

Restaurant Case Study: Bev and Bob's Bistro

Introduction

Bev and Bob are married. Bev was born in the United Kingdom and Bob was originally from the United States. Two years ago, they opened a restaurant together. Their skills complement each other well, and the restaurant business is thriving. Bev is in charge of everything to do with customer service in the dining room and bar. Bob is the office manager. He manages the finances, payroll, legal, and purchasing. He also manages the kitchen. Both Bev and Bob are pretty advanced in their business acumen. They are continuously coming up with strategies on how to improve the restaurant. Bev wants to get the restaurant ISO 9001 certified. Bob thinks they should have a complete set of business models for training new employees. They have contracted with BAs Unlimited to achieve these two goals.

The restaurant has four major areas of operation:

- Kitchen
- Dining room
- Bar
- Back office

Kitchen

The kitchen is involved in the ordering, receipt, storage, and preparation of food.

The kitchen staff (*Brigade de cuisine*) includes:

- Charles, the executive chef
- Susan, the sous chef
- Larry and Laura, the line chefs
- Doug and Dave, the cleaning staff

Executive chef

As the executive chef, Charles is in charge of operating the kitchen. He reports directly to Bob, the office manager. Charles supervises the kitchen staff, creates the menu and new recipes with the assistance of Bev and feedback from Bob, makes purchases of raw food items, trains any apprentices, and maintains a sanitary and hygienic environment for the preparation of food. He prepares all the main courses.

Sous chef

Susan, the sous chef, is the second in command. She is responsible for scheduling and filling in when Charles is off-duty. She is trained as a pastry chef (desserts, cakes, etc.), but she also prepares rolls and some other baked items. She prepares these ahead of time for the nights she is not on duty.

Line chefs

The line chefs are Larry and Laura. Larry is studying to be a pantry chef (*garde manger*). As a pantry chef, he will eventually be responsible for preparing cold foods, including salads, cold appetizers, pates, and other charcuterie items. However, because this restaurant is too small to have a specialist just in this area, he has to do Susan's job when she is off. Laura is an apprentice chef who fills in wherever and whenever needed.

Expediter

Bob uses the North American term "expediter" for the job of synchronizing a party's meals. This task is performed by the sous chef, Susan. As the meal orders are printed out in the kitchen by the Meal Order and Billing System (MOBS), she distributes them to the kitchen staff appropriately (main courses to Charles, appetizers to Larry or Laura). She keeps track of the orders and the state of meal readiness. She often puts the finishing touches on a dish before it goes to the dining room. She checks to make sure all the dishes for a table are ready at the same time by asking the kitchen staff the status of particular dishes. She lets the servers know when a table's order will be ready and finds a server if a table's order has been waiting too long. On Fridays and Saturdays, when the restaurant is very busy, Bob performs the expediting task.

Food ordering and storage

The kitchen includes a walk-in freezer for frozen items, two large refrigerators to keep perishable items fresh, and a walk-in pantry for dry goods. On Monday, Charles checks the food items in inventory and decides which items need replenishing. He takes it all down on a clipboard and then does all the food ordering by phone. He uses eight different suppliers: three for meats, fish, and poultry; two for fresh foods and vegetables; one for baked items like bread; and two for dry goods and cooking oil. Charles always plans his food inventory four to five days in advance. He knows the mix of food items needed for the dishes on the menu. He knows which dishes sell the most and which sell the least. He also takes into account seasonal factors, such as fewer soups and more salads sold during the summer.

Health inspector

There are occasional random visits by the health inspector. He will inspect food storage and preparation areas in the kitchen to make sure they are clean and free of pests. He wants to make sure the food in the refrigerators is being kept below 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4 degrees Celsius). Bob, the office manager, usually deals with the inspector.

Specials

The daily specials make food ordering more difficult. These specials are planned only one day in advance, which causes the problem. They are designed to help reduce food items on hand that have not sold as fast as expected and might soon perish. To prepare these specials, additional food items need to be ordered on short notice, usually in the middle of the week. The other incentive to prepare such one-off specials is that the profit margin on specials is better than regular meals.

Receiving

Food deliveries arrive throughout the day. Charles is in charge of receiving at the back door. He checks the packing slips against his orders and makes sure the food is stored correctly. He

marks the packing slips "Received in Full" and passes them on to Bob for matching with the suppliers' invoices. Susan receives orders when Charles is not there.

