

489 Ways to Cut Costs in Restaurants, Cafes, Clubs, Catering, Hotels & Bars

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See our complete range of management systems on the website
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business more efficient and much more profitable.*

Email: info@profitablehospitality.com

Phone: 1800-001353 (Australia) or +612 93401089 (International)

Food costs and kitchen management

1. Set a minimum use-by date needed on your supplies to avoid having stock that runs out of date before you use it.
2. Make sure there is sufficient lighting in the dining area so menus can be read, and they are typed large enough to be read in dim light. Anything that leads to reduced sales will flow through to a higher cost structure.
3. Offer expensive seafood as part of a mousse item eg smoked salmon mouse tartlets rather than smoked salmon on rye.
4. Watch weather reports for supplier costs and find websites that give supply price changes – this allows more economical menus to be planned in advance.
5. Check your product specifications so they aren't too strict, resulting in supplies being sent to you no matter what the cost eg first grade lemons may mean using expensive imports at some times of the year.
6. Increase some prices, especially on your middle priced items – 50c more on half a dozen items may mean a difference of 0.5% less in food costs.
7. Break down your cost cutting efforts into 2 or 3 items each week – this way staff feel it's an achievable (even fun) project rather than a massive undertaking. Make a fuss about the good results they achieve.
8. Supermarket purchasing is a curse (and an occasional blessing). Ban it for all 'run-out' purchases but monitor it for specials eg salad vegetables.
9. Specify the need for staff training by product suppliers when they start supplying to you eg chicken supplier will show staff how to get extra cuts from boning a whole chicken, how to bread fillets for schnitzels, make 'supreme' portions etc. Sales reps enjoy this part of their work – it's a change from haggling over prices and they will be more motivated to look out for deals for you. They also get brownie points back at the office for their extra customer service.
10. Understand how the sales reps makes their money. You don't want to be loaded up with massive amounts of stock that will take weeks to use just because you bought their special pallet deal.
11. At the end of the month when sales reps have quotas to meet you *might* be able to get good deals on items you use a lot if you help them meet their target figures.
12. Import your own supplies – if you use large quantities of say mineral water, tinned tomato etc, investigate how much a container load will cost. Take into account storage and lead times but the savings can be enormous. Use temporary storage if need be.
13. Print up a plan of your cool room and storage area (like the plan in a bookshop) so new staff can find things quickly and there's no excuse for not putting stock away in the right place.
14. Have standard names used in your recipe cards and order lists eg Beef – ground, Beef – sirloin, Beef – eye fillet rather than ground Beef, Sirloin Steak and Eye fillet Steak – otherwise they will sort alphabetically into different areas.

15. Watch that garnishes are served in edible sizes eg the large scoop of sour cream on the nachos is often way beyond what will be eaten, same for the cream on the side of the cake. Reduce. Understand that staff want to be generous and will often fill to the top every dish or glass or bowl you serve food in – the answer may be in having smaller size dishes.
16. Put a service plate under the starter or small size dishes – makes a smaller portion look big! Don't be afraid to have many different serving dishes if it means you have the right size one for a particular dish.
17. Try using oval plates for serving some dishes – also makes less look more.
18. Owners and managers pay for their meals – on their account or pay actual cash. This eliminates the idea that it's a free-for-all.
19. Make the staff meal one that all can eat – this may well mean vegetarian or almost. Do a survey and cook accordingly otherwise special one-off meals will need to be made and the benefits of one-meal for all will be lost.
20. Check for collusion between front and back of house so customer gets a better deal and will tip better eg waiter apologises with a wink for not charging for the second bottle of wine, resulting in a bigger tip.
21. Reduce ladle and scoop sizes and match them exactly to the portion being served.
22. Choose green vegetables that require less trimming to create a final product eg broccoli loses 50% or more – is it really the vegetable you should be serving?
23. Use portioned cake dividers to mark large cakes and gateaux into correct portion sizes.
24. Have the pastry chef decorate cakes in a way that shows the portion size and enforces correct portioning eg with 16 piped rosettes around the chocolate cake for 16 serves.
25. Work out how to account for the cost of staff meals so they don't upset your food cost percentage – put a nominal staff meal allowance into your monthly or weekly sales figure to balance the cost of the food used. Ideally all staff should sign on for staff meals.
26. Investigate how large-size orders come eg pallet size or container size – once you know what the size is that won't need labour to divide it up, you'll get a better deal when you negotiate for that quantity.
27. Buy smaller serving dishes for garnishes eg small bowls just for mayonnaises and creams – staff can have the satisfaction of filling them right to the top without giving away too much.
28. Have food properly dry before frying – uses less oil and cooks more quickly.
29. Drain oil into a filter cone or collector at end of shift while still hot. Will be cold and ready to use next morning.
30. Invest in a proper oil collector on wheels so it's easy for all staff to manipulate and move.

31. Make sure barrels for waste oil are kept covered if outside, as water can contaminate them and make them unusable or unsaleable.
32. Have a dedicated shelf space where food can cool down otherwise it is in the way and will go into the cool room prematurely and overheat the refrigerated space.
33. Make sure cooks understand the chemistry of cooling certain items eg pumpkin soup that can spoil if not done properly.
34. Have trivets available for cooling pots to sit on so they cool underneath as well as sides and top.
35. Make sure cool room is big enough so food is not packed in too tight – takes longer to cool down and will spoil. Also means there's constant fossicking through shelves to find items with consequent breakage and spoilage.
36. Store less frequently used items higher in fridge and coolroom and more frequently used items at eye level.
37. Adjust fridge shelf heights for what goes on them – may mean more can fit in and there is better air-circulation.
38. Make sure air can blow from condenser fan around the food – look at the air-circulation principles involved. Food will cool quicker and stay fresher.
39. Don't allow food trays to cover floor-based fans blowing up into a deli-style display counter – will completely block the cooling.
40. Use a test kit to see when oil is ready to be changed. Change when needed, not according to a pre-assigned schedule (eg changing all fryers every Monday morning would be wasteful if it was a quiet weekend).
41. Rotate fryers and keep one for products that are heavy on the oil eg crumbed food. Even with filtering this will deteriorate faster but better to have one changed more often than all of them.
42. Only purchase what's needed for the week – in general large orders and 'one-free for ten' deals only benefit the salesperson's commission – having large quantities of stock around leads to pilfering and extravagance and rarely cost saving.
43. Label purchase dates on boxes or cans that aren't marked.
44. Investigate use of 'day-dot' type systems for marking age of food stuffs.
45. Have marker pens available and tied up near the store and coolroom so items can be labelled easily and quickly.
46. Have dedicated scales in the delivery area so spot check of weights can be made.
47. Have probe thermometer and sterilising material available in delivery area so delivery check can be made and non-conforming items immediately returned.
48. Have your policies on delivery inspection and return printed and laminated on the wall so there are not argument with delivery people 'in a hurry'.
49. Have your delivery times on a sign at the entrance to the delivery area – this will allow for calm receiving and checking of goods at your convenience, not at the convenience of the driver.

