

Lesson Plan E

Course: Fruits and Vegetables Galore – Helping Kids Eat More

Module I: Meal Appeal – Attracting Customers

Lesson E: Focusing on Presentation and Service

Lesson Length: 30 minutes

Lesson Equipment and Materials

Equipment

Overhead projector or Power Point

Supplies

One 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper per participant

Visual Aids

V-E1 *Increase Eye Appeal*

V-E2 *Stimulate the Appetite*

V-E3 *Take the Food to Your Customers*

V-E4 *Quick Tips for Simple Changes*

V-E5 *Customers Are the Reason We Are Here!*

Participant Materials

H-B6 *Increasing Fruits and Vegetables in Meals—
A Plan for My School*

Lesson Preparation

1. Read the entire Lesson Plan E.
2. Reproduce all Participant Materials for Lesson E.
3. Post performance standards for Lesson E. Use flip chart or blank transparency.
4. The term School Nutrition Program (SNP) will be used for school foodservice or Child Nutrition Program.

Lesson Outcome

On completion of the lesson, the learner will become actively involved in ensuring that the SNP increases the variety and consumption of fruits and vegetables based on the following **performance standards**:

--Identify good food presentation and customer service principles.

Lesson Instruction

◆ Setting the Stage

Focus learner's attention.

- ▷ Evaluate your school cafeteria—as **students** may see it. Answer the following questions:
 1. Is the cafeteria a comfortable place to hang out?
 2. Is the food appealing? How does the food look?
 - Are there pleasant food aromas?
 - What is the first thing a student sees in the serving line?
 - Does staff place food on the plate/tray to look attractive?
 - Do garnished complement the flavor, color, and texture of food?
 - Where are fruits and vegetables presented on the line? How are they offered? Do they look fresh and appealing?
 - Would you like to eat here?
 3. Evaluate your customer service.
 - Does the staff interact positively with the students?
 - Does the staff encourage students to try fruits and vegetables?
 4. Evaluate your food quality.
 - Does the foodservice staff taste the meals they serve?
 - Would food service staff choose to eat this food?
 - Is the quality of the food consistent from day to day?
 5. Evaluate your facilities.
 - Are facilities and equipment clean and without clutter?

◆ Relate to Past Experience

- ▷ **Activity (5 minutes) – Launch Customer Service.** Distribute a white sheet of paper to each participant. Instruct participants to **think of one idea their school nutrition program has recently done to improve customer service.** *Did they make the school cafeteria a more comfortable place to hang out? Did they try new techniques to make the food more appealing? Or did they just simply improve their customer relations.* Have participants write their customer service idea on the sheet of paper and fold it in to a paper airplane and launch it into the air. Instruct each participant to pick up an airplane and read the idea. Have participants share several ideas with the group. Encourage participants to take these ideas and adapt them to presenting fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria.

- ▷ Students are more likely to eat your food if it's easy to see and get, the cafeteria is a fun, relaxing place to be and the food is attractive and appetizing.

◆ **Today's Lesson...**

- ▷ Students are a tough audience, so you have to be especially creative in promoting school meals.
- ▷ This lesson will focus on presenting and serving foods.

◆ **You Will Be Able To...**

- ▷ Identify good food presentation and customer service principles.

◆ **Identify the Purpose**

- ▷ Healthy Children

Performance Standard

The learner will:

-- Identify good food presentation and customer service principles.

◆ **Lesson Content**

- ▷ **Good Food Presentation.** Presenting food creatively can turn a dull looking foodservice line into a bountiful marketplace of healthful and appetizing eating opportunities. Emphasize fruits and vegetables by making them the most attractive part of your meal.
- ▷ Show and discuss *V-EI Increase Eye Appeal*.
 1. **Light-** Consider under-counter or track lighting to enhance the appearance of foods. Dim lighting makes your food look dull.
 2. **Color-** For maximum color, batch-cook foods in small batches just before you serve them. Avoid using poor quality ingredients, overcooking, holding foods longer than 20 minutes will make colors dull.
 - Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables that make your line colorful.
 - Contrast colors to catch students' attention. Placing the peas and carrots in a half pan next to the white rice makes the vegetables stand out and look particularly appealing. It also makes the plain, white rice look more appealing which is better for your overall menu.