Mise en place

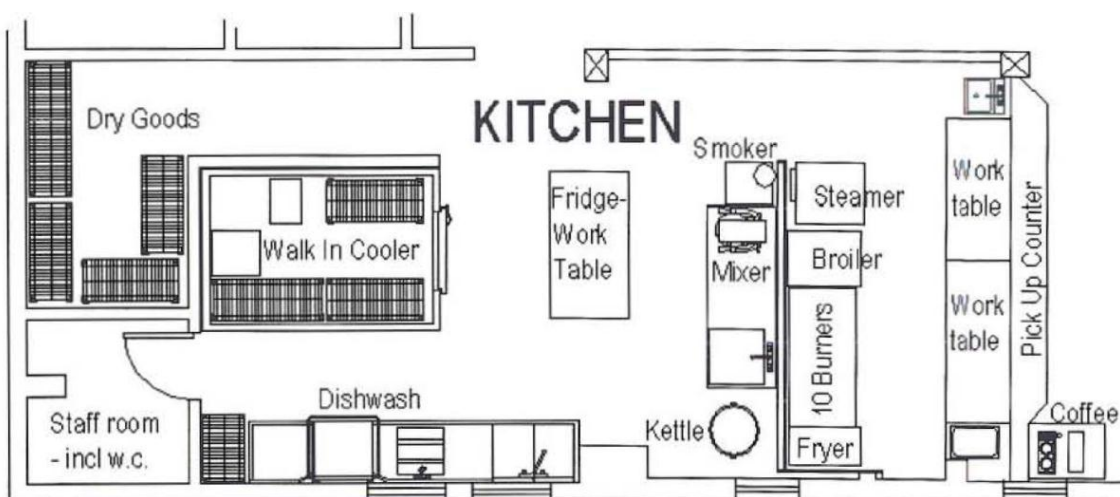
Before lunch and in the afternoon before opening for dinner, Charles, with the aid of the other kitchen staff, sets up everything in the kitchen. This is called "mise en place" (literally "put in place"). This includes preparing all the ingredients, such as cuts of meat, sauces, par-cooked items, spices, shrimp cocktails, freshly chopped vegetables, and other food items that the kitchen staff will need for the meals on the lunch or dinner menu that day. Recipes are reviewed to check for necessary ingredients and equipment. Ingredients are measured out, washed, chopped, and placed in individual bowls. Equipment such as spatulas and blenders are prepared for use, while ovens are preheated. Performing the mise en place ahead of time allows Charles and the other chefs to cook without having to stop and prepare items, which is desirable in recipes with time constraints.

Shift end

Toward the end of the shift, the kitchen staff will begin to put away food items in the refrigerators or pantry. This is an ideal time for Charles to think about what needs to be sold sooner and what might be the next day's special. He also decides what tomorrow's soup du jour will be.

Equipment

The kitchen staff uses a wide variety of equipment. For cooking, there are two ovens, a stove top, a grill, a griddle (hot plate) with a grease trap, and a deep fryer. For food preparation, there is a large cutting board area, a meal preparation area, and a meal warming/pickup area. Above the stove, ovens, grill, and hot plate is a large exhaust hood and fire suppression system. Pots, frying pans, and cooking utensils are stored under the cutting board and meal preparation areas.



Cleaning Staff

The cleaning staff (Doug and Dave) have the task of keeping the plates, utensils, pots, and pans clean. They operate the dishwasher. Plates and cutlery are put through wash, rinse, and sanitize cycles because customers eat with them. However, pots and pans are just washed and

rinsed. Doug and Dave must have everything washed and put away before the end of their shift. They sort the cutlery and return it to the dining room. They pile up plates, cups, and saucers on the shelves close to the meal preparation area. They do not wash any glassware; that's the job of the bartender. In the role of kitchen assistants, Doug and Dave help prepare food by doing tasks such as peeling potatoes, cutting up vegetables, or washing salad.

