

**THE SETUP AND OPERATION
OF AN AMERICAN CHILE PARLOR**

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OVERVIEW

This paper will focus on the mechanics of setting up and operating what is commonly called an "American Chili Parlor." This "American" distinction is made to avoid confusion with Mexican food establishments, many of whom carry chili, but are mainly purveyors of a full line Mexican menu rather than the chili/burgers/fries of the American Chili Parlor.

Surprisingly to most, chili or "chile" is an American invention, later exported to Mexico. These parlors have been operating in the United States since the 1850's and are a part of historic Americana.

Why would someone want to open a chili parlor compared with another type of restaurant? Here are the reasons:

- Setup is relatively simple and inexpensive. No special equipment is needed beyond what is found in a diner or café. Space required is relatively small, with 1000 square feet sufficient for a full serve parlor, and as little as 500 square feet sufficient for a fast food setup restaurant.
- No special chefs are needed in a chili parlor, keeping labor costs moderate and avoiding stoppages in work caused by absenteeism.
- Due to its simplicity, finding labor is relatively easy, and pay scales are affordable to the operator.
- Margins on sales are high due to the reliance on inexpensive chili for 80% of the food served. In general, in O.T.Hodge Chile Parlors, food costs are at 25% of total sales, well below the national average of 33% for restaurants in this price category. Chili parlors offer a limited menu, with little inventory required. These qualities provide increased profitability compared with other types of restaurants.
- Waste is minimal. Uncooked chile is extremely long-lasting in the freezer or refrigerator, while most food items are either delivered frozen (burgers) or can be easily consumed between deliveries without waste. There are no fresh fish and generally no salads with fresh vegetables to deteriorate and cause expense to the operator.
- Serving chili and chili-based dishes is fast and easy. This moves traffic through the restaurant quickly and keeps labor costs down. A person can get a full meal prepared in a few minutes and be on his/her way. This boosts the potential for revenue compared with other formats. This also draws customers to the parlor in high traffic areas where other restaurants are slow to serve the customer.

Disclaimer

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of what is required to select, set up and operate an American Chili Parlor. This information is based primarily upon experience in St. Louis, MO at O.T. Hodge Chile Parlors, a local institution since 1904.

Although we have done our best to convey information accurately, we must issue a disclaimer that this information, while correct for us, and scientifically gathered, applies to our restaurants in our home city. Situations in other cities may differ, to include local laws, labor rates and rules, and real estate costs. We ask that potential operators examine their individual situation using our information as a guide only; using only what is relevant to their individual city and environment. This is also true about the chili product itself. O.T.Hodge manufactures a proprietary chili product which has certain qualities related to preparation and serving. Our section on "Handling Chili" makes this disclaimer, but we feel that it is important enough to mention here. The preparation and serving technique for your particular chili product must be suited to the product you decide to use, obtained from the purveyor you have chosen.

Insofar as O.T. Hodge's goal in presenting this information, we feel that the American Chili Parlor format, so popular in the past, is being forgotten in the twenty first century. It is viable, profitable and relatively easy to operate. Given proper attention it can be an asset to the community and a profitable business venture for the owner.

Chili Product

As mentioned above, in our case we manufacture a proprietary chile product in St. Louis. But on a national level there are many chili manufacturers from whom the operator can turn for chili product or to manufacture a custom chile product as we do. We have enclosed a listing of those chili manufacturers at the end of the paper for your reference.

We would be happy to offer assistance in this area to a potential chili parlor operator seeking chili product.

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

We have an interactive spreadsheet available through on the O.T. Hodge web site. The numbers here are real, developed from our parlors in recent years. The spreadsheet calculates profitability and costs at different levels of volume, and different rental costs. The model is driven by the number of customers per day. The only items one must enter into this spreadsheet are the number of customers per day and the restaurant rental. All other figures are derived from the formulas in the sheet.

The key item here is volume of customers. A chili parlor can serve many people quickly. The key is to find a location which has the potential for volume, looking for office workers primarily, rather than residents or transient driving traffic on the street. Downtown areas are the best followed by suburban industrial centers. One advantage of downtown locations is that they normally do not need to provide parking for the customers.

But there are other important determinants of profitability, which we will review in the pages that follow. One is inventory control. Another is speed of processing orders. Still another is maintaining a stable work force to handle the demands of volume serving.

Copy this Internet Address into your web browser to access the interactive spreadsheet. Simply enter the monthly rent you expect to pay in block G15 and then enter the number of customers you expect to serve in block H6. This will calculate total sales, total profit and each one of the variable expenses at that volume of business.

<http://www.othodge.com/response.html>

A static image of the interactive spreadsheet is on the following page. A figure of 275 is placed in the yellow block H6 showing results if 275 people are served per day in a 30 day month. In the yellow block G15 we placed rent at \$2000. This is high volume which breaks down as 83 customers at breakfast, 138 at lunch and 55 at dinner. This is relatively high volume, which would generally occur in a dense downtown district.

Visit the site page and run combinations of volume and site rental to see the range of profitability or loss in your projected situation.

