

Introduction to Food and Beverage

Introduction to Food & Beverage (F&B) Operations

Operations

Key concepts, functional areas, and best-practice fundamentals for anyone entering or managing a food-service establishment.

1. What Is Food & Beverage Operations?

Aspect	Description
Definition	The planning, preparation, service, and control of all food and beverage activities that generate revenue for a hospitality venue (restaurant, hotel F&B outlet, catering service, etc.).
Goal	Deliver consistent, high-quality guest experiences while maximizing profitability and maintaining safety/quality standards.
Scope	Menu design, purchasing, inventory, kitchen & floor staffing, service styles, cost control, sanitation, and guest relations.

2. Core Functional Areas

Area	Primary Responsibilities	Typical KPIs
Menu Planning & Development	• Concept alignment (theme, target market) • Recipe creation & costing • Seasonal & dietary considerations	Menu profit margin, item popularity, menu turnover
Purchasing & Receiving	• Supplier selection & negotiation • Order placement (quantity, timing) • Inspection of deliveries (quality, temperature, documentation)	Purchase price variance, on-time delivery rate, reject rate
Inventory Management	• Stock rotation (FIFO/LIFO) • Cycle counts & physical inventories • Waste tracking	Food cost percentage, inventory variance, waste %

Introduction to Food and Beverage

Area	Primary Responsibilities	Typical KPIs
Operations		
Production (Kitchen)	• Recipe execution • Portion control • Equipment maintenance & scheduling	Labor productivity, kitchen yield, equipment downtime
Service (Front of House)	• Guest greeting & seating • Order taking & delivery • Upselling & guest recovery	Table turnover, average check, guest satisfaction scores
Financial Control	• Budgeting & forecasting • Cost analysis (food, labor, overhead) • Pricing strategy	Food cost % (target 28-32%), labor cost %, profit margin
Quality & Safety	• HACCP & sanitation protocols • Allergen management • Health department compliance	Inspection scores, incident reports, audit compliance
Human Resources	• Recruiting, training, scheduling • Performance reviews, safety training • Labor law adherence	Turnover rate, training completion, labor productivity

3. Service Styles & Their Operational Impact

Service Style	Typical Venue	Key Operational Traits
A la Carte	Fine dining restaurants	High labor intensity, complex plating, extensive menu
Table-dine (Plated)	Mid-range restaurants	Standardized portions, moderate kitchen flow
Buffet/Ready-to-Serve	Hotels, cruise ships	Large batch production, strict temperature control, high waste monitoring
Counter Service	Fast-casual, cafés	Quick turnover, limited table service, emphasis on speed
Room Service	Hotels	Small batch prep, tight delivery windows, special packaging
Catering/Events	Banquets, corporate events	Menu customization, large-scale prep, logistics planning

Introduction to Food and Beverage

4. The “Food Cost” Equation Operations

[$\text{Food Cost \%} = \frac{\text{Cost of Goods Sold (COGS)}}{\text{Total Food Sales}} \times 100$]

Step

Action

1. **Recipe Costing** List each ingredient, quantity