- Concentrate colors for maximum effect. Bright colors indicate fresh food and they are simply more appetizing.
 - Use ingredients in the recipe as a garnish
 - Add cut fruit or vegetable to the top of a dish for color contrast. (Use sliced red bell pepper rings or julienne carrots to garnish green beans. Use cherry tomatoes to garnish salad greens.) Avoid using expensive items or ingredients (such as cheese) that add unplanned fat and sodium to the menu item, etc.
3. **Shapes**—Vary the cuts in the food. Carrots can be sticks, julienne, medallions, shredded (fine, medium, coarse), diced, angle cut slices, crinkle cut, whole, or baby carrots.
 - Combine shapes in a dish—green peas with carrot medallions.
 - Surprise customers with unexpected shapes—cut food into triangles instead of squares, diamonds instead of rectangles.
 - Use cookie cutters to add interest to ordinary foods.
 - Cut sandwiches in squares, circles, or triangles.
 4. **Simplicity** – Place garnish in the center, side edge, or corner(s) of the pan.
 - Clean lines attract the eye and focus the attention.
 - Line decorations should enhance the food—not compete with it. Too many posters and signs and decorations on and around the serving line can draw attention away from the food instead of to the food. Focusing on one theme at a time is a good way to keep things simple. For example, decorate with red and focus on apples.
 5. **Height** – Keep serving pans full, making it easy for customers to see the complete array of options. **When you eat a buffet, do you prefer to take the last couple of servings or one of the first servings from a fresh, full pan?** Students are the same way. (But remember not to combine different batches of potentially hazardous foods such as cooked fruits and vegetables and fresh, cut melon.)
 6. --Add height to meals with other ingredients. For example, you can use ingredients to make portion sizes look bigger without actually providing more food. By using shredded lettuce instead of leaf lettuce on sub sandwiches, you make the portion look larger and the sandwich more appealing.
 - Choose containers that add height to the line.

Packaging –*Stainless steel pans* – there is nothing wrong with using stainless steel pans. They are not exciting but they are acceptable and can be dressed up with garnishes. The cloudy plastic tubs with curved edges that restaurants use to clear dirty

tables are not recommended. The image associated with them does not help kids want to eat your fruits and vegetables.

- ▷ **Stimulating the appetite** is another important component of presentation show *V-E2 Stimulate the Appetite*. Make food attractive by stimulating all five senses.
- ▷ Let your students **See it:** We have already talked about how to make the food look good. Beautifully presented food encourages customers to select and try it.
- ▷ **How can you ensure that the aromas are inviting?** Let your students **Smell it:** aroma enhances the attraction of food and increases the anticipation to taste it. When you bake breads and desserts (with cinnamon) and other aromatic foods, open the doors and let the wonderful smell escape into the school.
- ▷ **Taste it:** fresh, well-prepared food provides positive experiences physically and emotionally. Remember what we have talked about up to this point -- purchase fresh, quality ingredients, protect it (especially by storing it correctly) and use preparation techniques that make it wonderful.
- ▷ **Feel it:** a variety of textures and temperatures enhances the enjoyment of the meal.
- ▷ **Hear it: Have you ever eaten in a restaurant where a sizzling platter of fajitas was served? It sounds as wonderful as it smells. Well the sizzling sound peaks your interest, doesn't it?** That's what we want to do, peak your customers interest. Serve crisp, crunchy fresh fruits and vegetables to balance soft, hot foods. Make foods fun to eat.
- ▷ **Take the Food to Your Customers.** Unfortunately, even when you have great tasting food that looks good and appeals to all the senses, the students don't choose to eat in your cafeteria. Why do you think that is? (Years of bad jokes about school lunch, lack of time and other priorities over their lunch hour (e.g. getting a tan, studying, visiting, etc.). Presentation includes not only creating eye appeal and stimulating the appetite; it also includes physically getting the food to the students. Show *V-E3 Take the Food To Your Customers*. Discuss ways to speed up the process and encourage more students to eat school meals. It makes sense financially to get their business (because the more reimbursable meals you provide, the more money you get).
--Breakfast in the classroom – even the most skeptical of teachers have bought into it because they have found that it helps their students

to bond as a group and to eat enough food to feel comfortable and ready to learn. If breakfast is too much, what about providing a healthy snack of fresh fruits.

