

Business Case Study Developing Better Procedures

Written by Steve Marr

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Bill and Maureen owned three restaurants, Eggs & More, in a town of 125,000 people. The places opened at 5:50 AM, and closed at 8:00 PM, seven days a week. The couple each directly managed one place themselves, and they shared supervision of the third location.

Business was OK, but the third location was a drag. While some customers developed into regulars, the couple was disappointed in not developing repeat business. A review was conducted of each location. That uncovered the following results:

- Customers were greeted differently, at times with a sign saying “seat yourself” while other times were asked to wait to be seated
- At times the hostess immediately asked if the customer wanted water, coffee, or something to drink, and then filled that request
- Other times the drink order was left for the waitress to fill
- Recipes were the same, but different cooks adjusted ingredients to suit their tastes and ideas, resulting in some product variations between locations, and by shift resulting in customers receiving
- Cooking standards were different, for example poached eggs ordered medium could be runny, or cooked through depending on the cook
- Portions were inconstant depending on the kitchen staff causing some customers to feel shortchanged
- A health department cited the third location for numerous health code violations
- In summary, the food was inconsistent especially when Bill or Maureen were on duty at a restaurant.

After the review, written standards were established and staff was trained to those standards. As a result, the health code problem was eliminated, customer satisfaction improved, and business grew 15% over the next year.

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