

10 Ways to get the most from *Service That Sells!*

1. Read *Service That Sells!* within the next two weeks. Why put it off?
2. Write down the 15 best ideas you see in the book as you read through it. Invite other managers in your operation to do the same.
3. At your next manager meeting, share your lists. Agree on the most useful ideas, outlining them on a flip chart or piece of paper.
4. Prioritize the ideas, then set a timetable for implementation.
5. Highlight pages for your servers and bartenders to read. Ask them to write down the 10 best ideas they can put to work.
6. Review the ideas at a server meeting and agree on an action plan for implementation.
7. Make *Service That Sells!* required reading for every new manager, server, bartender or greeter.
8. Don't forget your kitchen employees. Assign them the chapter on "Waste Watching." Ask them to write down and implement three ideas to control costs in your operation.
9. Assign each department (managers, servers, kitchen staff, bus staff, host staff, bartenders) to compile their own "Cycle of Service" based on the Moments of Truth unique to their jobs.
10. Use the Appendix and its 101 ways to sell more food and beverage to form lesson plans for your upcoming sales-training sessions.

Service That Sells!

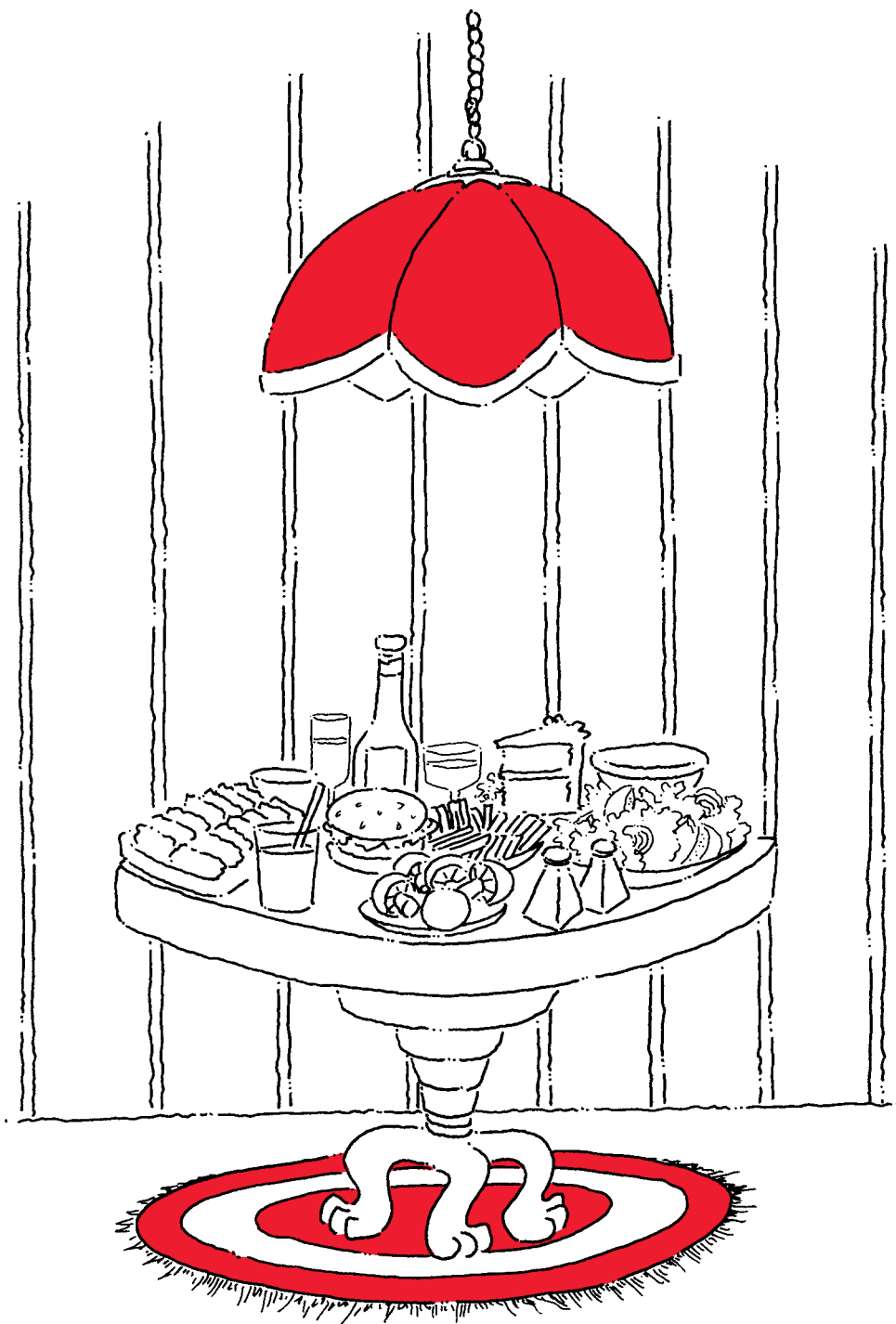
**The Art of
Profitable
Hospitality**

*“You can have the best product in the world,
but if you can’t sell it, you’ve still got it.”*
— *Diamond Jim Brady, 1901*