50. Have your delivery times printed on the delivery invoice or docket so there will be no misunderstanding about when they will be accepted.
51. Do a weekly food-rotation check when the age of all items is checked – timed for a quiet time and possibly managed by the second-in-charge – manager or head-chef is usually too busy.
52. Develop par levels for the amount of food or bar stock needed at a particular times and days so not over-preparing.
53. Investigate the donation of left-over food to a food-bank or charity that can use it (in accordance with food safety regulations).
54. Make a rule that no left-over food can be taken home by staff, even if it is surplus – this can create a culture where excess production starts to be made and the line blurs between legitimate take-home and pilfering.
55. Make a rule that staff cannot buy product through your account from suppliers – if they wish to purchase it must be on a separate invoice and paid for by them.
56. Investigate the possibility of left-over food scraps being composted or used for animal food (in accordance with food safety regulations).
57. Set up a waste watch committee to channel ideas from employees and establish the idea of regular review and auditing.
58. Use the systems in the Profitable Hospitality *Profitable Kitchen Manager* set to get the kitchen organised quickly. Tight, written systems always mean standardised production and lower costs. Details online at www.profitablehospitality.com .
59. Roster staff so some cooking is done during the afternoon period – this should be a productive time.
60. Establish the idea that all menu items with a high cost % must be matched by something with a low cost %.
61. Establish recipe cards for all dishes.
62. Purchase recipe management software such as the Profitable Hospitality *Profitable Recipe Manager* – train staff how to use it.
63. Organise administration staff to assist in the data entry for recipe costing so the chef can go straight into recipe writing.
64. Hire a chef to work specifically on costing recipes – it's too big a job to expect your existing staff to do that as well as their other work
65. Use approved style refillable condiment containers eg tomato sauce and ketchup bottles. The real ones are cute but your own means you can buy in bulk and refill.
66. Buy your meat in bulk and trim to order – establish skills in this area so you are not dependent on high priced pre-cut items.
67. Write to meat suppliers setting out clearly that there must be no deals with your staff – any discounts or bonuses to be paid to business owner only. Reinforce this message with staff and put it into all staff agreements – no kickbacks!
68. Have a cool-room large enough to buy cryovaced meat by the case so you can get better deals and age it – a better steak at a better price. But you will need good storage space.

69. Get advice from meat marketing groups on how to use cuts other than the finest fillet – because it's so easy to cook, less skilled cooks will only use the best with a corresponding affect on your profitability. They need training in other cuts – sirloin, rump etc.
70. If using large quantities of eggs, investigate using frozen yolk and whites for baking, or pre-shelled eggs for salads, sandwiches etc.
71. When checking deliveries do a combination of daily checking routines and surprise spot-checks and blitzes. This is usually the job for an assistant but the boss's presence every now and then will put across a powerful message
72. Clean fridges out regularly from back to front – Sunday or a quiet day is best when anything lost at the back can be retrieved before it spoils.
73. Chest freezers are a two-edged sword – very energy efficient but large amounts of stock get lost down the bottom in a frozen tomb – on balance they may cost more than they save.
74. Don't have more freezer space than you need – staff will be encouraged to keep it full 'just in case' at the expense of excessive stock holding. Par stock levels will help to control this.
75. Check which is regarded as more of a problem – running out or over-stocking. If it's the latter you are giving a strong message that you want excess stock on hand – at your cost.
76. Investigate and teach techniques for re-hydrating vegetables that have wilted – place stalk in slightly warm water for a short time.
77. Check the effects of cold, dry refrigeration and ensure food is covered. Have abundant amount soft cling-wrap available in an easy to use dispenser so it's always at hand.
78. Establish the tradition of using trim from meat and vegetables in stock and sauce preparation, taking care not to make the stockpot a garbage bin!
79. Watch what comes back on the plate – a sure check if you're serving too large a portion.
80. Have a 'best suggestion' competition every now and then for waste and cost reduction – not all the time because it will become too routine, but often enough to keep it in mind. Acknowledge the winner with a letter of thanks and a small prize (the letter will be kept for sure).
81. Coco Channel, the French fashion designer suggested removing one accessory before a woman left the house – could you remove one garnish item from the plate? Think of the money that could be saved!
82. Work out the cost of each strawberry, black olive, artichoke heart and other high-priced garnish or luxury items – include them in your recipe priced per-piece so the real cost is always known.
83. Replace strawberries as a garnish with strawberry coulis.
84. Use frozen fruit in coulis and bar cocktails – it's high enough quality.
85. Check how much of the side-serve of salad is actually consumed – is there another way to garnish?

86. Purchase a Japanese rotary mandolin – it makes very fine and attractive garnish from carrot, daikon or beetroot at a fraction of the cost of conventional cutting.
87. Purchase an electric slicer to ensure meat, cheese and other sliced products are sliced as thinly as possible - it will also produce a very uniform product.
88. Purchase quality scales that work out price per kg/lb – now check the cost of one prawn/shrimp, or a scallop or a shitake mushroom etc – can you still afford to throw them around or even use them?
89. Establish the routine that all portioned meat is weighed as prepared eg steaks when cut, burgers when moulded.
90. Use high quality fries – they absorb less oil, maintain their shape on the plate and fewer create a better impression. Less goes into the waste bin.
91. Egg yolks don't break as easily if at room temperature – order eggs frequently so they don't need refrigeration. Tell your customers about your waste reduction and recycling campaigns – their questions and positive comments to staff will be a powerful incentive to continue the program and may even be news-worthy (although you should be chasing good-food stories before you talk about what you throw out!).
92. Check the separate Gross Profit margins on products to see where the heavy costs are – if you have all of food and beverage lumped together for your Cost of Good Sold (COGS) it will disguise problem areas.
93. Review purchase agreements on an annual basis, with invitations to tender.
94. Investigate establishing an exclusive-supplier relationship with one supplier rather than playing off several suppliers against each other – it's surprising the deals that can be done.
95. Reduce the amount of shelving in dry store areas so over ordering is much less possible.
96. Adjust the par levels you carry to the period of delivery possible eg if you can have a delivery every day, won't par levels of two-days supply be enough?
97. Check for freezer burn and spillage in the freezer – one area we usually assume food will be stable. Why is it happening – food there too long?
98. Use an external chef or checker to audit food left uncovered or improperly stored after everyone has gone home.
99. Arrange for your suppliers to fax you weekly costs for checking – use one of your staff who's fussy with details to highlight changes beyond a few cents – the big changes are what interests you rather than most of the prices where there's been little change.
100. Don't just change suppliers for the cheapest price without getting a quote and then giving your existing supplier the chance to meet or better the price. All suppliers offer fabulous deals to start with and prices creep up when you become complacent.
101. Get someone to check invoice prices against the quoted supply prices – highlight differences and request a credit. Once suppliers know you're watching the price changes may slow.

102. Order forms should be on a clipboard where the deliveries are received so there's no problem checking prices as the goods arrive.
103. Order Forms aren't just one page for a day but used for a whole week – products listed down the left and columns for each day's order. Add up the totals at the end of the week.
104. Print up your own numbered and designed Order Books – very inexpensive from the local instant printer.
105. Have a policy to remove the least profitable item from the menu every week – gradually removing all of the weakest performers.
106. Keep in touch with the dishwasher to find out what's being thrown out and not eaten – this is the item that has to come off the menu or the dish.
107. What comes and goes through the back door – have large and clear sign posted there with your business rules about theft and removal of stock. Mount an intercom or bell so everyone knows who's there.
108. Put locks on freezers and fridges and store rooms that are located away from the main store or kitchen – the further away the more you will lose in time and stock.
109. Spot check the garbage bins and bottle bins for expensive items – imported liquor, steak, shrimp etc that may be collected on the way out by staff going home.
110. Have a strict rule about all staff leaving work through the front door or staff door only.
111. Shock tactics – get heavy gloves and a plastic apron and go through the garbage bins occasionally – you'll be amazed at what you find. Staff will be impressed seeing the boss getting her hands dirty!
112. Have waste put into clear plastic shallow trays, not deep dark bins – once it's inspected then it can be dumped out the back in the bins.
113. Remember staff are more likely to steal when they are disgruntled or unhappy – and others will collude with them at these times. How is the emotional climate in your business?
114. Use a Purchase Order Book as a minimum – duplicate pages mean you can check and there's a record of everything ordered.
115. Work out an incentive deal for the head chef on keeping food costs below a certain percentage.
116. Pay cost-control bonuses monthly not quarterly – rewards that are frequent make more of an impression.
117. Make your figures transparent so staff know 'how to win' and give them running weekly figures towards the monthly total so they can improve as they go.
118. 'Your coolroom and storage area should be like a boutique'. Think about it – neat attractive displays with everything easy to find on the shelves.
119. Write prices per unit on boxes of stock so staff know the value of what they use.

