

## **INCREASING YOUR SALES AND PROFITS WITH THE SAME CUSTOMER BASE:**

Today, yesterday and tomorrow, everyone is looking for ways to increase their sales. And yet the answer is so easy and very cost effective. You must train your staff to sell more to your existing customers. The process is called “*up selling*” or “*suggestive selling*.” It sounds so easy, but when you ask someone to do it, more than likely, it doesn’t happen.

Fundamentally, we all hate rejection and up selling and/or suggestive selling for many is a guaranteed way to be rejected. The other reason why your staff does not up sell/suggestive sell is because they do not know how. We spend a lot of time working with our staff on many of the basics of our business (and we should), but we spend very little or no time on one of the key ingredients that will generate more sales for you at virtually very little cost. When I say very little cost, I mean that the incremental dollars obtained from up selling/suggestive selling can result in much higher profits. When you think about it, if each employee was able to generate an additional dollar of revenue (sales) from each customer that you already have, there would be an obvious positive impact to your bottom line.

Granted, not all people will do well at up selling/suggestive selling. But if an employee is going to be in contact and possibly be selling something to a customer, this should be a key factor to consider in the interviewing process. Hire for personality and train for skills definitely applies.

So once you have hired an extrovert, you will still need to train them in the “art” of up selling/suggestive selling. Really, you cannot just tell them to go out and sell more to your existing customers. You must provide them with the verbal tools to achieve this objective and there are so many ways to initiate this. McDonalds made billions more dollars when they introduced “Biggie Me.” You can do the same thing. Train your staff to sell jumbo drinks, fries, salads, etc. It is all in how they say it and asking the right question can make all the difference in getting the sale-“would you like a 32 ounce drink?” works better than “what size drink would you like?” or saying, “would you like a small drink?” Recommending an add-on item, such as, “may I serve you some fries with your hamburger?” or “would you like our homemade apple pie to complete your meal?” Customers tend to say “yes” rather than no to positively asked questions.

So make a list of the positive selling points that your staff can use to up sell/suggestive sell to your customers and review these daily before the meal period starts. You can also motivate your sales staff through contests-the person who sells the most gets the prize (and the prize can be a lottery ticket, tickets to a movie or some logo merchandise given to you free from your vendors).

One final comment-start UP SELLING/SUGGESTIVE SELLING TODAY!! There is no reason to wait until tomorrow and yesterday is already gone.

*This article is a condensed version of an article that appeared in many food service trade magazines. It was written by Jerry McVety, President, McVety & Associates, LLC. To learn more about how to increase your sales, contact Jerry at 248-737-0800.*