PENCOM[®]
INTERNATIONAL

Phil “Zoom” Roberts & Jim Sullivan

Service That Sells!



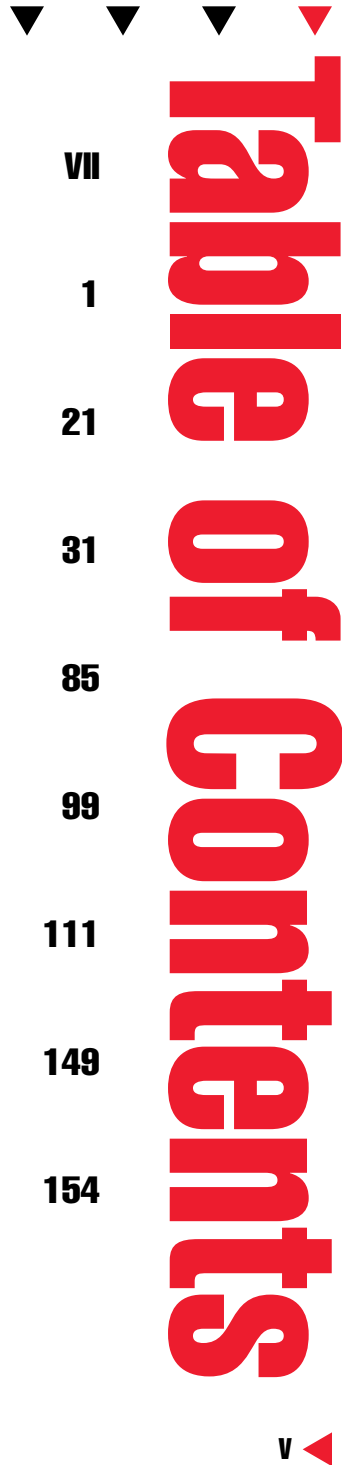


Table of Contents

Introduction

VII

Welcome to *Service That Sells!*

Chapter One: To Sell Is To Serve

1

Without sales, service can't exist.

Chapter Two: It's a Retail Business

21

Pump up your profit centers.

Chapter Three: Guide Your Guests

31

Service is in. Order-taking is out.

Chapter Four: Waste Watching

85

Get everyone into the act.

Chapter Five: No Train? No Gain!

99

Teach your staff something new every day.

Chapter Six: The Cycle of Service

111

Real marketing starts when guests walk in.

Chapter Seven: Wrap It Up

149

Implementing *Service That Sells!*

Appendix

154

101 ways to sell more.



FOREWORD

*There is no foreword.
Nobody reads forewords to
books anyway. Besides, you've
got a restaurant, bar or
hotel to run, and we've got
1,001 ways to make it more
profitable. So let's stop wasting
time and get on into it....*

— *The Authors*





Step #1 of better service and higher sales:

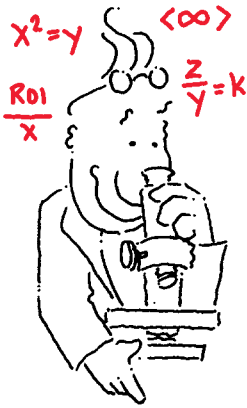
Think of yourself as a salesperson not an order-taker.

There are two great myths operating in the food-service industry today. The first one is that we're in the restaurant business. As we discussed earlier, the reality is that *we're in the business of retail sales*. The other great myth is that we have waiters, waitresses and bartenders working for us. The truth is that *they are really independent contractors, commissioned salespeople*. But why should they believe that unless you can *prove* it to them?

Remember the importance of tuning in to WII-FM before you train? Here are eight reasons why a server should see him or herself as a salesperson:

1. You're working for six or eight or 10 hours anyway at your restaurant ... why not make the best of it? Suggest! Sell! Serve! Don't be a walking vending machine!
2. Your guests are here to buy, not browse!
3. The owner or operator pays all the expenses (food, drink, utilities, glassware, plates, napkins) advertises for all the guests and therefore takes all the risks. You make 10 percent to 20 percent on each dollar. The owner may make nothing!