120. Store small precious food items in the office eg saffron, imported chocolate couverture, truffles etc – treat them in the same you handle money.
121. Buffets – have a waiter or cook attending to ‘help’ people with their portions – much less likely to pile the plates and pig out.
122. Poor seals on the freezer door mean some food is thawed and spoils, even if solid (may refreeze overnight)
123. No dry food to be on the floor – bags get wet from mopping
124. Separate storage of food and chemicals so no cross contamination
125. Use a vertical freezer rather than a chest freezer – while a little less efficient energy-wise, there is an overall saving because stock is not lost ‘at the bottom of the harbour’
126. Buffets not displayed properly iced or refrigerated necessitating them to be thrown out at end of meal period check required food temperature,
127. Wrong sort of refrigeration used in display cases eg floor-cooled rather than chilled from the top
128. Staff eating on duty- tacky to look at, breaking food safety regulations and no control over what’s eaten.
129. Plates too hot resulting in staff dropping food – no carry cloths provided.
130. Butter or margarine portions left out for convenience resulting in going rancid and being thrown out. Staff not told of the cost of a butter pat.
131. Prices for specials or extra items guessed at because no instructions
132. Open Key used on POS because prices and items have not been kept up to date – means sales totals are corrupted and not credible
133. Proper rubber scrapers not used to empty bottle and bowls – need to have a number of sizes and not the cheap ones – they perish.
134. Allowing floor staff to come in to get side orders/salads etc because kitchen staff are too busy. This is not teamwork but collusion in poor work habits
135. Frozen food thawed under in sink of water or hot running water causing contamination and loss of appearance and quality – should be one in the coolroom overnight
136. Saucepans and bowls too big and heavy for smaller staff to lift – can cause spills and accidents and burns.
137. Use very large stockpots with a tap on the bottom for drainage – these are not suitable to use without – alternative is to use a braat pan for larger production.
138. Soup pots and other sauces in bain-marie being left to evaporate and thicken resulting in poor quality items that will be thrown out. Evaluate usefulness of this method in off-peak times compared to microwaving or heating portion on the stove

139. Petit-fours and after-dinner mints are used for staff munching – popular items with guests but not for cost control.
140. Start the rule that all new recipes go through a review process before they are put into use – written and costed then tested against marketing and concept. This will mean fewer failures or unpopular items and more certainty Order individual cup-cakes portions of popular cakes rather than large cakes that will be cut into 12 or so slices – at least 2 of the 12 are lost for one reason or another and it's much easier to count and control individual small cakes
141. Put together a good simple muffin recipe and teach the kitchen hand to make it – this is the first job first thing in the morning g- can usually be made by hand and doesn't need a mixer. The smell of baking will draw customer in like a magnet
142. Measure like with like – kitchen labour against food sales, bar labour against beverage sales and waiter labour against waiter sales.
143. Understand the elasticity of your prices – how much some can be 'stretched' without affecting sales too much – some basic staples like burgers, beers etc have prices that are watched and commented on – keep the price increases for slightly less popular items maybe

Your suggestions and tips on how to cut costs and increase efficiency are very welcome – please email them to kburgin@profitablehospitality.com
Let us know if you wish to be acknowledged for the suggestions in the next edition of this publication (otherwise we will include it anonymously).

Administration and insurance

1. Outsource payroll processing to a bureau – they are more efficient and can generate individual records, tax certificates and employee reports without the pain and hassle of end-of-year reconciliation.
2. Insist all staff must provide bank account details and the only option is for pay to go directly into their account.
3. Align the pay week with the calendar week so you can compare all your cost percentages for like periods – food and beverage costs are usually done Monday – Sunday and payroll should be done this way too.
4. When comparing year by year figures compare 13 x 4-week periods rather than 12 calendar months – this will mean you are comparing periods with the same number of weekend days so sales figures will be a more valid comparison.
5. Check if you can trade off higher Insurance deductibles or initial payments for lower premiums, or carry the cost of certain injury insurance for a longer initial period as a trade-off for lower premiums.
6. Stop insuring your cash-on-premises and install a better safe.
7. Reduce the number of accounts you offer to customers – are they really essential to keep their business or would they still come anyway? A new system could be set-up where the account is backed by a credit card that you debit for the amount owing each week.
8. Reward staff for a cost reduction suggestions – use a survey form and offer a reward for best of the month. Simple rewards are sufficient in most cases eg movie vouchers. Publicise the winners.
9. Set up a waste watch committee to channel ideas from employees and establish the idea of regular review and auditing.
10. Use the *Profitable Hospitality* systems to get all parts of your business organised quickly. Tight, written systems always mean standardised production and lower costs. Details at www.profitablehospitality.com.
11. Send a letter of thanks to staff who have achieved good costs or improved on budget – these are sure to be kept in their CV.
12. Measure administration labour against total sales – it's an indirect figure but worth watching to see what might be changing month by month.
13. Develop your forecasting techniques to adjust for expected numbers – keep previous year diaries to see what happened on certain nights. Adjust for TV events and sporting events if that's what your customers love. Your labour needs will start to be much more predictable
14. Use plain paper fax paper, not thermal- recycle letters and pre-printed paper through it!
15. Have menus available on the net for browsing rather than having to fax and post them.
16. Have menus and pictures ready as Word documents and PDFs for emailing, and pictures as low-resolution JPEGs (that won't take too long to download). These are a speedy and cheap way to send function information to inquires.

17. Work towards one-page reporting – have all necessary Key Performance Indicators and cost figures for the week presented on one page so it's all in front of you at the same time
18. Keep your accountant interested and aware of your business trends – monthly discussions will keep them on their toes and thinking about how to cut your costs. Cutting back on chargeable discussion time is usually ridiculously counter-productive.
19. Pay your accountants bills quickly – they'll be pleasantly surprised and will give your preference over the slow-payers.
20. Discuss likely accountant and contractor fees in advance and get an idea of what to expect so there is no bill shock (that usually leads to unproductive cutbacks and false economy)
21. Gift-certificates should be on hard-to-find paper, numbered and recorded in a book when they are given out – eliminate counterfeiting.
22. When you do advertising and promotion make sure all vital information is included so it's not a waste of money eg time, address, directions if hard to find, phone details, website, benefits of taking part (what's in it for the customer) and logo or brand.
23. Have your logo and important photos available in common file formats (JPEG and TIFF files) and in colour and black & white, so advertising can be done up for you rather than needing a designer – magazines and newspapers will usually do this for free if you have this information and graphics ready for them to use.
24. Make it a point to negotiate on your credit card fees regularly, particularly if you are doing other business with the bank. Even 0.2% reduction on \$100,000 = \$200!
25. Join a trade association that will offer you a better deal on credit card fees – the savings are often considerable.
26. If some credit cards charge more than others, publicise the card that gives you a better deal and have the other facility available if requested.
27. Employ a separate person to do till balancing and checking – and make sure they have little or no contact with other staff. They are there to check for you.
28. Make it a general principle to NOT have audit functions done by operative staff.
29. Make sure book-keepers take regular leave and have systems set up so someone else can do the work while they are away.
30. Swap tills and cash-drawers between shifts and separate the counting function so those who just cashed off do not count their own till. Make sure the check is done within 24 hours so discrepancies are notified and actioned immediately.
31. Make your menus more long-lasting by printing on standard size paper, buy a laminator and do it yourself – laminators are very cheap and the exercise will pay for itself quickly. It will also make you more inclined to change the menu (and prices) regularly, thus increasing your profits by not carrying unpopular or wrongly priced items.

32. Pay your accounts on time so you're in a strong position to bargain for better prices.
33. Pioneer your suppliers electronic ordering systems – you will be well ahead of the pack. Most hospitality operators, particularly in food, are very backward with their use of IT and computerised systems. If you embrace their system they will be reward for you with deals, let alone the efficiency benefits.
34. Bar telephone calls from work phones to mobile/cell phones.
35. Bar the retrieving of voicemail or sending SMS messages from work phones
36. Designate certain numbers for long-distance calls and bar others having access. Managers given certain rights to override.
37. All dockets should have a serial number on them and the rule is they should not be re-used. Reassemble them after a shift and make a big deal of any that are missing.
38. Teach staff about financial literacy – credit card rates, personal finance, financial planning for the future. As they start to understand how money and finance works, they will have a more intelligent and informed approach to the business cost cutting efforts – your aim is to make them into your 'business partners'.
39. Educate staff about the difference between fixed costs (that they generally can't influence) and variable costs that are all about getting the product onto the plate or into the glass. of what goes on the plate or in the glass. and getting it to the customer. Train by using 100c in \$1 and explain where it all goes – they may be shocked to know how little is really profit!
40. Change the day you buy in coin change from the traditional Friday when everyone is harassed, late and stressed (and it's a perfect time for mistakes and even robbery).
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42. Educate staff about the difference between fixed costs (that they generally can't influence) and variable costs that are all about the cost of what goes on the plate and getting it to the customer. Train by using 100c in \$1 and explain where it all goes – they may be shocked to know how little is really profit!