Cleaning

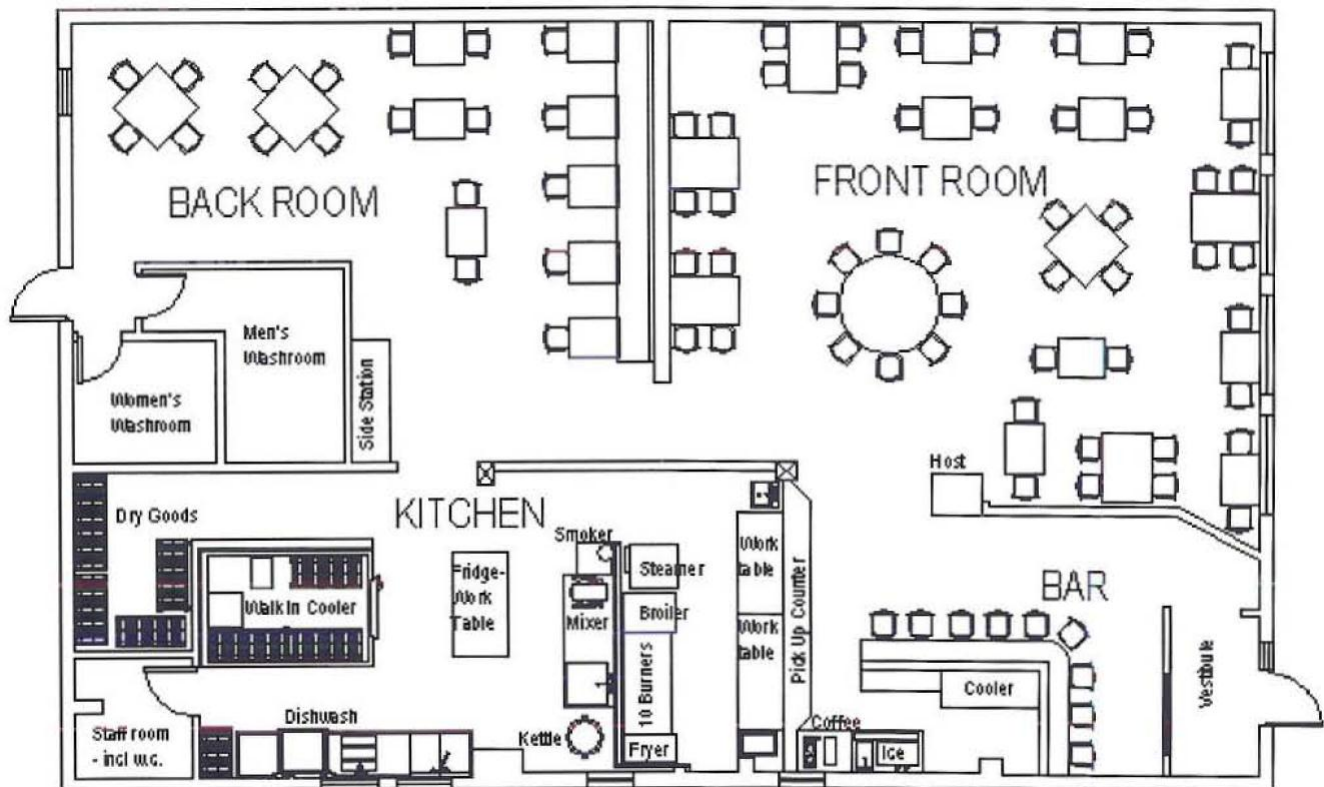
At the end of the shift, Doug or Dave cleans the kitchen. This includes mopping the floors, cleaning food preparation areas, emptying the utensil soak bin, and taking out the garbage. Other responsibilities include changing the deep fryer oil twice a week and cleaning the grease trap for the griddle every month.

Twice a year, Bob arranges with different contractors to:

- Test the fire suppression system
- Steam-clean the exhaust hood
- Clean out the grease interceptor

Dining Room

The dining room is involved in greeting and serving customers. It also handles payments for meals. It is open for lunch and dinner. The shifts are 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for lunch and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner. There are two dining areas, the front and back rooms. The two rooms are divided into five dining sections, three in the front and two in the back.



The dining room staff consists of:

- Helen, the hostess
- Servers: Steve, Sam, Shelly, Sara, Stacey, Sean, and Sandra

Hostess

Helen greets customers as they enter and checks the reservation list in case they have a reservation. After confirming the number of people in the party and helping them hang up their coats, she shows them to a table. She gives each customer a menu and provides a wine list for the table. Helen tells the customers who their server will be. She knows which servers are on duty each shift and which sections are open, and she tries to spread out the parties evenly across the open sections. This can be difficult if customers state a preference for where they want to sit.

Reservations

If a party with a reservation does not show up within 15 minutes of the reservation time, Helen is allowed to assign the reserved table to any customers who might be waiting. Customers are told of this policy at the time they make the reservation. Helen will also answer the phone when the restaurant is open. She can answer general questions about opening hours, the menu, and how busy they are, but all questions about reservations must be passed on to Bev or Bob, depending on who is available. Due to privacy regulations, only Bev and Bob can confirm, cancel, change, or take new reservations. Customers must provide their phone number when they reserve a table or change a reservation. The reservation list given to Helen does not have telephone numbers on it.

Servers

Since they are from opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean, Bev frequently calls the servers "waiters" and "waitresses" while Bob uses the term "servers." Servers are assigned to a section on a rotation system so that they do not always have the favourite higher-tipping sections. Servers take the meal and drink orders from the customers. They need to know the menu in detail and must be able to describe the specials for the day. After taking the customers' orders, the servers return the menus and wine list to Helen.