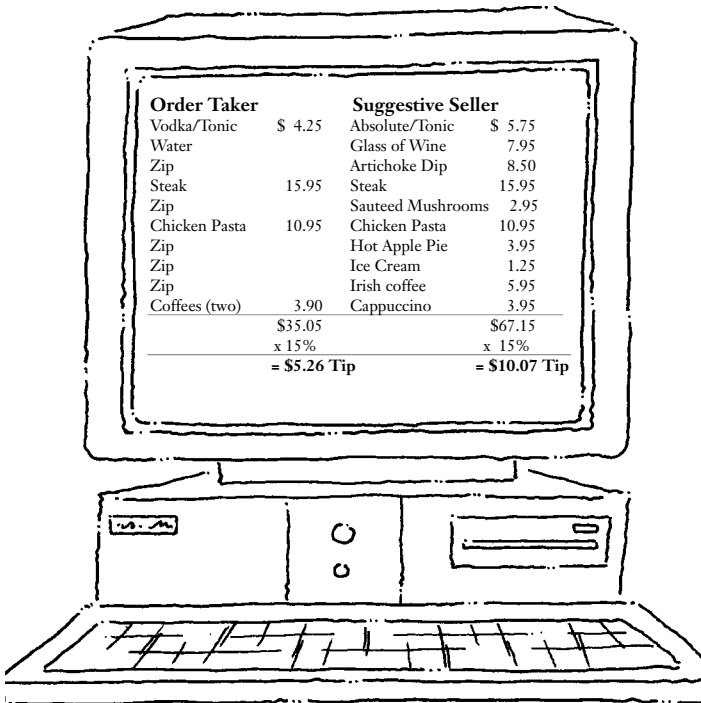


4. You're tipped (10 percent to 20 percent) on a percentage of what you sell. To make more money, you can either sell more food and drinks or get tipped a higher percentage. Either way, it's based on how well you serve and sell. If you're *not* a salesperson what *are* you? A *server*? Not without selling, you're not!
5. Remember, suggestive selling is not "being pushy," it's helping guests make decisions that are good for them.
6. When it's busiest, that's the time to make the most suggestions. Hunt ducks while they're flying!
7. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose! What's the absolute worst that could happen when you recommend appetizers, desserts or beverages? The guest says "no." Oh jeez. Bury me six feet under, they said "no!"
8. A salesperson easily makes more tips than an "order-taker." For example:
 - Sell 10 extra house margaritas or 10 extra domestic pints of beer per shift at \$3.50 each, five days per week, fifty weeks per year, times 15 percent and you'll take home \$1,312.50. Not bad for taking cocktail orders. ($\$3.50 \times 10 \times 5 \times 50 \text{ weeks} \times 15 \text{ percent} = \$1,312.50$)
 - Now upgrade those 10 house margaritas or domestic pints to top shelf margaritas or large domestic beers at \$4.75 each per shift, times five shifts, times fifty weeks a year, times 15 percent and you'll see \$1,781.25 in tips! \$468.75 more just by upselling to a better tasting or larger drink! ($\$4.75 \times 10 \times 5 \times 50 \text{ weeks} \times 15 \text{ percent} = \$1,781.25$)

- Now figure out how much more tips your servers can make in a year when they just sell an extra two appetizers or two desserts per shift. Chart it out for them. Include it in your training manuals and post it in the kitchen. See the example below.

Look at the difference

The great thing about this business is that you don't have to sell an appetizer, bottle of wine and dessert to *every* customer to make thousands more each year; only every tenth or twelfth guest. And that is easily achieved. But not if you don't try.



Order Taker		Suggestive Seller	
Vodka/Tonic	\$ 4.25	Absolute/Tonic	\$ 5.75
Water		Glass of Wine	7.95
Zip		Artichoke Dip	8.50
Steak	15.95	Steak	15.95
Zip		Sauteed Mushrooms	2.95
Chicken Pasta	10.95	Chicken Pasta	10.95
Zip		Hot Apple Pie	3.95
Zip		Ice Cream	1.25
Zip		Irish coffee	5.95
Coffees (two)	3.90	Cappuccino	3.95
	\$35.05		\$67.15
	x 15%		x 15%
	= \$5.26 Tip		= \$10.07 Tip

The difference between a .250 hitter and a .300 hitter is an extra hit every *twenty* times at bat.



