3115 Training vs Coaching Know the Difference

People Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/3115-training-vs-coaching-know-the-difference/

There's a difference between training and coaching that most operators never name — — and the gap between them is where most of your development problems live.

Training: Teaching someone something they have never done before.

Standard-Setting: Defining how something already known gets done in your operation, for your Guests, at your standard.

Coaching is what closes the gap between knowing and doing. A compliance-trained cast member says, "Can I start you off with something to drink?" A coached cast member reads the table — — notices it's a celebration, adjusts their energy, makes a recommendation that fits the moment. One is executing a step. The other is creating an experience.

Most operators confuse managing with coaching. Managing is telling someone what to do. Coaching is showing them why it matters and helping them discover how to do it better. Managing produces compliance. Coaching produces ownership. And the difference between a cast that complies and a cast that owns is the difference between a restaurant that functions and a restaurant that thrives.

Real coaching is demonstration, not explanation. It's a manager on the stage showing a cast member how to read a table — — not telling them to read a table. It's a kitchen manager working alongside a line cook, plate by plate, until the standard is muscle memory. It's a leader who corrects in the moment, recognizes in the moment, and teaches in the moment — — because the moment is the only time development actually happens.

You can never execute a level of service that you have never before experienced. If your cast has never seen what great looks like, no one is coaching them toward it.

The Difference at a Glance

The distinction between a training culture and a Coaching culture is not philosophical. It shows up in how every decision gets made — who the process centers, what it produces, how it is measured, and whether the person on the other end of it actually grows.

Training Culture

Coaching Culture

Instructor focused

Learner centered

Event based

Ongoing

Centralized

Decentralized

Siloed

Shared

Top-down perspective

Front-line perspective

All about delivery — inputs

All about results — impact

Centered on improving business outcomes

Centered on improving individual outcomes

Transactional

Inspirational

Cost managed

ROI engineered

Classroom

Business environment

Manuals and theories

Real-life experiences

Timely performance reviews

Daily one-on-ones

Managed rules and policies

Coaching and mentoring

The training culture produces cast members who know what to do. The Coaching culture produces cast members who know why — and can make the right call in the situation the manual never anticipated.

Your training manual documents what you want people to do. It does nothing to develop who you need them to be. Documentation does not develop anyone. High-impact development is specific, relevant, demonstrated by your best people, and grounded in the actual Guest experience your operation is trying to create. If your idea of developing the team is handing them a binder and asking them to sign the last page, you are not building a team. You are building a liability.