CHANGE DATA IN YELLOW CELLS ONLY. DO NOT CHANGE OTHER CELLS

Revenue				\$5,533.55
		\$1,650.00	Sales Per Day	
			30 Days Open Per Month	
Total Sales/Month		\$49,500.00		\$594,000.00
Less Food Cost	0.25	\$12,375.00		
Gross Profit			\$37,125.00	
			Customers/Day	275
Costs			Breakfast	93
			Lunch	136
			Dinner	85
Sales/Day		\$1,650.00		
Sales/Wk		\$12,375.00		
Payroll				\$22,121.55
Monthly Payroll @23% of sales - does not include Manager		\$10,395.00		
Monthly Manager's(2) Salary Est@ 20% of sales		\$9,900.00		
Payroll Taxes		\$1,826.55		
Total Payroll				\$22,121.55
Rent			Enter Rent	14,967.00
	0.21			
Other Operating Expenses		0.2		
Benefits	3.00%			\$683.65
Direct Opn Exp	1.75%	5.70%		\$866.25
Insurance	1.50%	Actual	0.012	\$594.00
Marketing	1.50%	Actual	1.50%	\$742.50
Utility	4.70%	Actual	0.03	\$1,435.00
Repairs, Maint	1.50%	Actual		\$742.50
Depreciation	1.00%			\$495.00
G&A	1.50%			\$742.50
Entertainment	0.20%			\$99.00
Interest	1.10%			\$544.50
Other Expense	1.00%			\$495.00
Total Other Operating Expenses				\$7,469.90
Total All Payroll, Rent, Other Expenses				\$31,591.45
Income Before Taxes				\$5,533.55

344.72

IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS ESTIMATE SHEET WAS CREATED USING NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION NORMS FOR OPERATING EXPENSES AND RENTAL. IT IS DESIGNED TO SHOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VARIABLES. IT CANNOT BE USED TO GAUGE TOTAL SALES. FOOD COST WAS AN ESTIMATE BASED UPON ACTUAL PRICES OF KNOWN FOOD PRODUCTS. FOOD COST DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY AMOUNT FOR WASTE, SHRINKAGE OR BACKUP INVENTORY REQUIREMENTS. THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION MEDIAN FOR FOOD COST IN THIS PRICE RANGE IS 34.2%. FOOD COSTS SHOULD BE REVIEWED BASED UPON FINAL MENU AND INVENTORY PLANS. ANY SALES FIGURE CAN BE USED AS A VARIABLE. SALES WILL VARY BY LOCATION, SIZE AND MANAGEMENT QUALITY. UNKNOWN FACTORS, NOT INCLUDED MAY AFFECT PROFITABILITY.

Sample Start Up Items with estimated prices

Restaurant Equipment	\$40,000.00
Signage/menus, wall decor etc.	\$5,000.00
Initial Inventory	\$3,000.00
Hood	\$15,000.00
First/Last Rent	\$5,400.00
Buildout	\$80,000.00
Cash Registers	\$5,000.00
	<u>\$153,400.00</u>

WHERE TO LOCATE THE CHILI PARLOR

General

The margin per check is relatively high in a chili parlor. However, the average check total is relatively low, generally averaging \$6.50 per person. *The key is to maximize volume.* This affects the choice of location very much. *A chili parlor needs a high volume location.* Like other lower priced restaurant programs, people are not likely to travel great distances to reach a chili parlor. Therefore, a high traffic location with good visibility is a *key component to success.* Volume of traffic becomes a primary concern to an operator for these reasons. If you use our interactive spreadsheet described above, you will see the impact of volume on profitability.

A note about Labor

There are some zones in every metropolitan area which do not have sufficient labor available locally for the retail businesses within them. Generally employees travel from far distant locations for these jobs by car or more often by public transportation. Zones of this type are dangerous for the chili parlor operator. Bad weather can ruin attendance and people tied to long range public transportation may be inflexible for overtime or schedule changes when they are needed. Make certain that you are not selecting a location of this type.

Type of Restaurant Traffic

Pedestrian Traffic

Many O.T. Hodge Chile Parlors have been located in dense business districts with high amounts of pedestrian traffic. An environment of this type virtually assures a high volume of business. Our experience has been that a chili parlor can attract a wide range of pedestrians to include businessmen, construction workers, secretaries, public employees, institutional employees. These locations typically do not have family traffic. They also have a large number of small parties, one or two people.

In our history, key components to success with pedestrian traffic have been nearby public buildings such as court houses, post offices, and large office complexes.

A well managed chili parlor in a dense downtown area can attract from a wide audience of pedestrians. The key is high food quality and *very fast service*. The ideal is getting food to the customer in less than five minutes. Most of these areas have big breakfast and lunch traffic but minimal dinner traffic after close of the office buildings.

Drive By Traffic

Locations with good visibility but low foot traffic can do well *under conditions of easy access* in both urban and suburban settings with high volumes of drive-by traffic. An obvious requirement is sufficient parking. A drive-through window is a major asset in this type of location. Industry studies indicate that a drive-up window can generate as much as 50% of total volume. The chili product is an excellent take-out product. It tends to travel well, enhancing the take out and drive through program. Drive through also reduces the need for parking spaces and personnel. Under conditions of high drive-through, a chili parlor can have fewer employees, as employee movement is reduced under this concept.

