

Manager's Corner

Serving Line Presentation

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NUTRITION



OPERATIONS



ADMINISTRATION



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MARKETING



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and Appearance

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Institute of Child Nutrition

The University of Mississippi

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PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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Professional Standards

SERVING FOOD – 2200

Employee will be able to correctly and efficiently serve food portions to meet all USDA school meal pattern requirements and encourage healthy food selections including those for special diets.

2230 – Maintaining Food Quality and Appearance
Serve food to maintain quality and appearance standards.

Introduction

Manager's Corner: Serving Line Presentation is designed to empower managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This lesson plan contains:

- Learning objective
- Statement explaining the importance of the topic
- List of materials
- Instructions on how to present the information
- Questions to ask staff
- An activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff

Lesson Overview

Instructions for lesson:

- Review the lesson objective and background information.
- Review why it is important.
- Ask staff the questions.
- Facilitate the activity outlined.
- Provide time for staff to ask questions.

Objective: Identify methods for displaying and presenting foods in an attractive manner.

Background information: One way to demonstrate that you care and encourage students to participate in your program is the way you organize foods on the serving line. Not only should foods be nutritious, but also they should be appealing to the eyes. Food should be presented in a way that is appealing to student customers.

Why it is important: When foods are presented in an appealing and pleasing way, customers are more likely to be drawn to selecting the item.

Questions for Staff

- **In a school nutrition program, why is it important to serve food on the line in an attractive manner?**

Possible Answers:

- Students eat with their eyes first, and if the food looks good, they are more likely to eat the foods offered.
- Some items are not eye-catching, such as chili. However, when garnishing the food or presenting it on a display tray with the accompanying toppings (like shredded cheese, a dollop of sour cream and fresh chopped cilantro), the food looks more inviting.
- Students may be more inclined to try a new or ethnic cuisine if it is present in an appealing fashion.

- **What are some easy, low-cost ways to make foods look more appealing?**

Possible Answers:

- Present like food items of different colors with one another. Example—adding a few green granny smith apples to a basket of red gala apples, mixing black beans and kidney beans in the same pan on the salad bar, mixing green leaf and red leaf lettuces.
- Garnish foods with fresh or dried herbs.
- Display foods at a level students can see or have an attractive image to display what the food items look like.
- Add “color pops” to foods with other foods, like adding a few fresh berries to a fresh fruit salad or adding a handful of shredded carrot to the lettuce mix.

- **What are some ways to keep foods looking fresh while on the serving line?**

Possible Answers:

- Use smaller pans so foods do not sit out as long, especially for slower service times or less popular items.
- Transfer foods to smaller pans when the line has slowed, near the end of service. Replace a full pan with a half pan, and use an empty half pan to “blank” the empty space on the steam table or cold line.
- Step out to the customer's side of the service line and ask yourself, “Does this look appetizing?” Make an adjustment as needed.
- If possible, adjust foods in the pan to make the pan look fuller rather than the majority of the food being in the back of the service pan.

Please note: The answers provided are only examples and are not an inclusive list of possible responses.

Activity: Food Presentation

Activity materials included in this document:

- **Food Presentation**

Materials provided by the school nutrition operation:

- Copies of handouts
- Copies of the site's cycle menu
- Pens/pencils

Activity Instructions:

- Print copies of handouts.
- This activity can be completed individually or in teams.
- Provide staff with the site's current cycle menu and **Food Presentation**.
- Allow staff five minutes to identify three ways they can easily increase the visual appeal of the current cycle menu with low to zero cost modifications.
- At the conclusion, ask the staff to share their responses.
 - Example responses:
 - Garnish steamed corn with dried parsley or cilantro
 - Mix red and green grapes to add color contrast
 - Add a handful of blueberries to cubed watermelon
 - Display whole fruits like pears, apples, and oranges in the same service container for a color pop
 - Add chopped fresh mint to cut fruits
 - Use smaller or more shallow pans on the service line
 - Batch cook items vs. hot holding for hours
 - Keep salad bar pans full and fresh looking