Electricity and gas

1. Use task lighting – good lighting on a task area reduces the need for high levels of overall lighting – add up the total wattage in a room and see if it can be reduced and possibly give each person more light on the area they work eg lighting over cooking space
2. Clean light fittings regularly.
3. Position heat producing equipment away from thermostats so they have a true reading of the room.
4. Explain to customers and staff why you are implementing energy saving policies and ask for their input and co-operation.
5. Wash linen and clothes in cold water if it will do the job – check what's necessary. Much washing is done in water hotter than necessary. Motivate cleaning staff to be involved in what they do.
6. Use exhaust fans only when needed - don't turn them on automatically when the kitchen is opened.
7. Gas stoves only to be turned on when cooking is about to commence – not turned on ritualistically when chefs start.
8. Check and clean or replace exhaust hood filters so exhaust fans work more efficiently.
9. Check and replace door seals on all refrigerator doors.
10. Check maximum and minimum temperatures for refrigeration on/off cycle – discuss with refrigeration mechanic on their next visit. It can make a big difference to the amount of time the motor is working.
11. Replace incandescent lamps in work areas with fluorescent lamps.
12. Use concealed colour-corrected fluorescent lamps for atmospheric and display lighting.
13. Use sodium lighting for external illumination – much lower wattage than other types.
14. Have movement sensors on lights in lesser used rooms eg store-rooms lights not accidentally left on.
15. Have automatic cut-off on air-conditioning so it's not left on overnight by mistake – it can be over-ridden if still open.
16. Install awnings, solar screens and blinds to keep in the cool air in hot weather.
17. Have kitchen extraction by make-up fresh air so exhaust doesn't suck up all your expensively chilled air-conditioned air.
18. Install air-lock doors so warm air is not lost in cold climates.
19. Change stoves from electricity to natural gas.
20. Investigate gas air-conditioning instead of electric.
21. Install ventilation windows high up on walls to remove hot air automatically – reduce the need for continual air-conditioning.
22. Keep all coils of heating and cooling equipment free of dust.
23. Make sure they are accessible for easy cleaning.
24. Make sure motors are not close to each other in a way that reduces efficiency.

25. Move fridge motors outside where they can cool much more efficiently.
26. Check how electricity is billed – you may be charged for peak load which could be reduced by staggering turn on times of equipment eg not all turned on when the first person arrives.
27. Check the time needed to get steam-tables and bain-maries up to heat – it may be much less than you think. Reduce time accordingly.
28. Use a microwave oven to replace certain cooking and thawing tasks.
29. Arrange for thawing to occur overnight in cool room rather than rapidly on stove (check food-safety requirements).
30. Keep seals of ovens clean and replace if needed. Same principle as fridge door seals – don't let expensive heat escape.
31. Turn equipment off when not in use.
32. Make sure heating equipment like convention and combi ovens has a timer that turns off when time is up.
33. Use the right size pots for cooking – never smaller than the burner.
34. Keep pots together so they share heat
35. Turn down flames when correct heat has been reached.
36. Cover pots with lids when cooking to conserve heat.
37. Make sure there are enough lids to go on pots.
38. Only turn on the griddle or hot-plate section you need.
39. Work out the length of time needed to get the oven up to temperature – don't turn on until just needed.
40. Use a combination griddle that cooks on top and grills below.
41. Check the exact heat needed for frying and adjust the temperature accordingly – this will save energy and mean the oil lasts longer too.
42. Turn down gas burner between busy periods.
43. Check how many fried items are needed in quieter times – does the fryer need to be on at full-heat the whole time? Maybe the customer could wait a few minutes longer while fryer comes up to heat.
44. Check and recalibrate thermostats on all cooking equipment regularly. Replace if needed.
45. Make sure all controls have knobs with temperatures on them – these are often worn, dirty and unreadable.
46. Have accurate oven thermometers available to check cooking temperatures are correct.
47. Clean gas jets of grease and burnt food regularly so they work more efficiently.
48. Don't have two ovens going when one will do.
49. Use ovens with multiples shelves so a number of things can cook at once.
50. Invest in a convection oven – they're not very expensive buy.
51. Schedule cooking of items in the oven so the 'receding' or stored heat can be used.
52. Learn how food cooks in the stored heat of the product eg meats, large pots of soup etc.
53. Clean the fan and the light in the regular cleaning of the convection oven.

54. Fry in the range of 300-350°F or 150-180°C – this saves energy and frying oils from deterioration.
55. Allow solid fat to melt in warm area before pouring into fryer instead of using fryer heat to melt it.
56. Dishwasher is run only when it has a full load.
57. Check water temperature is not hotter than it needs to be (in accordance with food safety regulations).
58. Check operation of power-rinse cycle on the dishwasher – that it runs only for the required length of time
59. Allow items to cool down before putting them into cool room (in accordance with food safety regulations).
60. Have sliding doors on the back of deli-style displays so they keep the cool air in.
61. Schedule defrosting of fin or coil cooling elements in deli-style units – best at the end of the week or end of the day.
62. Make sure fridges stand level so doors close properly at all times.
63. Make sure fridge doors are not buckled so they can't seal properly.
64. Keep refrigerators distant at least a fist from the wall so there's room for air to circulate freely.
65. Keep a small broom tied to the motor to clean the fins – this way it won't be greasy which always makes the dust trapping worse.
66. Investigate heat-recovery systems to use the waste heat from your compressor.
67. Investigate availability of process-heat rates from your electricity company.
68. Install instantaneous hot-water instead of storage so you only heat what you need.
69. Install turnoff switches on the power point used for irons in the staff rooms – they can often be left on, using power and are dangerous.
70. If storage water heaters are used, have timers fitted so they turn off and on again at the time needed.
71. Insulate all pipes carrying hot water so they don't lose temperature.
72. Insulate all pipes carrying refrigeration so they are not exposed to hot air and preserve the chilled coolant inside.
73. Investigate energy efficiency in building design renovations – there are often significant opportunities for improvement.
74. Install roof insulation to reduce need for heating and cooling
75. Install 'sarking' or thick aluminium sheets to line the roof and keep out hot sun.
76. Design terrace awnings to take into account the angle of the sun at different times of the year – shaded in summer and sunny in winter.
77. Install solar water heating to boost water heating – may do a pre-heat so you don't need as much gas or electric heating, even if it's not sufficient to do all the heating.
78. Use double pane windows for increased insulation.
79. Avoid use of full-length bi-fold doors across front of a restaurant or bar – they increase cleaning needed and dramatically reduce the efficiency of

- air-conditioning. Same effect can be obtained from opening windows from table height up and won't drain all the cooled air out into the street.
80. Adjust gas flames so they are almost all blue and not orange – more efficient and hotter.
 81. Calibrate the oven thermostat regularly just as you check the thermostats used for refrigeration (check for 100°C / 232°F is really boiling temperature).
 82. Use low-wattage bulbs in exit and direction signs – they are on all the time and don't need to be high powered.
 83. Clean the filters in air-conditioning units – they get very dusty quickly. Make this part of the regular weekly roster. Ensure they are easy to reach safely – they are often very high and difficult to access.
 84. Benchmark your energy usage with other neighbouring industries on a percentage basis. Many restaurants and bars are reluctant to share \$\$ figures but are more willing to share percentages – who's is smaller and can you learn some of their secrets?
 85. Install a plastic ribbed curtain on the coolroom door to save cold air.
 86. Choose colour-corrected fluorescents (eg form Philips) to give a more flattering view of your food especially in display counters and fridges – sales will increase and you'll sell out. Less waste.
 87. Explain to staff the units of measurement that are used for energy consumption – BTU's (British thermal Units), watts, Kilojoules etc – bring it down to units they understand eg amount of energy to run an electric heater for one hour, and amount of coal needed to be burnt to produce it. Appeal to the conservationist in them – more motivating and effective.
 88. Maximise use of natural light when designing new premises – large windows means less need for daytime lighting
 89. Install quality weather-strips around door ways to reduce drafts.
 90. Move ice-machines out from under the bar where they get over-heated and in the way – they will operate much better in a well-ventilated area and are only used every hour or so.
 91. Replace all fluorescent tubes regularly (before they fail) as they gradually give off less light but use the same amount of power.
 92. Notice how many appliances and computerised systems are now in 'sleep' mode – this has replaced turning off with many items but they are still using energy.
 93. Investigate Time-of-Use or off-peak programmes for energy consumption – there may be good savings.

