives hospitality and is willing to pay for such hospitality. Remember we are in the hospitality industry, never refer to your guests as customers. This mindset alone may increase your tips.

Now let's continue on and learn more great ways to increase your tips.

Give Yourself a Raise

Or

Owning your section

By J.D. Marshall

Originally the title of this article was going to be “Owning” your section – as in running it as if it were your own little restaurant. Like you I thought it might be too long and may not grab your attention. But I’m sure “Give yourself a raise” did the trick and got you here.

What do the titles have in common you ask? We all want to make more money and we know the boss isn’t going to give us a raise over the measly \$2.13 we already earn. So how do we give ourselves a raise?

Simply by taking over ownership of the section/station we work in. That’s right taking over ownership. That doesn’t mean we have to purchase anything or put a huge capital investment on the table for the owners. What we do have to invest is some time and effort and the pride of ownership.

We walk into work everyday saying “If I owned this place, things would be different.” “I would make so much more money” “I would make sure all the guests were receiving great service.” On and on we go. Well now you can “Own your own restaurant.” At the very least your own section, it’s very easy to do.

Before you leave home, check yourself in the mirror, are you groomed and dressed for success. Is your hair nice and neat, is your uniform pressed and cleaned? If you want to be a success, you must look like one. You do want to look like you own the restaurant right?

Then let’s start from when we first clock in, take pride and responsibility in doing your side work and setting up your station. Make sure that everything you need is ready by the time you get your first table. Do you have all the condiments set up, tea, coffee made? You don’t want to waste time looking or restocking something when you need it in a hurry. Next go to your tables. Are they nice and clean, no crumbs or sticky areas, would you sit at that table? Make sure any condiments you have on the table are stocked and clean. Salt/pepper shakers full, sugar caddy full and clean? The first impression your guest will receive of their dining experience, comes from what they see at the table. A nice neat table will increase your tip average by 1 to 3%.

Do you have the menu memorized? Do you know what is offered with each entrée? If not, you need to learn it right away. You should be able to answer all of your guests’ questions. Take time to review and memorize the day’s specials. Just by knowing the menu and being able to recite the specials, shows that you are a bright and knowledgeable server. Yes this can increase your tip average also.

Now your first guest walks in, your happy to see them, you smile at them and greet them by name. You thank them for coming in. You ask them if they are having their regular cocktail or glass of wine if you know it. Never ask what they want to drink, always recommend something, such as glass of our special house wine or margarita perhaps a nice cold ice tea. If you don't recommend something, they may just tell you water. There is no extra income in serving water. Before you leave, recite the specials to them, let you know you will answer any questions they may have when you return with the drinks. As you go to get their drinks touch them lightly on the shoulder, ensuring them that you will be right back. Get their drinks and bread to them as quickly as possible. Remember your manners when you get back, set the drink down for the ladies first.

Recommend at this time two or three special appetizers. Would you folks like to start with the shrimp cocktail or the crab cakes? They may not have been thinking of one, but now you gave them two choices, odds are that they will order one. (This again increases your income.) Be sure also that they enjoy the drinks they have.

Now it's time to order the entrée's, recite the specials again and answer any questions they may have. Repeat the order to them and suggest a nice wine that would compliment the ordered entrees or offer to freshen up the drinks they have. While waiting for the entrée be sure to check back and let them know that the meal will be ready shortly. Clear off any unneeded dishes at this time also.

Returning with the entrees (you again serve the ladies first), making mention of what a great choice they made (the salmon looks delicious etc.) Ask if there is anything that you may get them at that time. Thank them and tell them to enjoy their meal. Check back on them to be sure everything is to their liking. You should do this in the first two minutes (2 bites equal 2 minutes).

Keep an eye on the table and remove any empty plates as soon as possible. Crumb the table if needed. (Wipe it off if dirty). Return with the desert tray, being sure to never set the tray on the table. Don't ask if they want desert. Say something similar to, folks let me tell you about our wonderful deserts. Then describe them in a way that makes them irresistible. Ask then if they would like the devilish chocolate cake or the soufflé. Yes you will sell more deserts this way and increase your income. Don't forget to offer coffee or perhaps a nice cappuccino.

Have the check ready for presentation, but never lay it down until you have written a nice thank and signed your name (you may want to draw something also, but if you're a male, never draw a smiley face). Clear the desert dishes from the table and offer to refill the after dinner drinks. Then and only then should you present them the check. Thanking them once again for dining with you and what a great pleasure you had in serving them.

When they look at you and say what a great server you are and that you should own the place. You can smile and say "I do, I do".

More tips for tips

First Impressions

Have you ever dined at a restaurant where the server looked disheveled? Their hair not combed, uniform dirty and wrinkled. Nails and hands looking like they just changed the oil on the 1968 Plymouth they have to drive because that is all they can afford?

What was your first impression? Probably not very favorable. Did you tip them in the normal 20% to 25% range like you normally do? Or did you leave them less? I would dare guess that you left them less than you would have if they were groomed and dressed neatly. It's ok we all do that.