Food Presentation

Menu Item	
Way(s) to improve the visual appeal of the menu item	
Resources needed (food/equipment)	

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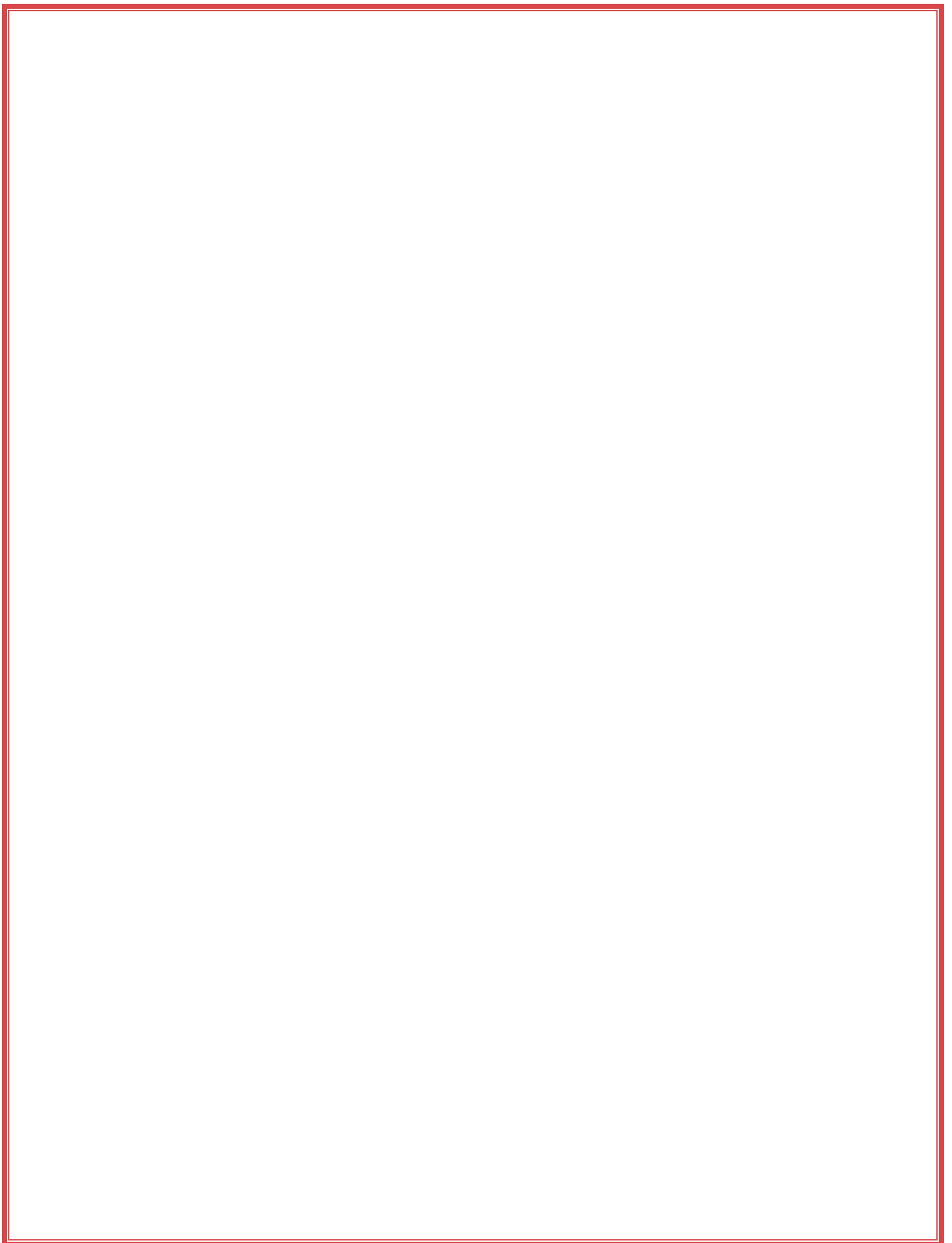
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