Water Usage

1. Change showerheads for guest and staff facilities to low-flow systems – explain why you have done it to reduce negative reactions.
2. Lawns and gardens can be watered in early morning, late afternoon or overnight to reduce evaporation.

3. Plant ground covers instead of lawn - they require little watering and less maintenance.
4. Replace washers in dripping taps – find out the local specialised person who does this (often called Mr Washers or similar in the yellow pages).
5. Ensure tap fittings are heavy duty commercial variety not domestic so they don't fall to pieces after being used 100 times a day.
6. Replace rubber washers and gaskets on taps with ceramic or metal ones – much longer life and will stop leaks. Install flow-restriction devices on certain taps so they are not turned on full.
7. Check the size of sinks needed in particular positions – you may not need massive deep sinks that are inevitably filled up just for simple washing jobs.
8. Install automatic turn-off taps in certain positions so they can't be left running (in accordance with food safety regulations).
9. Install water tanks to collect run-off water and use for gardening – purchase price is often subsidised for cost.
10. Replace toilet cisterns above male urinals that automatically flush 24/7. Install buttons or chain types or electric eye systems and put in appropriate signage.
11. Use toilet cisterns that do a half flush if that's all that is needed (in accordance with local hygiene regulations). Water used in toilets can be *50% or more* of total water usage in many food operations so attention here will pay off.
12. Educate staff on the implications of water usage and how much is used each day – describe it in terms they will understand eg each week we use enough water to fill 50 bathtubs or one swimming pool (work out your equivalent).
13. Also compare saving after a period eg we saved 50 bathtubs or if turning off lights – by saving 100 kW we saved X tons of coal being burnt and X tons of carbon dioxide being released into the air (your power company will have comparison figures).
14. Have a water and energy use audit done by your supplier or a private contractor – their job is to find where the leaks and waste are and it's often amazing what they find. Use professionals for this task.
15. The hose is not a broom – do a proper sweep first before you hose down the kitchen floor or outside areas.
16. Sweep and scrub terraces with a heavy duty deck-brush before hosing so it's quick and effective.

Repairs and maintenance

1. Make sure all repair tradespeople are genuine – ask for ID. Just having a uniform doesn't mean they are there to do the job. Fake service people can be a problem eg they come to refill fire-extinguishers but do nothing.
2. Clean steamer ovens regularly with proper descaling to remove build-up from water used.
3. Install a water filter on the steamer oven water supply to prevent scale build-up and less efficient operation.
4. Clean, drain and blow down steamer at least daily if used for long cooking periods.
5. Do a deal with fridge repair people for a monthly preventive-maintenance call – maybe in return for a meal voucher or some such.
6. Book maintenance visits before you expect the summer heat to start. Fridge motors often collapse on the first hot busy night and it's always at a time when call outs cost a lot more.
7. Diarise the next maintenance visit when they finish the current one – do a deal so it's not charged at full price but is during a week when they are in the area.
8. Assign the checking of equipment to a second or third in charge person – the head-chef or manager is too busy for what can often be a second priority task and they will be overlooked. If it is the responsibility of a lower rank they will be more keen to be involved in a 'management' task and can report on the results to the manager.
9. Have a maintenance logbook/diary to record repairs and maintenance and diaries future maintenance needed.

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Bar, cellar and beverages

1. Forget the formulas you've been told for pricing wine – buy good wine (that no-one knows much about) at a low price and charge as much as you can for it (making marketing sense of course – customer perceptions of value are the key to success here).
2. Keep a weekly value of your total liquor in stock – keep to a set value. This figure is often overlooked in the rush to work out consumptions figures in stocktaking.
3. Make sure all cocktail recipes are on cards at the bar where they will be made. In large print so they can be read in dim lighting.
4. Fruit garnishes should be seasonal, not fixed if at all possible i.e. cheaper.
5. Use free sample liquors to make up an original punch for a function.
6. Have your consumption formulas worked out and written down for liquor consumption eg number of men/women, age groups, ethnic groups (different attitudes to alcohol consumption). This is the number on which you base your issue stock.
7. Inventory the bar and check out and check back all function bottles – no empty bottles to be thrown away as they must be counted. Use a specific sheet to organise this.
8. No free-pouring – all liquor to be poured with nip measures or pouring caps.
9. Demonstrate the cost of the 20 grams of wasted ground coffee each year – $20g \times 5 \text{ times a day} \times 7 \text{ days a week} \times 52 \text{ weeks a year} = 36.5kg$ per year @ \$20 per kg = \$728. What could you buy the staff for \$728 if you had it?
10. Use the systems in the Profitable Hospitality *Profitable Bar Manager* set to get the bar and cellar organised quickly. Tight, written systems always mean standardised production and lower costs. Details online at www.profitablehospitality.com.
11. Experiment with how you sell cold beverages when you provide water at the beginning of the meal. Free water is an essential courtesy – and it doesn't need to eliminate drink sales if you time the offer and order taking properly.
12. Front of house and bar people have a cleaning roster too – it's not just the job of the kitchen-hand. Have the cleaning schedule printed and laminated and up on the wall. The professional cleaners concentrate on the heavier jobs.
13. Investigate common means of theft in bars and kitchens – eg *99 Ways employees steal in a Restaurant or Bar* (from Martini & Co – contact Profitable Hospitality for a copy if you can't obtain it). Go through this carefully and check what could happen at your place.
14. Don't fill ice-bins until the rush starts – many staff fill them up when they start a shift, often an hour or more before the rush and much of it melts.

15. Buy a large capacity ice-machine that will handle the busiest nights – have it convenient and well-ventilated so it works efficiently – this will avoid expensive trips to buy ice at peak times. How much does that cost you each year??
16. Sell re-usable mugs to encourage people to bring their own mug for take-out coffee.
17. Use durable coasters rather than cocktail napkins – test the type of cardboard you use and try to get longer use from them. Discourage all coasters being trashed automatically at the end of the night.
18. Do a count of how many coasters used in a week and compare to customer count – are the figures a surprise?
19. Coasters are not notebooks – discourage their use as the all-purpose writing pad. How much do they cost each? Let staff know.
20. Consider installing a post mix dispenser system rather than serving soft-drinks out of a bottle. Weight this up against any likely cost of post mix installation – what is the Return on Investment? Remember anything ‘free’ from a supplier usually locks you in to buying their higher-priced product.
21. Check how much gas is left in a postmix bottle before it’s returned – learn how to check this with gauges. A lot of bottles are returned with substantial amounts of gas still in them. It’s one of the jobs often done by the less skilled people who don’t know what to expect – train them!
22. Check the syrup-to-water ratio and calibration regularly in post mix machines – many die-hard coke and Pepsi fans prefer it from a bottle or can because of quality variations, but it’s in your interest to sell it from post mix because of higher profit.
23. Buy your own coffee machine and grinder so you can shop for deals on coffee beans.
24. Establish real excellence in your coffee making and play down the brand – brand dependence locks you into high priced suppliers who offer ‘benefits’ that only really promote them. Once your known for your coffee you can experiment with supply and play harder for better deals with suppliers. Free cups and sugar packets aren’t usually worth what you give up.
25. If you have excellent volume negotiate with suppliers for deals on price per kg/lb – skip the free umbrellas that only promote their image, not yours.
26. You’ll never overcome the craving for diet-cola drinks but you can compete with them by offering quality fresh juices, frappes and smoothies – any way that you can sell ice sounds like a good way to make money!
27. Purchase a quality commercial juicer and start purchasing juice-grade fruit to put fresh juices on your beverage list – very high profit and popular.
28. Increase your coolroom space to enable you to purchase juicing fruit and vegetables in bulk

