

Quality Standards – A Foodservice Check-Up

Lesson Description:

This lesson discusses the importance of quality standards for customer service in a school nutrition environment. The activity uses a cafeteria checklist to increase awareness of indicators of a positive school nutrition environment. The lesson is designed for managers to teach school nutrition assistants/technicians.

Lesson Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, the participant will be able to;

1. Discuss how a school nutrition environment influences customer choice.
2. Evaluate your school cafeteria based on quality standards.

STEP 1 – Discussion

Discuss how a foodservice operation influences your choice to dine there or not. Discuss how these affect a school nutrition environment and customer choices to participate.

STEP 2 – Self Evaluation is Key!! How are we doing??

Cafeteria Dining Room	Yes	No	Comments
The dining room looks clean and fresh; furnishings are clean and in good repair.			
Interesting items such as artwork and posters decorate the walls.			
The floor and tables are cleaned often, and always after each serving period.			
The tray return area is kept clean and orderly; if there is a garbage can in the dining room for scraping trays it is hidden.			
Table tents with nutrition messages, centerpieces, and other table decorations are sometimes used.			
The lines are short and there are optional serving areas available or “grab and go” items available as part of the unit-priced meal.			
The dining room has sufficient seating for the number served; there is no overcrowding.			
The cafeteria smells clean, but not of chemicals; the food aromas that permeate the air are appealing.			
Cafeteria Serving Area	Yes	No	Comments
The area is kept clean and organized. No empty used pans or soiled wiping cloths are visible.			
Any area of the kitchen visible from the serving area is clean and organized.			
There are clean wiping cloths in sanitizing solutions below each of the serving tables to clean drips.			
All portioning tools and surfaces are cleaned after each serving period, or as needed.			

Cafeteria Serving Area	Yes	No	Comments
All signage is colorful and professionally-developed; there are no hand written signs.			
The serving area is decorated with colorful posters and items such as a bowl of gourds, or fruit and vegetable sculptures.			
Only clean pot holders are used.			
Nutrition Staff	Yes	No	Comments
Everyone is wearing a fresh apron or other appropriate uniformed dress, such as a school tee shirt or certain color top and dark pants. Apparel looks like retail restaurant uniforms.			
Each person has taken a few minutes to personally "freshen up" prior to service.			
All service staff members wear a smile and speak to the students in a respectful manner.			
Service staff offer foods by asking random questions such as "What vegetable are you having today?" or "Have you tasted this broccoli?" as a friendly reminder of the healthy choices.			
Free samples of a new food offered the day before it is served.			
Hot & Cold Serving Areas	Yes	No	Comments
All foods should fit on the wells of the steam table with the possible exception of pizza. Foods on the steam table should be attractively presented and held at the proper food temperatures.			
Pans are not stacked or balanced on top of one another on the steam table. A variety of pan sizes are available.			
All drips are wiped from the plate or serving table immediately, using a wiping cloth kept in a container of sanitizing solution under the serving table away from food.			
The runner replaces the pans of food before they are empty so that no customer is getting a serving that has been scraped from the bottom of the pan.			
The hot and cold tables or self-serve bars are enhanced with decorations to make them more attractive.			
If self-serve bars are used, staff are assigned to keep it neat and clean, log temperatures, and keep containers at least half full.			
Food Items	Yes	No	Comments
Daily choices available in each menu category: entrée; grains; breads; cooked vegetables; raw vegetables; and fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and juices.			
Pans of hot foods are presented to enhance appearance.			
Cold foods presented attractively to introduce new foods.			
Excess grease removed from foods to enhance the appearance.			
All pre-portioned items are arranged on the serving line so that each choice is readily available and customers do not have to reach over the other food to select a serving.			
A choice of lower fat condiments such as dips and dressings are readily available for student selection.			

Food Items	Yes	No	Comments
Any food sitting out too long and become dry, discolored, or unappealing is removed and replaced with fresh product.			
Operating procedures should be followed with leftover foods that are reserved for a later date.			
Chilled milk is maintained and always available.			
Foods are batch cooked as directed by the recipe and held in warming cabinets for a minimal amount of time.			
Standardized recipes are used for every preparation to ensure consistent quality. Foods are seasoned according to the recipe, not by personal taste.			
All foods are consistently served at the proper temperatures and these temps are recorded throughout the serving period.			
Healthy foods are packaged for convenience for eating in the allotted meal period, for example slicing apples and oranges rather than serving them whole.			

STEP 3 – Suggestion Box

Using the evaluation you have just completed, write your suggestions for change that might increase the enjoyment of our customers when they dine with us.

Suggested changes to the physical environment:

Suggested changes to the style of service:

Suggested changes to the food:

Other suggested changes:
