



The key principal of success is giving your customers what they want.

The “free from” market is gaining momentum. There is a greater awareness than ever of those who have special dietary needs such as coeliacs, diabetics and nut-allergy sufferers.



Customers are increasingly opting for vegetarian or vegan food and many major supermarkets are responding to these dietary and lifestyle choices by introducing new food ranges.

The younger generation are also concerned with the impact of food production in relation to the environment. If you can adapt your menu, reduce plastics, meat consumption and ensure that food is eaten with no waste, you too will be responding to the needs of today’s customers.

The added bonus is that if four people are going out and only one has dietary preferences or needs, the focus will be on that person. Your venue will be chosen, so instead of catering for one new customer, you will gain more. Health conscious and locally sourced menu items entice customers.



Workplace Pensions!

From the 6th April this year, the last of the planned increases to workplace pension contributions came into effect.

Your own contributions for staff who pay into a workplace pension will increase from 2% to 3%. At the same time, staff contributions will almost double from 3% to 5%.

This means that from now on total pension contributions being saved for employees will be 8% of their earnings.

YOU MUST NOT in any way induce staff to opt out of the scheme. If, for affordability or perhaps other reasons, a member of staff wishes to cancel their contributions, you should advise them to take independent financial advice.

We can help you with this, so please do ring Emma for contact details.



Start Embracing Complaints...

A customer who complains is giving up their time to help you improve your business...because they care!

There are four ways a complaint reaches your business: in person; by telephone; by email or by post. You must be able to handle all of these channels efficiently.

Someone who complains has not necessarily lodged a formal complaint, but has told a member of staff.

Nearly all customers will recommend your business to their friends if a complaint has been resolved efficiently and most customers will pay more for excellent service. Most employees however don't feel qualified and are not trained to deal with complaints.

Training is quite straightforward. Simply give them authority to

deal with a complaint. It should be a top priority in your business.

The points to convey to staff are:
1: They must thank the customer for bringing the matter to your attention.

2: They must put themselves in the customers' shoes.

3: They must approach the circumstances in a positive way and start with the view that the customer has a valid point.

4: Most importantly, they must listen and get all the facts. Then they should correct the mistake and learn from it. In this process, the customer must be thanked sincerely.

Remember, your customer may not have run a pub but they could have visited hundreds, so they know what works and what doesn't. The rule is that the customer is always right, but if they're not, they must be left feeling that they are.

Staff Payslips!

From April, payslips must show hours worked where the pay varies by the amount of time worked.

This does not apply to fixed hour contracts unless extra hours are worked. In these cases, the extra hours (which are variable) need to be recorded separately. In other words, for variable hour contracts and overtime for a fixed hours contract, the hours and the rate per hour must be recorded rather than just the total weekly pay.

Save on Business Rates

You should receive a reduction in business rates of one third for the current year, providing your rateable value is less than £51,000.

On previous occasions when such arrangements have been made, the reduction has not always been put into effect. If it has not been granted, contact your local council immediately.