29. Adjust your juice menu when certain fruits are out of season or over-priced.
30. Regulate the consumption of carbonated drinks in the kitchen – much of it is not drunk because it goes flat or warm before it's drunk.
31. Ban staff soft drinks being brought into the kitchen in jugs – half will be warm before it is wanted and then will be thrown out.
32. Install a water filter for staff water and then disallow drinking of expensive bottled water.
33. Allow purchase of cordial drinks (eg lemon or lime) to be made up for kitchen refreshment for busy nights – then ban consumption of sodas and carbonate drinks by staff.
34. Don't fill coffee pots up just before closing – just in case. Have a small pot ready to make for that one last order – the customer will be flattered you made it freshly just for them.
35. Untrained bar staff who don't know how to pour a beer usually create a lot of foam and waste. Show them what to do!
36. Wrong gas connected to beer lines in the cellar results in contamination and much product is lost in the process.
37. Use left over coffee and tea as iced coffee and tea – adjust your recipes accordingly
38. Pour left over skim-milk (for cappuccinos) into the regular milk so it's not wasted.
39. If using soy milk infrequently, but small single portions and open as needed rather than large ones half of which will go off
40. Don't buy drinks in tin cans and leave them in it eg tomato juice – decant into a another container. Check if single portion serves for less popular but necessary items would be cheaper in the long term.
41. Do some price increasing, especially on your middle priced items – 50c more on half a dozen items may mean a difference of 0.5% in beverage costs.
42. Understand the elasticity of your prices – how much some can be 'stretched' without affecting sales too much. Some basic staples like beer etc have prices that are watched and commented on – keep the price increases for slightly less noticeable items.
43. Break down your cost cutting efforts into 2 or 3 items each week – this way staff feel it's an achievable (even fun) project rather than a massive undertaking. Make a fuss about the good results they achieve
44. Specify the need for training by suppliers when they start with you eg wine supplier will show staff about product features and food matching etc. Reps enjoy this part of their work also – a change from haggling over prices and they will be more motivated to look out for deals for you.
45. Understand how the sales rep makes their money – you don't want to be loaded up with massive amounts of stock that will take weeks to use but at the end of the month when they have quotas to meet you might be able to get good deals on items you use a lot of

46. Print up a plan of your cellar (like the plan of a bookshop) so new staff can find things quickly and there's no excuse for not putting things away in the right place.
47. Understand that staff want to be generous and will often fill wine-by-the-glass to the brim. The answer may be in having smaller size glasses just for those items.
48. Owners and managers pay for their drinks – on their account or pay actual cash. This eliminates the idea that it's a free-for-all.
49. Work out how to account for the cost of staff drinks so they don't upset your cost percentage – put a nominal staff beverage allowance into your monthly weekly sales figure to balance the cost of the stock used. Ideally all staff should sign on for staff drinks or ring them up on a staff key.
50. Use bar cloths on the bar surface to avoid breakages
51. Make sure the cool room is big enough so liquor is not packed too tight – it also takes longer to cool down and means there's constant fossicking through shelves to find it with consequent breakage.
52. Store less frequently used items higher up in fridge and cool room and more frequently used items at eye level.
53. Adjust fridge shelf heights for what goes on them – may mean more can fit in and there is better air-circulation.
54. Make sure air can blow from condenser fan around the stock – look at the air-circulation principles involved.
55. Only purchase what's needed for a week – in general large orders and one-free for ten ordered deals only benefit the salesperson's commission – having large quantities of stock around leads to pilfering and extravagance and rarely cost saving.
56. Label buy dates on cartons that come in and aren't marked - print off your own large labels for the job.
57. Have marker pens available and tied up near store and coolroom so items can be labelled.
58. Have your policies on delivery inspection and return printed and laminated on the wall so there are not argument with delivery people 'in a hurry'.
59. Have your delivery times on a sign at the entrance to the delivery area – this will allow for calm receiving and checking of goods at your convenience, not at the convenience of the driver.
60. Have your delivery times printed on the delivery invoice or docket so there will be no misunderstanding about when they will be accepted.
61. Develop par levels for the amount of bar stock needed at a particular times and days so not over-supplied.
62. Adjust the par levels you carry to the period of delivery possible eg if you can have a delivery every day, won't par levels of two-day's supply be enough?
63. Make a rule that if staff are allowed a staff drink and it is not consumed it cannot be taken home.

64. Make a rule that staff cannot buy liquor through your account from suppliers – if they wish to purchase it must be on a separate invoice and paid for by them.
65. Hire a consultant to work specifically on costings – it's too big a job to expect your existing staff to do that as well as their regular work.
66. When checking deliveries do a combination of daily checking routines and surprise spot-checks and blitzes. This is usually the job for an assistant but the boss's presence every now and then will put across a powerful message
67. Clean fridges out regularly from back to front – Sunday or a quiet day is best when anything lost at the back can be retrieved before it is broken or damaged.
68. Check what is regarded as more of a problem – running out or overstocking. If it's the latter you are giving a strong message that you want to be overstocked – at your cost.
69. Work out the cost of each strawberry, lemon and lime wedge and other high-priced garnish or luxury items – spread the word!
70. Use frozen fruit in coulis and bar cocktails – it's usually of quite sufficient quality.
71. Review purchase agreements on a regular basis, with invitations to tender.
72. Investigate establishing an exclusive-supplier relationship with one supplier rather than playing off several suppliers against each other – it's surprising the deals that can be done.
73. Reduce the amount of shelving in the store areas so over ordering is less possible.
74. Get someone to check invoice prices against the quoted supply prices – highlight differences and request a credit. Once suppliers know you're watching the price changes may slow.
75. Have Order Forms on a clipboard where the deliveries are received so it's easy to check prices as the goods arrive.
76. Use a Purchase Order Book as a minimum – duplicate pages mean you can check and there's a record of everything ordered. Have Order Forms designed to be used for a whole week – product listed down the left and columns for each day's order. Add up the totals at the end of the week.
77. What comes and goes through the back door? Have a large and clear sign posted there with your business rules about theft and removal of stock. Mount an intercom or bell so everyone knows who's there.
78. Put locks on freezers and fridges and store rooms that are located away from the main bar – the further away the more you will lose in time and stock.
79. Spot check the bottle bins for expensive items such as imported liquor, etc – collected on the way out by staff going home,
80. Work out an incentive deal for the Bar Manager on keeping costs below a certain percentage. Make sure your figures are transparent so they

know 'how to win', and give them running weekly figures towards the monthly total so they can adjust as they go.

81. 'Your store-room should be like a boutique'. Think about it – neat attractive displays with everything easy to find
82. Poor seals on the fridge doors mean they are working overtime – time for replacements?
83. Ensure separate storage of liquor and chemicals so no cross contamination or safety concerns.
84. Eliminate use of the Open Key on the Cash Register/POS. It's too open to abuse and corrupts your weekly figures.
85. Measure like with like – especially bar labour against beverage sales so you have figures that managers can be held to account with.