We all tip based on our first impression. So what can we do to give the guest the right first impression?

First off, we must be sure that our grooming habits are impeccable. Is our hair neatly combed and styled, pulled back away from our face and if long is it properly secured so it won't hang in or touch the food? If you have a beard or mustache is it trimmed neatly? How fresh is your breath? There is no investment better than a box of mints, an extra toothbrush and toothpaste to have with you while serving. Make sure our fingernails are trimmed and clean. Looking and feeling neat and clean will improve your attitude, your guests will appreciate it and show it by tipping more.

Our uniforms must be clean and free of stains. They must be ironed with neat creases in the shirt sleeves and pant legs. Just because you pulled them out of the dryer, doesn't mean they are wrinkle free. Aprons also must be neat, clean and wrinkle free. How many times have you used the same apron in a week without washing it? You may not notice it, but your guests will. What? You say you can't afford an iron. Most of your better restaurants will have one on the premises that you can use. Better yet buy one, it will be the best \$20 investment you make, the returns are incredible.

If you wear a tie, make sure your top button is fastened and the tie is neatly knotted and pulled up covering the top button. Do you wear long sleeves? Do you roll them up? If you do roll them up, please don't do the mechanics roll up above your elbows. One to two neat rolls is all it takes or better yet roll the sleeves rolled under.

Are our shoes clean and polished? You would be amazed at how many guests will notice your foot wear. Polish daily if possible, but no less than twice a week.

Wear socks that compliment your uniform, try never to wear white socks unless your uniform allows you to wear jeans.

Now look at yourself in the mirror. Do you feel and look good? I bet you do!

The next area will also determine one of the largest portions of your tip. That being table cleanliness. No one and I mean no one likes to sit at a dirty table. If a guest sits down and puts their arm in a sticky mess or has to wipe crumbs off the table, you are going to receive a much smaller tip regardless of how great your service is.

Detail your tables before you start accepting guests. Detail everything on the table, salt/pepper shakers, sugar caddies and any other condiments on the table must be clean and full. Table tents if you use them must be wiped down and the inserts clean. Silverware should be polished and clean. Table top or linen table cloth should be clean and spot free. Wipe down the edges of the table. Don't forget the seating, all seating areas must be clean and crumb free also.

Now we are neat and clean, our section is neat and clean, we are ready to start serving our guests.

What else will make a great first impression? The list below is also very important.

Our faces! Plant a big smile across yours and keep it there.

The front of the restaurant should be neat and clean.

The manager or a host/hostess with a big smile should greet the guests.

Restrooms should always be clean and stocked. (Guest average is 2 visits to the restroom while dining).

Dining room floor free of debris.

Stay on the floor, don't disappear for too long.

Don't gather in a group and chat with the other servers.

Be available for your guests.

What else can you think of that would give the guest a great first impression? If you think of it, believe me the guests will think of it also.

Know your product

To increase your earning potential, you must know your product (menu). Our title in the restaurant might be server, but the true title should be sales person. A sales person or at least a professional one will always know the product they are serving/selling. If a guest asks a question, you must know the answer.

For example a guest asks – Is the salmon fresh or frozen? A typical server may respond with “I don’t know, I think it’s fresh” A professional server would respond “Our salmon is very fresh, it is flown in daily from the pacific northwest.”

Guest “Are your steaks good?” Typical server “I think so.” The professional “Our steaks are aged for 21 days and are hand cut, we only use the best cuts of prime” “My favorite is our New York steak, it is a center cut and very tender with great flavor.”

Guest “What sides come with this?” Typical server “Hmm let’s see, we have potato’s veggies and rice” Professional Server “You have your choice of baked potato, garlic mashed potato’s or french fries, we also offer steamed green beans or rice pilaf. The garlic mashed potato’s are always fantastic.”

Ok you see the difference in knowing your products. The guests will always appreciate the professional answer and will reward your knowledge.

Now knowing your menu goes much further than just knowing what food products you offer. You must know what soft drinks, liquors, wines and desserts are available. You must know how all the products are prepared, priced, presented and the substitutions you can you make.

The more you know about your menu and products, the more money you can make. Don’t be afraid to take a menu home to study. Ask questions of your chef, cooks, prep cooks, baker, bartender, manager and senior servers.

Knowledge is power. The more knowledge you have the more powerful your presentation. The better your presentation the better your selling abilities. Better selling abilities lead to guest satisfaction. Guest satisfaction leads to greater tips.

Powerful Soft Selling

Earlier the effect of selling was discussed briefly. But this topic deserves a lot of attention. Others would have you believing that you should only be selling when it is not busy. I can't tell you how wrong that is. You should be constantly selling, from the time you approach the table to the time you thank your guests for dining with you.

The first selling you are doing, is selling yourself. This applies to the previous topics of grooming and smiling. Since we understand that part we will devote this to the selling of the products and the dining experience.