Order taking

There are three order-entry and bill-printing terminals, one per dining room and one in the bar. The servers enter all the meal-order details per table on these terminals. This system is called MOBS (Meal Order and Billing System) from Restaurant Software, Inc. The software automatically sends meal orders to the kitchen printer and drink orders to the bar printer. If the servers enter small items such as coffee that they can prepare, the order is not printed out. Servers are expected to visit the kitchen to find out the status of meal orders and the bar section to pick up drink orders. If a server is too busy and if Bruce, the bartender, is not too busy, he will deliver drinks to the table directly.

Service

The challenge for the servers is to keep customers happy. That means they must keep the meal progressing at a steady pace. For example, they don't want to deliver the main course while the customers are still finishing their appetizers or have the customers wait too long for their main course. Timing is everything!

Payments

When it comes time to pay the bill, the servers use a MOBS terminal to print it. MOBS can print a separate bill per customer, per pair of customers, or one for the entire table. If the customers are paying by credit card, servers use the card-swiping terminal of the Credit Card Payment System (CCPS) to process credit card transactions. CCPS is a separate system from MOBS. It is provided by the bank to the restaurant as part of the banking services. The card-swiping terminal is located at the bar. This allows Bruce, the bartender, to use it without leaving the bar section.

Credit cards

To process a credit card payment, servers first put through a credit card transaction for the total owed on the bill. The slip printed out has a line for the tip and total that the customer can enter. It also has the signature line plus a transaction number. The transaction number is used by the servers when they reuse the CCPS terminal to open up the transaction and add the tip amount.

Settlement

Servers and the bartender keep all their cash payments and credit card slips until the end of the shift. At that time, they pay what is owed to the restaurant based on the sales they made according to MOBS. They hand over the credit card slips and any additional cash to settle the amount. Any remaining cash the servers have becomes their tips. If too many of their customers paid by credit card and they have more money on credit card slips than what they owe the restaurant, they will swap credit card slips for cash with other servers. It is extremely rare that there is insufficient cash to cover all the tips, but when this happens the servers hand in all the credit card slips. Bev or Bob pay the servers their tips the next day.

Handling cash

If more than \$1,000 in cash is collected in the evening, Bev or Bob will stop at the bank on the way home and make a deposit at the night deposit box. Otherwise, the cash will be locked up in the safe in the back office.

Clearing and setting tables

The servers are responsible for clearing plates, glasses, and utensils from the tables. Dirty plates and cutlery are returned to the kitchen. Plates must be scraped clean and cutlery tossed into the soak bin. Glasses, however, are always returned to the bar. Servers are expected to clear and reset tables after the customers depart. However, Helen often resets tables if servers are busy and customers are waiting. Tables are always reset at the end of the shift so they are ready for the next shift.

Tips

In order for Helen to share in the tips, Bev collects for her an additional one percent of the sales made by the servers and bartender.

Miscellaneous

As the Customer Service Manager, Bev's additional responsibilities include:

- Ordering linens, cutlery, plates, etc. from suppliers
- Getting new menus and wine lists printed when there are changes
- Changing signage outside the restaurant
- Advertising in the newspaper or restaurant guides
- Designing any promotions or special discount coupons
- Dealing with the cleaning contractor who cleans the dining rooms each morning
- Managing furniture repair

The Bar

The bar operates similarly to a kitchen, except it prepares drinks. Bruce is the bartender. He is involved in the ordering, receipt, and storage of drink supplies and the mixing of drinks for customers. The bar is also similar to the dining room because it serves drinks and appetizers. Customers who are waiting for tables will often wait at the bar. Bruce has Monday and Tuesday off. Bev looks after the bar on these days.

Inventory control

Both Bruce and Bev have a key to the liquor and wine storage room. Bruce checks his supplies each morning and places orders by phone to keep sufficient drink ingredients on hand for a week. When new supplies arrive, he checks them against his orders and makes sure everything is stored correctly. As a bartender, he has to keep a close count of his inventory. At the end of each shift, he fills out a log sheet showing what stock remains in storage and what bottles are open and how full they are. At the start of the next shift, he checks his inventory to make sure nothing has gone missing.

Mise en place

Just like the kitchen, Bruce performs "mise en place" before the restaurant opens at lunch and in the evening. He has to make sure lemons are sliced, the ice bin is full, and all liquor bottles are on hand.

Equipment

Bruce has a MOBS terminal on which he can enter meal orders for customers at the bar. He has a printer for drink orders coming from the dining room and for printing bar bills. Since he acts as a server when receiving payments from bar customers, he uses the credit card terminal as well. He keeps all his transactions and cash in a cash drawer during the evening, and then settles up with Bev at closing just like the servers.

Restaurant Organization Structure

Diagram: Restaurant Organization Structure
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