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Functions and events

1. Make sure all function concessions in writing to avoid comeback arguments. Any changes are also confirmed in writing. Arguments usually mean you give in (and lose) to save future business.
2. Be ready to offer concessions and have counter-concessions ready to ask for if price is being negotiated.
3. Know the actual value of all concessions eg extra staffing, extra coffee etc.
4. Make sure there is a clearly understood cancellation clause in the event contract.
5. Offer extended times and complimentary extra space, free parking, office space, upgraded rooms, health club usage, meals, exhibitor space etc instead of discounts.
6. Use the systems in the Profitable Hospitality *Profitable Function & Entertainment Manager* set to get your functions and eventss organised quickly. Tight, written systems always mean standardised procedures and lower costs. Details at www.profitablehospitality.com
7. Know your high-demand times and offer special deals for low-peak times to maintain your sales and cover fixed costs.
8. Build up your range of hire-out equipment, plates, tables, candelabra, Audio-visual equipment etc and then hire it out at normal commercial rates.
9. Investigate available Audio-visual and IT skills amongst your staff who could run these facilities as an add-on to their normal job – save on the cost of hiring in an expensive specialist.
10. Try to negotiate food and beverage spend on a per-head basis so your costs are covered for no-shows.
11. Find out the likely proportion of people who don't drink alcohol (according to customer type) and factor this into the profit margin in your beverage packages.
12. Keep track of actual consumption from previous events and compare to give you a guide of what to offer – compare customer types in this.
13. Remember the no-show factor – check it from previous events and assume accordingly. Airlines make an art of this! Have kitchen and bar on stand-by to top up if necessary.
14. Because conferences and all-day events are sedentary, people are less hungry and will want smaller portions eg 150g meat portion rather than 200g etc
15. Work with client to keep food costs low – what they save will also mean savings for you and they will be happier to spend on other items that have no-cost for you eg extra room space, Audio-visual hire etc if their Food & Beverage budget is reduced.
16. Know the gross profit item of everything in your function package and sell according to the profit margin you will make.

17. Set up your bonus scheme for function sales staff with a higher bonus on high-margin items.
18. Place food service stations against a wall to reduce gorging.
19. Have staff serve at food stations to limit consumption.
20. Investigate specialist event management software to handle bookings and production of running sheets etc.
21. Investigate and understand musician union rules and minimum play times and rates – specify entertainment and price you charge accordingly.
22. Make sure the entertainers are using music that has been arranged already so you don't pay for special arrangement fees.
23. Close separate bars progressively as a function starts to end – reducing to one. Guests will remain happy and labour costs will be reduced.
24. Have a clear written policy on 'band-riders' (free drinks) and freebies for events with live entertainment. Have it written in the band's contract and in a laminated poster in the band area and near the bar. It helps bar staff manage requests that go outside the rules.
25. Say no to small catering orders – are they really worth it? Do your costings and set the minimum profit that you want to make, then work out a polite way to say no.

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Labour costs

1. Use the internet to advertise positions - to speed up recruitment and cut costs. This way the ad stays up for days or weeks.
2. Get your staff to help you recruit – once they are established ask them to recommend others
3. Pay trusted staff a bonus if a person they recommend stays beyond a particular time eg 3 months.

Tips on keeping good staff who you've just recruited:

4. Hospitable beginnings – make time for induction and a tour of premises.
5. Give them time and a quiet area to read your staff policies & procedures.
6. Introduce them to other staff both front and back of house.
7. Make training time for familiarisation with the menu, beverages, cooking methods etc.
8. Assign a team buddy to demonstrate procedures and answer questions.
9. Clarify key issues like pay day and rates, staff meals and uniforms etc.
10. Check back within 2 days and at the end of the first week – a formal seated discussion of what's happening and what else they need to know.
11. Use the systems in the Profitable Hospitality *Essential Staff Manual & Kit* to get all areas of recruitment and staff management organised quickly. Tight, written systems always mean lower costs. Details online at www.profitablehospitality.com.
12. Plan farewells well in advance – as much as you don't want people to leave there will come a time when they will. Shock departures are costly – have it well known that it's ok to leave but a month's notice would be greatly appreciated and will not affect their reference. This especially applies when you have a lot of students working for you with plans for more study, work or travel.
13. Have specific responsibility for *watching* costs and reporting waste in the job descriptions of all staff.
14. Have specific responsibility for *managing* costs and *implementing* cost-reduction programmes in the job descriptions of all management staff –
15. Make sure supervisors and managers have specific numbers to report on, and the information they need to draw their reports from.
16. Who is your trainer – does that job fall to the manager? They may not be the best person to do this job – too busy, not interested or not patient enough to coach and guide someone new. Split off this job and find someone who will find it a boost and do a much faster and more efficient job and get onto it much more promptly.
17. Investigate and establish a work-place agreement that rolls extra pay and allowances and different weekend rates into one hourly rate.
18. Even if you average pay rates over a week, offer a slightly higher rates for less popular times to ensure rostered staff turn up.

19. Make sure your tip allocation system works for your business as well as for the staff who collect them. Check that it encourages proper sales and cost-control behaviour. Change the rules if needed.
20. Check classification of staff for workers compensation insurance rates. Check exemptions that may be possible for apprentices and trainees and have them classified separately in your payroll totals so you can get totals quickly and easily.
21. Make sure incentives for reducing labour don't reduce quality – they should be matched with performance indicators for service or product quality also otherwise overall quality may decline.
22. Adjust your opening hours - if you can get 2 long shifts staffed by full-time people this may be less expensive or the same cost as casual employee for shorter hours. You may be able to open longer hours for almost the same wage cost
23. Set standards for how long it takes to do standard tasks eg how long to clear and set up the bar fridge, how long to peel a bucket of onions, how long to peel and prepare 5kg of shrimp. This gives guidance to new staff and helps supervisors keep the pace moving.
24. Hand out tasks in threes – 'I want you to do this, this and that, then come and see me when you've finished' – they will always have one more thing to do. Just giving one task at a time allows it to be stretched to fill the time available
25. Be careful of not to give too many hours to staff who want it extra work because they are short of money – there's a short term advantage but as they become tired their work quality suffers and productivity is reduced. You could get someone else to do those extra 20 hrs for the same rate and they would be fresh, more energetic and accurate.
26. Redo your staff schedule or roster in 'positional' format rather than according to staff names – this way you can plan hours and costs in advance and delegate much of the position filling to a supervisor. See the article on *Better Rosters* on the Profitable Hospitality *Articles* page.
27. Training costs money but it's more expensive to use untrained people! Think of it as 'twenty-minute' training – small chunks that are fitted in around other work. Each mini-session will teach several shorter items. More will be done and there's not a panic about the cost.
28. Consider contractors for certain jobs eg cleaning that is traditionally done by kitchen or bar staff and not done well eg cleaning floor and bathrooms at the end of a long shift – no-one likes it or does it very well.
29. Look at the whole package of what you offer when setting pay rates. Often the business in your area with the lowest staff turnover is NOT paying the highest rate per hour. They are usually offering a lot of other benefits and intangibles such as teamwork, training, uniforms, staff discounts and social activities etc. Overall, their costs are much lower even though they seem to offer 'more'.

Safe working conditions

1. Buy a mesh gauntlet for cutting meat – it will protect hands, prevent food contamination from cuts and reduce time off because of serious accidents.
2. Run your own ten-minute training sessions on using all bladed equipment. Make this part of the chef's job description.
3. Eliminate staff drinks – with increasing concern about a business's 'duty of care' for staff after work (explicitly your responsibility under many insurance policies), take the plunge and end the practice. There are other places around for staff who want to socialise, and many would rather go home. Heavy drinkers will find somewhere else to work – you don't need them!
4. Discourage all-night staying out after a late shift. Tired staff are a walking safety problem.
5. Use safety posters around the work-place and rotate them regularly. Make this the responsibility of a supervisor or second-in-charge – managers are usually too busy for these jobs and forget them.
6. Only plastic cups and mugs allowed for staff use in the kitchen – no glass or breakables.
7. Use the Profitable Hospitality *Workplace Safety Posters* to reinforce your safety messages. Details online at www.profitablehospitality.com.
8. Space for their personal items eg secure locker, change area etc.
9. Use a locker that needs staff to provide their own small padlock. This gives them more control and eliminates the endless cost and drama of lost keys.
10. Enforce the type of shoes that must be worn by all staff – steel capped in the kitchen and fully covered for all other staff. It's possible for them to be fashionable, comfortable *and* safe – find out the best suppliers and suitable and advise staff.
11. Set up your safety KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) and talk about them – cost of insurance, cost of insurance saved if no accidents, length of time since the last accident, staff pay on reduced accident pay etc.
12. Get suppliers of new equipment to run safety training for all staff as part of the installation process.
13. Install non-slip surfaces and edges on steps and areas where slips are likely – measure the cost against the likely effect of a staff member out of action for 6-8 weeks (time it takes them to recover).
14. Let staff know the real weekly cost of your workers compensation or safety insurance – in dollars not just as a percentage. It gives your safety messages more meaning.