Action Plan 1: Eight ways to increase food and beverage sales

Purging the order-taker mentality isn't easy. It involves breaking bad habits and molding new ones. As

▶ *“What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing.”*

— Aristotle

Mark Twain said, “You can't just throw a habit out the window. It must be coaxed down the stairs, one step at a time.” **What you reinforce is what you get and what you don't reinforce is**

what you lose. Here are eight ideas to help:

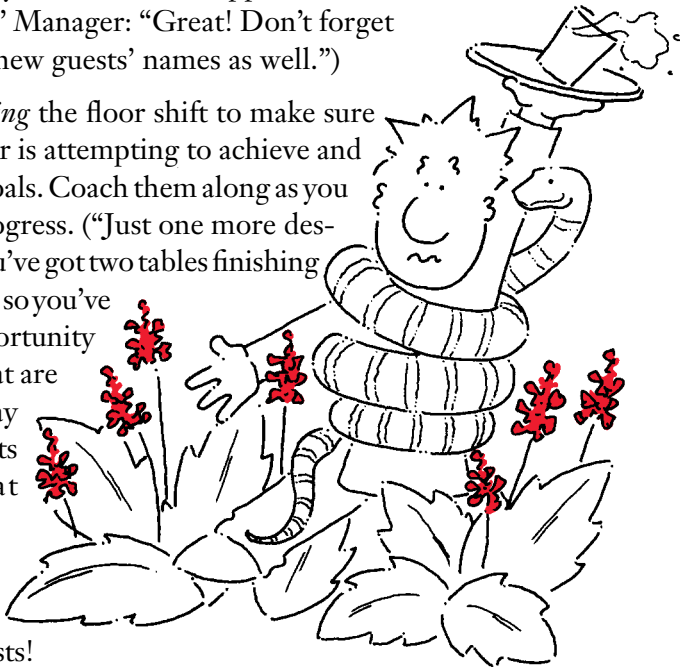
1. Give your employees a scoreboard. Start tracking sales of each server and bartender. Measure not only their *check averages* (at both lunch and dinner) but also the *number* of appetizers, sides, desserts, wine, soup, etcetera, they sell during each shift. *What gets measured gets done.*
2. Post the check averages where all the servers can see them, in order, from highest to lowest. Include each server's “*Personal Best*” highest check in parentheses next to overall average.
3. After tracking your sales, design and post bar graphs that measure the individual appetizer, dessert, wine, etcetera, sales of each server. This will make it easier to compare progress.
4. Schedule “sales” meetings at least six times a year with your entire service staff in which service and sales-oriented topics are discussed. Use these meetings as a forum to improve product knowledge, service skills and sales skills.
5. Stop referring to your staff as waiters, waitresses and bartenders, and start calling them salespeople.
6. Hold daily pre-shift team meetings in which you give *every* server and bartender specific sales and



service goals for that shift. (Manager: “Frank, how many desserts and appetizers are you going to sell today?” Frank: “Five appetizers and three desserts.” Manager: “Great! Don’t forget to learn three new guests’ names as well.”)

7. Follow up *during* the floor shift to make sure that each server is attempting to achieve and exceed these goals. Coach them along as you check their progress. (“Just one more dessert, Frank! You’ve got two tables finishing up their entrees so you’ve got a great opportunity here. Now what are you going to say to those guests to make that sale?”)

8. HAVE FUN!
Remember, he who laughs, lasts!



Step #2 of better service and higher sales:

Know your products.

Another story submitted to the *Service That Sells!* Real-Life Casebook: We were ordering lunch at a very well known casual-theme restaurant in Phoenix. The waiter was definitely an order-taker, but a pleasant one. We could tell he was an order-taker by the guacamole on his apron, the sweat on his upper lip and the panic in the corners of his eyes. Four of his five tables had just been seated.

The menu had a small clip-on note that said “Ask About Our Soup du Jour.” So we asked.



“What’s the soup du jour?”

The waiter was unsure. *“Just a second,”* he said politely, *“I’ll go find out.”*

He returned momentarily and answered proudly, *“That means soup of the day!”*

We paused and looked at each other, thinking we were on Candid Camera. Then we asked him what the soup of the day *was*. He then responded like any proud order-taker: *“I’ll go find out for you,”* and took off again! He was out of control.

Our friend Paul Sollicito told us about an experience he had in a restaurant in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He asked his waitress for a shrimp cocktail. Her deadpan response? *“I’m sorry, sir, we don’t have a liquor license!”*

Hey, servers who don’t know what you’re selling: Get a grip. Get a clue. Get some idea. Please!

