

RESTAURANT REALITY MODE: QUICK GUIDE FOR BUSY SHIFTS



When you're short-staffed, in a rush, or training on the fly — focus on what matters most.

1. THE 3 PRIORITY RULE (TEACH THIS FIRST)

When everything is happening at once, guide youth employees to prioritize in this order:

1. **Customer first** (acknowledge, serve, communicate)
2. **Orders second** (accuracy and flow of service)
3. **Cleanliness third** (maintain as you go, don't stop service flow)

! If unsure: always default to the customer

2. MINIMUM VIABLE TRAINING (DURING A BUSY SHIFT)

Forget full training — focus on **just enough to succeed in the moment**:

- Show 1-2 key tasks only (e.g., taking an order, assembling a single menu item)
- Demonstrate once → let them try immediately
- Stay nearby for quick correction
- Reinforce what they did right

! Goal: build confidence fast, not perfection

3. WHAT TO TEACH NOW VS. LATER

Teach Immediately (Day 1 / First Shift):

- How to greet a customer
- Basic task execution (1-2 stations max)
- Who to ask for help / where to find the info they need

Teach Later (After a few shifts):

- Full menu knowledge
- Advanced prep or multitasking
- Detailed standards and efficiencies

4. 30-SECOND CHECK-IN (USE DURING RUSH)

Quick coaching moment:

- “What are you working on?”
- “What’s your next step?”
- “Need help or are you good?”

! Keeps them focused without slowing you down

5. SET THE EXPECTATION CLEARLY

Tell them up front:

“It’s normal to feel overwhelmed at first — focus on one thing at a time, and ask for help when you need it.”

KEY TAKEAWAY



In a fast-paced environment, success isn’t about knowing everything — it’s about knowing **what matters most, right now.**