When you sell it should always be with the soft sell approach. The guest is dining in your restaurant and expecting a great meal and experience, they are not there to buy a car.

How do we soft sell? First you must know your products (re-read previous chapter if needed). Then we must offer multiple choices. We must also use the professional server head nod and positive language. The head what?

The professional server uses a very positive head nod when soft selling a guest. A positive head nod is up and down when offering the guest an item. To often when a server is asking a guest if they would like appetizer or a special drink they are shaking their head back and forth. This sends a mental negative message to the guest.

When taking the drink order for example, "Would you folks like to start of with a martini, a margarita or bottle of wine, we have a great house cabernet?" The professional server will be nodding his head up and down slightly. This sends a positive message to the guest who will normally order either the first or last item.

Do not ask – "What would you like to drink" or "Do you want something to drink" This is negative and will not help your earnings.

This applies to every course you offer. Suggest, suggest, suggest with the professional server head nod and positive language be descriptive.

Remember all the add on items that you can suggest also:

Premium and top shelf liquors.

Bowl of soup instead of a cup.

Sauteed mushrooms, onions and or cheese with the burgers.

Bottle of wine instead of individual glasses for two or more.

The list goes on and on. Sit down and make a list of all the menu items that you can add to. You will be surprised at what you come up with.

Never turn down the opportunity to sell or suggest items, even when you're slammed. Your guests are there for their own dining pleasure not yours. Make it a memorable experience for them.

Increase your ticket average and you will see your income increase along with it.

Positive language

Along with knowing your menu and suggesting items, you need to know and practice the proper language to use. We learned some of the proper language to use in previous examples, but let's go a little deeper.

Proper terms, questions and descriptive words that sell.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Folks

Madame

Sir

How are you

Nice weather we are having

Have a great day

Please stop back in and see us soon

Thank you for dining with us

Would you like to try_____ with that? (using the head nod)

Would you like that a tall, larger cut etc. (using the head nod of course)

I highly recommend

I will be right with you

My favorite is

Our guests love

Most popular

Original

Piping Hot

Decadent

Delicious

Famous

Fresh

Fun

Sauteed

Sizzling

Make your own list of adjectives that describe your menu items in glowing terms.

Be careful of what you say and how you say it. Don't say or use the following:

Girls

Guys (if it's all women) (it is ok if it's a ball team of men drinking beer)

What's up

What will you have

What do you want

What are you drinking

It's ok

I don't know (if you don't know, find out)

We can't do that

Do you want something to start with

You don't want to start with a _____ do you?

Do you need change (we will cover this later)

Will that be the small one

Micro waved

Hot (spicy is better when describing food)

Warm (hot is better describing temperatures)

Fishy

Gamey

Smelly

Disgusting

See ya

I'm busy

I'm swamped

I'll get to you as soon as I can

Anything else I can get you

Make a list of all the negative things we say and start to eliminate them from your vocabulary.

Closing the Deal

This is your last opportunity to increase your tip. Don't blow it here. Most servers will approach the table with the guest check in hand as soon as the guests are done with their entrée and will set it down with a quick thank you.

Now is the time to let the guests really enjoy the dining experience. Always offer desert, an after dinner cocktail, a cup of coffee (latte/cappuccino) using your newly learned adjectives and soft sell techniques.

Present the check only after the guest has refused all your offers and you have personalized the check (include your mint/candy here). Do not go more than ten steps (about 20 to 30 feet) without glancing back to see if they have the payment ready.

Pick up as soon as they are ready and offer to bring the change or credit card right back. Never, never ask if they need change, this will kill your large tip almost immediately. Always assume that they want change back.

When the guest uses a credit card, thank them by name when you return the card to them. Also at this time thank them for dining with you and let them know what a pleasure it was serving them. Tell them that you look forward to seeing them again soon and that you would be more than happy to serve them.

This is also a great time to lightly touch your guest on the shoulder or to shake hands with them.

Be sincere and smile!

(P.S.) Make sure you give back change properly so you may also increase your tips. Always have ones and fives included in the change. If the bill is \$34.28 and they give you a Fifty, the change you should give them back would be 6-\$1 bills and 2-\$5 bills. Throw in the .28 cents so they don't have to carry change or leave you change. Give them a gift and they will reciprocate by leaving you a larger tip.

Would you like more tips on tips?

The tips we have taught you here are just some of the many tips that you can use to increase your earning potential. Use these basic guidelines daily and practice until you are comfortable with them.

Serving/selling is an ongoing training process. You should never stop learning. We would be happy to continue giving you more tips and training by email. It's free and easy, just send us a blank email to: tiptraining@mail.com

Want to share your success story? Tell us about it here: tipstory@mail.com

Have a tip you would like to share with others? Share it here: tipshare@mail.com

We hope that you found this informative and that you have learned from it. Please share this with your fellow servers.

Good luck, Great tips and Great serving,

The Staff of Tiptop Server

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