--Grab-n-go packaging – consider offering this service, because the increased participation could offset the packaging costs.

--Specialty bars – such as sandwich bars or baked potato bars or fruit bars. Specialty bars are a good way to keep things fresh and interesting.

--Reimbursable meals from a satellite car or kiosk – If money is an issue (mobile cart too expensive) try using a table at first to see how it goes.

--Window café – this might seem a little far-fetched but successful participation, particularly with older students, is all about service and being as much like your competition as possible.

--Vending machines – get refrigerated vending machines and stock them with 100% juice, fresh whole fruit, salads to go, sub sandwiches, veggies with dip and more.

- ▷ Simple changes can make a big difference in presentation. It doesn't take much time or effort to make improvements Try some of these tips. Discuss ***V-E4 Quick Tips for Simple Changes***.

1. Serve fresh strawberries with frozen (thawed) blueberries and some low-fat vanilla yogurt or add a few fresh raspberries to canned peaches.

2 Students are more likely to take what they see first.

3. Let students help themselves. This may or may not be worth the labor and packaging cost so be sure to evaluate pros and cons in your situation.

4. This is called impulse buying and grocery stores use this trick all the time. It usually works, doesn't it?

5. Remind students of the importance of fruits and vegetables. Static clings are provided in the Meal Appeal booklet.

6. Draw attention to them by making them stand out.

7. It will add interest and make eating in your cafeteria more fun.

8. It is a way to gently guide their choices as they go through the serving line.

9. This takes some extra time and money but it can be very effective.

10. Offer taste tests.

- ▷ The last component of presentation that we need to discuss is customer service. Show ***V-E5 Customers Are the Reason We Are Here!***

- ▷ **Get Your Customers Involved.** Customer service starts with communication. You can't begin to successfully serve your customers if you don't know what they want.
 - Don't assume that you know what they want.
 - Ask them what they want.
 - Be prepared to follow through.
 - Create one or more advisory groups, such as a Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC group). Ask participants to share information about how well it works, how often they meet and what types of things they do or discuss.
- ▷ **Plan Menus with Students.** How many of you have the students helped to plan menus? This is a great way to teach them about the requirements you have to meet, about your efforts to provide a nutritious, well-balanced meal and to show that you care about their opinions.
- ▷ Direct participants to Meal Appeal booklet for ***Plan a Lunch Script*** on pages 36-40. This offers a well planned activity for the classroom. Instructor – review activity so you can discuss the content and encourage participants to use it in the classroom.
- ▷ **Optional Activity:** See booklet Meal Appeal – Appendix pp 36-39. Plan a lunch. If you have extra time divide participants into groups and have them discuss how to incorporate this activity in their school.
- ▷ **Enhance the Eating Environment. How pleasant is your eating environment?** Think about what you can do to make the eating environment pleasant and if you can't do it everyday, try doing it once a month (e.g. playing music while they eat, Large screen TVs in cafeteria, center pieces, table tents with nutrition information). Have groups of participants brainstorm about ideas to enhance their cafeteria. Have each group share one or two of their ideas.
- ▷ **Ask for Feedback.** Remember the importance of communication. Be sure to go back to them to find out how you're doing. **What methods have you tried for getting feedback? What has or hasn't worked well?** One of the best things you can do is just to keep your eyes and ears open. Observe how the students react to the food and decorations and listen for their comments.

◆ **Performance Check**

- ▷ ***H-B6 Increasing Fruits and Vegetables in Meals –A Plan for Your School.***

◆ **Closure**

- ▷ Exceptional programs are special. They provide delicious, nutritious food that meets requirements in an eating environment that is clean, attractive and welcoming. The employees in these programs work because they know they are positively impacting the lives of children in their community. They do more than cook and serve food. They play a role in the education of students by promoting good health and nutrition in the cafeteria and classroom. **What kind of a program do you have?**
- ▷ For more information on marketing and customer service, attend the five hour Pathways course: **Marketing and Customer Relations.**