You know, we feel sorry for order-takers who don’t know what they’re selling: we truly do. Not only do they make less tips than they could but they end up walking twice as far as they have to! Order-takers also spend more time in “the weeds” than an Everglades alligator. Why? More often than not, it’s because:

- *They waited for the guest to decide what’s good without offering any help or suggestions.*
- *They didn’t know the answer to a customer’s question.*
- *They forgot to bring the guest an item that was supposed to go with the food in the first place.*

It’s easy to spot the order-takers in any restaurant; they’re the ones who arrive at work full of vim and vigor and leave in a wheelbarrow, exhausted, muttering, *“I’m gonna get a real job,”* to anyone within earshot. Knowing your products is the secret to Energy Conservation in the hospitality business!



What will it take for me to get you in this new car today?

How important is it to know what you're selling? Picture this scenario: you're looking for a new automobile and just walked into a showroom. You're admiring the "fire engine red" sports car on display. A "salesman" walks up to you...

"Nice car, huh?" he says.

"Really nice," you reply. "Do you have it in any other colors besides red?"

The salesman pauses. "Uh ... I *think* so. Tell you what, you wait here and I'll go check."

"No, that's okay," you say. "Are the tires, pinstriping, floor mats, sunroof, automatic transmission and stereo standard features, or extra?"

"Good question!" he replies. "I'll go find out."

"Just a second. What kind of warranty does it come with?" you ask.

"An even better question!" the "salesman" replies. "Does it say there on the sticker? I'm not sure. I'll go find out!"

How much longer would you subject yourself to this dullard? Not very long, we'll bet. Yet how "different" sounding is the following scenario?

Guest: How's your steak sandwich here?

Server: It's good.

Guest: Hmmm ... well, how's this grilled chicken sandwich?

Server: It's good.



I DUNNO MUCH ABOUT IT- BUT I'M PRETTY SURE IT'S A CAR.





Guest: And the broiled salmon?

Server: It's good, too.

Guest: (strangling the server) How's *this* feel? *Good?!*

When guests appear indecisive (which is often the case) or they ask questions like “how's the prime rib?” they're begging for some guidance or reassurance that their server can help them out a little.

Guests get very anxious when ordering, hoping they made the right choice. (If you don't believe that, why does every guest look closely at their companion's food before their own when it's delivered?)

Customers expect waitstaff and bartenders to be experts on the food and beverage your restaurant offers ... that's why **you** work there and they **don't!**

What to know to provide better service

Here's what every restaurant server or bartender needs to know relative to product knowledge in a restaurant or bar:

- **The price of the item and the price of add-ons or extra items.** “The Chicken Monterey is \$10.95 and you can add guacamole or sour cream for only \$.75. With your entrée order you can also add a cup or soup or a side salad for only \$2.50.”
- **How those ingredients are prepared.** “The chicken is grilled, the peppers are sauteed, the Monterey Jack is melted over the peppers and chicken breast.”
- **How the dish is presented.** “It's topped with fresh cilantro and comes with a side of wild rice.”
- **What “extras” you could suggest to go with that item.** A cup of soup or garden salad with any entrée, grilled onions or sauteed mushrooms

on a steak, cheese or fries with a burger, a bottle of chardonnay with the broiled swordfish, three-cheese nachos with the margaritas, etcetera.

- **The *price of the item and the price of the extra or add-on items.*** “Chicken Monterey is \$10.95, cup of soup, \$2.50, garden salad \$1.50, side of guacamole or sour cream is only \$.75.”
- **The *value of that item.*** “Best deal in town!” “Very popular,” “I haven’t tried it yet, but my customers love it,” “Award-winning,” “Plenty for one, but enough for two to share,” “If you try a bottle you’ll save two dollars.”
- **How choosing that item will *benefit* the guest.** “Our Irish Coffees are great! Just the thing to take the chill out of the evening!” or “Since you’re each having a Bud draft, you may want to consider a pitcher. You’ll save a couple dollars.”

Knowing your bar products: When the guest drinks better, so do you!

Man does not live by bread alone; knowing your beverage choices is a great way to upsell premium liquor in cocktails, non-alcohol brew instead of iced tea and bottled water instead of tap water. Let’s discuss some ways that product knowledge helps us provide better beverage service.

▶ —————
*We don’t sell water.
 We give it away.*

If you serve liquor, it’s critical that every server and bartender knows the beer choices, the “well” liquor brand and the “call” or premium liquor brands that they can suggest when the guest orders a drink. For example: