

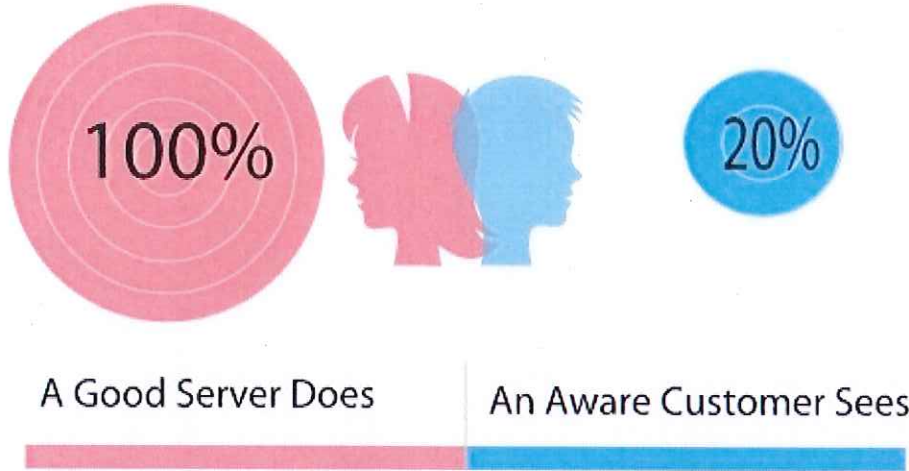
multitasking, taking tables | IamWaitress

The power of multi-tasking can not be taken lightly in the restaurant industry. **If you can multi-task, you can manage a large section.** If you can manage a large section, you are an asset. If you are an asset, you have job security and better sections (or if you team serve, you are on a level playing field with your co-workers). Multi-tasking skills set apart the A-team from the “oh crap, XYZ is working tonight? We’re f’d”, team.

Multi-tasking is not something that many people are naturally good at but luckily, with intention, it can be learned. It does take practice.

1. Don’t burn rubber! If there is one thing that I see new servers or not very good servers do, it is burn rubber, otherwise known as “one tripping”, doing one task at a time. That technique does not serve you well and does no one any good. **New and crappy servers complete one menial task at a time.** They keep their head down with intention to the task at hand “ring in table 9’s Martini-ring in table 9’s Martini-ring in table 9’s Martini”. What’s worse is they will often complete the task immediately by ringing the drink in, pressing send, and going directly to the bar to w a i t. This is a horrible mismanagement of time and will earn you no love from the bartenders who hate it when servers sit and wait.

The Server and Guest Perspective



Server: Wants A Happy Guest



Constantly loop your section. Do at least one thing for every table as you pass.

Guest: Wants To To Be Happy



Enjoy that you don't have to lift a finger. No cooking, cleaning or making your own drinks.

Refills

Split Checks

Composure

Menu Knowledge

Courses Timed

Chef is Yelling

Triple Sat

Keep tables clean

Water the Whole Room

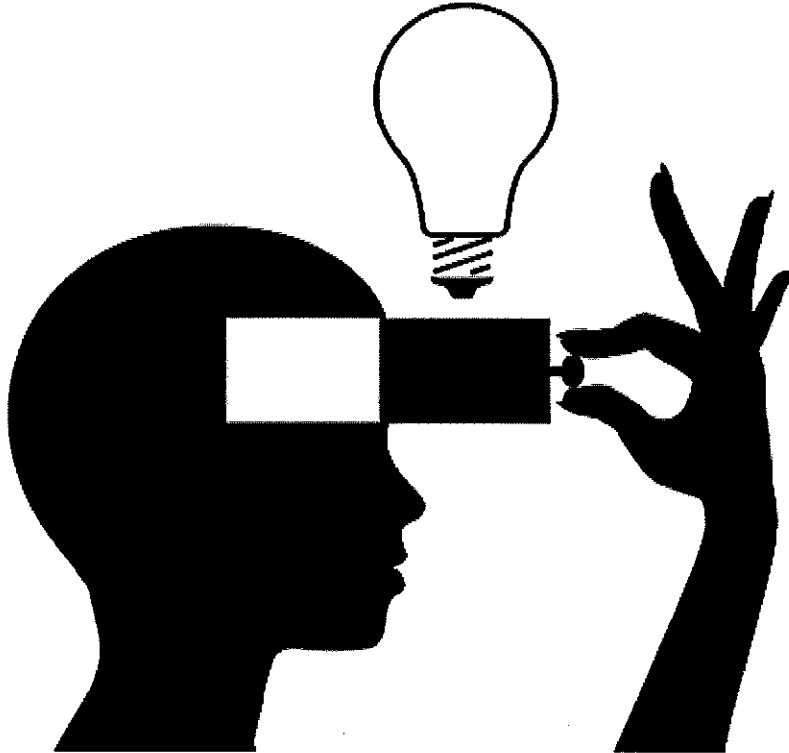
Runner!

2. Get eyes for the room! This is the first part of multitasking, you must see what needs to be done before you can do it. You must anticipate the needs before it is asked of you. Once you start to fall behind in anticipating needs that is when guests eyes begin seeking you out, fingers and eyebrows are raised in your direction, fingers point to empty drinks. Once you begin down that road, you are

playing the game of catch-up. When you are playing catch up, you don't have time to anticipate guests needs and if you aren't anticipating guests needs then you are not being a great server.

3. Gather information by keeping your eyes peeled on your section or the room if you are in a team. **You need to be gathering information of needs that need to be met or will need to be met.** Then, put that information in your brain and keep gathering. Once you have a handful of tasks...

4. Compartmentalize your thoughts. Having a list of things that need doing is the first part, the second part is doing them in the most efficient way.



For example, here is your list of tasks that need doing...

- Table 1 needs to be greeted
- Table 2 needs their drinks rang in
- Table 3 needs dessert menu's
- Table 4 needs a clear
- Table 5 needs to be crumbed
- Table 6 needs an order taken
- Table 7 needs a check dropped
- Table 8 needs to order deserts
- Table 9 needs to be marked
- Table 10 has a lot of questions

If you do all of these one at a time, you are absolutely screwed. This small list will take up more time than you have. An example like this is where good multitasking and task compartmentalizing comes into useful play.

What would you do in the above situation? Take a second to think it over. What do you think the best approach is to getting this stuff done? I would...

- Greet table 1 (greeting is priority one)
- On the way back take a dessert order on table 8
- take desert menus from table 8 and give them to the table 3
- crumb table 5 on my way to the server station
- ring in drinks for table 2, ring in dessert for table 8
- mark/re-silver table 9
- drop off check for table 7
- Clear table 4
- drop off plates from 4 to dish, return to take order on table 6
- and answer tons of questions for table 10
- Now, the drinks should be ready. I'll drop them off and swing by table one to see if they have questions or need assistance and pick up payment from table 7. Ring in table 6's order, receive payment on 7 and re-scan the room, getting more information to do it all again.

I think that memory games are an important way to increase your multitasking ability. My favorite is [Simon](#). Play a game and take the poll.

❖ Loading ...

If you can multitask you can face most challenges with ease and composure. Some servers will freak out if they get triple sat. Not you! You will compartmentalize what you need to do and you will think smart, planning your moves calmly and effectively.

The more you find yourself hurrying around the more a pause is necessary. I call it **taking a 'S.E.A.T'. Stop Everything And Think.** If you stop everything and think you will be able to handle your tables and customers by re-focusing on what is important and how best to get it done. I know the urge is to HURRY UP. But you need to SLOW DOWN and think smart. I am not saying to move slow, only to slow down your mind. **A frantic mind does not work very well.**

Remember that [etiquette](#), [table maintenance](#) and multitasking can be learned. It can be overwhelming but it is absolutely within your reach if you are intentional about it. If you have a genuine desire to make people happy through service then you are in the right industry and I have faith in your success.

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