Cleaning costs

1. Issue cleaning products like you issue liquor – they are costly and should be treated with care.
2. Do a comparison for staff information – compare the price per ounce/litre of an expensive cleaning liquid and a lower priced wine. That will get them thinking!
3. Use a filter replacement service for filters above the stoves so they are always done and not forgotten.
4. Have a regular program for cleaning the inside of exhaust hoods (often required by your fire-safety insurance). This improves efficiency and can mean in the unlikely event of a fire it's not a catastrophe.
5. Clean grills to remove carbonised food build-up – it cause spoiling of meat and seafood that can't be sold.
6. Line floor of ovens with heavy-duty foil to make removing spills easy.
7. Install automatic dispensing if staff are careless with use of chemicals.
8. Check automatic detergent dispensers are correctly calibrated so they don't over-dispense.
9. Clarify with chemical company (and put it in writing) their responsibility to replace all chemicals that are over-dispensed if the machine is faulty.
10. Investigate purchasing your own dispensing equipment to avoid expensive contacts with cleaning companies.
11. Clean dishwasher regularly during shift so filter tray is not clogged reducing effectiveness.
12. Do an effectiveness test of different brands of dishwashing powder to avoid buying the cheapest one that doesn't work – sometimes one supplier may not have all the best products.
13. Buy detergent concentrate and make up your own according to a strict recipe.
14. Install special shelving for detergent drums and buckets so they can be easily reached without strain or lifting. Less will be dispensed this way.
15. Train staff in the use of chemicals – most people don't have an idea of concentrations needed and come from their own practices at home, even though quality commercial chemicals are often much more concentrated.
16. Have instruction sheets on the wall – either from supplier or do your own and laminate them with lots of colour. Many staff doing cleaning work do not speak good English so go for colour and symbols to get the message through effectively.
17. Have spare taps available for drums so there's never the need to dispense from the top.
18. Have standard measuring cups in a particular colour available for powder detergents – stop the use of coffee cups etc.
19. Eliminate use of rinse-aid if there is time for cups and cutlery to dry naturally – they are very hot when they come through the rinse cycle.
20. Arrange for suppliers of cleaning products to take back and credit you for drums and buckets from cleaning products. They are often reluctant to as

it's a nuisance - stand your ground and have the instruction printed on the invoice (with the delivery times) eg 'must collect empty buckets for re-use'.

21. Check your credit for returned drums regularly on the monthly statement.
22. Understand and regularly audit the 'float' systems used by linen companies for supplying napkins, tea-towels, table cloths etc. Get to know the sales reps and make sure they know that you know! The float system was actually designed by a mathematical sadist...
23. Use squeegees to clean up and collect floor scraps in a scraper pan rather than letting it all go down the floor waste.
24. Use re-usable cloths for wiping tables and benches, with a routine of daily sterilisation.
25. Install your own washing machine to do tea-towels and other linen. It will handle some very filthy loads so it may pay to purchase a commercial machine and use commercial grade washing liquid.
26. Dry tea-towels and linen on a line over night in your own dryer. Watch for overheating of greasy cloths in a clothes-dryer – fire danger!
27. Replace small toilet rolls with large commercial dispenser rolls – more comfort for customers and saves the ends of rolls being thrown away.
28. Use multi-purpose cleaners that can do a number of jobs – you will use less product overall.

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Equipment and wares

1. Use equipment suppliers to train up staff on complex equipment they supply eg cook and hold ovens, combi-steamers etc. As part of the deal with them specify that this training be available every 6 months (or regularly) for new staff. They usually enjoy being of assistance and it gives them good credit back at their own office.
2. Buy crockery that has a guaranteed replacement life – special deals on end-of-line items means you've got a few items sitting there unused because it's not enough for your needs.
3. Invest in moulded glass-washing trays (from the dishwashing company). Expensive to start with but the saving on breakages is considerable. Say goodbye to metal storage trays.
4. It's not smart to know who can carry the most glasses without a tray or who can carry the highest stack of dishes – make sure this type of behaviour is NOT rewarded inadvertently eg by a laugh or cheer.
5. Have a board on the wall with examples and the actual price of each item of glass-ware, cutlery and crockery – staff have no idea of individual cost.
6. Do a stocktake of these wares regularly and put in opening and closing stock and purchases – takes a little bit of time but the results can be frightening – knowledge leads to action. Do it in the same way you do good and liquor stocktaking
7. Eliminate scrape holes beside sinks as they become black holes that eat cutlery – make sure bins can be easily accessed so cutlery can be rescued.
8. If you must have a scrape hole buy a magnetic rubber collar to go around it to catch steel items like cutlery.
9. Tie in monthly cost of ware purchases to a bonus scheme – it may even reduce other bonuses if it breakages and loss goes beyond a certain acceptable figures (so what *is* really acceptable at your place).
10. Have rubber mats on the floor in front of dishwashers and glass washers so items falling off will bounce and not break.
11. Check that shelves holding glassware and cups are not slightly sloping forward which causes items to fall off and break – maybe worth putting a ledge around them. See how it's done on a boat.
12. Sell off unwanted crockery and glassware – it's only taking up space.

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Packaging and consumables

1. Avoid over-packaging of take-out orders – check to see the real number of napkins and boxes needed.
2. Make staff aware of cost of every packaging item used in take-out – have a board on the wall with each item attached and actual cost written on it – they will be surprised!
3. Make sure kitchen do not portion or store food in take-out containers but use their own reusable plastic containers.
4. Make sure they have enough containers for use at all times, even during peak production times before weekends.
5. For take-out orders offer napkins and straws on request rather than automatically.
6. Consider having a no-straws policy and explain to your customers that it's being done on environmental grounds – they will be impressed and usually quite agreeable. Optional straws for people wearing shiny lipstick!
7. Use bulk straw dispensers instead of individually wrapped.
8. Use plain paper napkins rather than printed ones – the fancy words you print on them are never noticed. Spend the money on internal signage and branding so customer *really* know where they are.
9. Use a plain brown bag for take out and invest in a big clever rubber stamp to put on it – save on expensive printed bags and having to order and store large quantities. Stamping is an activity for quiet times.
10. Arrange for beverage post-mix to come in reusable containers rather than a bag in a box.
11. Use roll-paper towels instead of pre-cut dispenser ones – people will use less than you expect.
12. Use linen roll towels to make a good impression at a surprisingly low price.
13. Use re-usable caps and hats for employees.
13. Use a Point-of-sale system that takes a direct order onto the correct keypad – this will eliminate the need for expensive docket books – now all you need are small cheap pads or even cut up paper.
14. Negotiate with suppliers to take back boxes and reduce your waste quantities and bills.
15. Refuse to accept certain types of packaging (in accordance with food safety regulations) eg white foam boxes from seafood suppliers.
16. If not returnable, collect packaging such as large plastic buckets and sell or swap them with trades people eg painters etc. - they are expensive for them to buy. Make sure they are not used again for food.
17. Offer customers a small but motivating discount when they bring their own take-out food containers (in accordance with food safety regulations).
18. Have dedicated areas for waste oil, glass, cardboard, foam boxes etc. Find out the commercial value of it (if there is) and make some money from returning it.

19. Investigate the cost/benefit of a cardboard 'elephant's food' type box compressor, It can save considerable amounts of space and disposal fees – possibly share the cost with another business.
20. Ensure aluminium cans are flattened and collected.
21. Motivate staff on the recycling and waste return policies by publicising it and talking about the volume of land-fill saved (this may be more effective than talking about the money *you've* saved).
22. Return ink and laser-printer cartridges and get a refund – get staff involved in using the refund for a good cause. This helps to get people aware of what can be recycled.
23. Investigate how you can recycle or return steel cans – they're not easily recycled.

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Thanks!