

HIDEAWAY PIZZA.

Common Complaints of Restaurant Guests

Studies of restaurant guests show that these are some of the things that will lead a guest to perceive that they received poor service.

- **Cashier or Host absent or distracted when guests enter the building**
 - Most guest complaints can be traced back to disrespect or perceived disrespect.
 - A distracted, visibly irritated, or stressed greeter should not be the first thing a guest experiences when walking in the front door of a restaurant. After all, they just drove past 10, 20, or 30 other restaurants to come to ours.
 - Hosts and greeters should be enthusiastic, focused, and pleasant, especially when they're busy. After all, the guest is not an interruption of their job. The guest is their job.
- **Superficial Congeniality**
 - This term speaks volumes to the fact that service has to feel natural, warm, and genuine to have true value for the guests.
 - Make sure that FOH staff actually cares about other people.
- **Letting guests overhear managers & crew discuss the daily activities of running a restaurant**
 - Guests should never have to be within earshot of someone asking bussers to wipe down a table, clean the bathroom, or to fill the ice.
 - They should never, ever have to hear staff talking about cut duties, other staff, other guests, tips, or what you did when you were off work with your friends. You're always on stage.
- **Not noticing a guest with a problem**
 - Look for guests who appear to need something or seem unhappy with their food, beverage, or experience.
 - Support staff must notice problems and begin the process of resolving issues.
 - Get a manager to help.
- **Avoiding a guest with a problem**
 - This is much worse than not noticing a problem in the first place. Support staff must be vigilant in the dining room about helping to resolve small problems before they become big ones.
 - Support staff must also make sure that they get a manager involved if at all needed. Guests can be hesitant to ask to speak to a manager.
 - Your managers can't help with solving problems that they don't know about!
 - Unhappy guests today have many ways to make life uncomfortable for a restaurant. Social Media news travels quickly...And guests will often email or call corporate to complain.

- **A public work area that is not spotless**
 - There is no reason why your work area shouldn't be clean and neat, always and in all ways.
 - You serve better, sell more, and make more money in a clean restaurant. Don't ever think that guests don't notice and talk about a dirty restaurant.

- **Not getting to know regulars**
 - Guests who frequent a restaurant over and over and never seem to be recognized can feel disrespected.
 - Support staff should constantly make an attempt to remember regulars and acknowledge them.

- **Making lots of mistakes (but never learning from them)**
 - Messing up is one thing, failing to recognize the mistake and learning not to make it again is what distinguishes average operators from great ones. It's all about continuous improvement.

- **Forgetting to say goodbye and thank you**
 - Keep it fresh, keep it focused, keep it fun, and remember to say thank you to every guest.
 - Reinforce the importance of a positive last impression at the table or cash counter.

HOW TO HANDLE GUEST COMPLAINTS WHEN THEY INEVITABLY HAPPEN

No matter how hard we Hideaway Pizza team members try to be perfect, we experience mistakes, which unfortunately are at our guest's expense and inconvenience. Our goal is to try to reduce the quantity of mistakes our individual store's guests experience and the obvious negative economic impact that could result from decreased sales due to bad recommendations from unhappy guests.

We encourage our management teams to look forward to the challenges of correctly solving issues and problems that are a result of our mistakes. When done correctly, one is able to build a repeat guest and foster a positive relationship, from what could have been a negative one.

The challenge when solving any guest problems is not to find out who did what wrong. Instead, it is to find out what the problem is, correctly solve it as quickly as possible, and make the guest as happy as possible. We want the managers actively involved and to solve most guest complaints. We want this because we feel they can solve the problem correctly and efficiently while displaying the most professional behavior.

Problems seem to happen mostly when we are at our busiest and sometimes our slowest. Some situations will arise that require special care and attention. If our guest is unsatisfied in any way, you may be called upon to handle the situation. And always learn something new from every situation.

Here are a few guidelines that can help minimize the effects of a problem with any guest. These steps will take you from the rise of the problem to informing the management of the problem:

- **Assess the Situation**- The longer that our guest is idle with nothing being done about the problem at hand, the more escalated the problem can become. Immediately remove any food item they are complaining about. The concept of "out of sight, out of mind" applies.
- **Control the Situation**- Make the scene smaller by lowering yourself and your voice. If the problem is with a table, squat down close to the table, and keep the conversation quiet so only

those guests can hear the conversation. If the problem is with a carry-out order, do your best to separate that guest from the rest of the waiting guests.

- Listen- The way you listen is most important. Remember to be sincere, keep good eye contact, and nod understandingly. Reflect questions back to our guest so they know that you understand the problem. Inform the guests that you understand the problem and will do everything in your power to reconcile the situation. Show that you really care to listen to what they have to say. "I am sorry and understand why you are upset. We will do everything we can to help resolve the problem."
- Start to Solve the Problem- Inform the BOH *immediately* of the menu item needed. Remember, don't fight, but make it right. It doesn't matter whose fault the problem is, it only matters that it is taken care of quickly! If you need a food item sent to the table or waiting guest, get a manager to write out a ticket and they will ask for it "on the fly." While the BOH is taking care of their end of the situation, have your manager speak with the guest. If the problem does not involve the BOH find a manager immediately, so that they can start to solve the problem.
- Get a Manager- Having a manager talk to our guest is important because it lets them know that their situation is a high priority, and we value them and their opinion. Just make sure you give a quick debriefing to the manager, so they are aware of the situation. The manager will then go assess the situation and take the appropriate actions.
- Follow Up! - This could be the most important step because you want to make absolutely certain that our guest is fully satisfied with the result, and they are now happy and will return to The Hideaway. Get the corrected food items out to them as soon as they are ready and ensure that every other aspect of their dining experience is stellar.
- Say "Thank You"- At the end of their meal, always thank our guests for coming in let them know we hope to see them in the very near future!

Some our past guest complaints here at Hideaway (listed in no specific order). Please do your part to minimize these mistakes or common complaint areas:

- Slow to refill drinks
- Server had too many tables and was too busy to take care of us
- Server was not attentive to my table
- Employees too busy talking to other employees, standing in a group
- Hostess in groups inattentive, coming and going
- Wasn't busy and service was slow
- Wet or sticky tables and chairs or benches
- Lack of utensils
- Ask to speak to management and took a long time to get there or manager never came
- Hostess attitudes negative – remember about the 1st and last impression
- Server putting blame on other people