In high volume suburban locations, competition tends to be high. Although a well run chili parlor can compete well with any fast food restaurant, generally it is wise to select a location which is as distant as possible from other direct competitors, even for purposes of visibility. Direct competitors are McDonalds, Wendy's, Sonic, Steak 'N Shake and Burger King, and Rally's. In general, taking the step of avoiding these direct price and product competitors will yield dividends to the owner. We find that restaurants of different themes, such as Mexican, Italian, and subs represent lesser competition than the burger chains.

Mall Considerations

A Cautionary Note about Malls in General

One of the problems and often hidden problems with malls of all types involves the landlord and competition. Often early in the development of a mall the landlord grants exclusives to restaurants for a type of food or service. The typical example as may affect the chili parlor operator is burgers. Often a desirable burger restaurant is given an exclusive on burgers in the mall. In the case of the chili parlor, burgers are one of the mainstays of the menu. The real problem is that too often the chili parlor operator is not informed of this agreement with a competitor until the contract is signed and the chili parlor is opened. At that point this can be disastrous. This happens often.

Strip Malls

In general, we believe the strip malls are less desirable locations than standalone buildings or conventional mall locations. One problem with strip malls is lack of street visibility. The strip mall, supporting many retailers, generally provides little or no visible street signage for the mall occupants. Since our chili parlor format is such a draw, every effort must be made to keep the name near the street, rather than away from the street. Often occupants of a strip mall select the site because they are individually weak, and need other retailers around them to survive. This should not be the case with a well managed chili parlor. We do not need the spill-over traffic from other retailers if we can project our sign onto the street.

There are other negatives. The movement *out* of an anchor retailer can devastate the remaining retailers and restaurants. The movement *in* of a large parking user can seriously reduce access to the parlor.

Office Buildings

These are desirable, though often expensive locations. A building may house a thousand or more employees of its tenant companies. The combination of an in-house captured audience together with easy access take-outs and deliveries are complemented by street traffic. Together, this can produce high volume, and often an ability for the operator to work only business day hours on weekdays rather than having to be open evenings and weekends.. Take out business is high in these locations. The typical format here is a fast-food or cafeteria style format rather than full table service due to the reduced space requirements of fast food operations.

Major Enclosed Mall

In general, food court locations in malls are very expensive. A recent study in St. Louis indicated that \$4800+ per month was the norm for a very small space. Volume can be high in these locations, but landlord control is also high. In some cases, mall owners place restrictions on menu items within the court. Most charge a percentage of the gross sales to the restaurants. Hours are generally long, and the owner of a chili parlor competes with other retailers for employees as well as customers.

The positives are high traffic, no need for heating, air conditioning or restrooms, and mall provided seating. Depending upon the volume, the mix of competitors and the availability of personnel to work the hours, these locations can be good or bad, but generally the high rental requires an extremely high volume of sales.

An example of the tradeoff can be made based upon a recent effort to locate an O.T. Hodge in a St. Louis suburban mall. With rental at \$4500, three employees

working mall hours, and an estimated 1/3 food cost, the breakeven number of sales at our typical \$6.50 per person was 111 per day. In a mall environment, this may be achievable. This number divides to approximately 10 servings per hour. But no profit is made until that level of volume is achieved.

The key is volume of sales, restrictions on menus (if any), and willingness of management to work long hours.

Any consideration of an enclosed mall requires a significant study of traffic patterns, volume by hour, and strength of the food court members at the very least. O.T. Hodge prospered in the Union Station Mall in downtown St. Louis, but mall requirements required twenty-four hour operation, which eventually prompted a move out of that location due to an excessive management burden and difficulty in attracting dependable night shift employees.

In some rare cases, major malls have secondary food locations with mall provided seating, at half the normal rental. These are often a good choice if volume of foot traffic is high. With the mall providing heating and air conditioning, a rental of \$3000 or even more for an eight hundred square foot chili parlor is workable. These are generally run as fast-food format parlors, which limits the number of personnel required. However, generally the hours are twelve hours daily, seven days per week. Personnel costs represent a much higher percentage of total cost in these locations than in any other type of location available to a chili parlor operator. See a comparison of fast food vs. table service in a later section.

Street Location Considerations

Suburban Stand-Alone Buildings

A good street location provides heavy traffic and easy access into and out of the parking area. The ideal location has a drive-up window. Many apparently good street locations are hampered by difficult access from one or more directions. Often these locations are empty and attractively priced. But the penalty of poor access is difficult to fight at the chili parlor check range. It is necessary to move many people through our parlors each day, but especially during the busy lunch hour.

While a street location avoids much of the heavy control of a strip-mall, there is a need for more maintenance and parking, and, depending upon the lease, building improvements.

In general, a street location with a drive up window which had a previous fast food occupant is an excellent choice for a chili parlor if access is good. Our system moves people through faster than most others, but we also tend to get many small parties of one or two people, who can fill a small lot quickly. Often a

restaurant which was unsuccessful under a different format will be a successful chili parlor due to our draw and fast service of an unusual but tasty menu.

High Density Urban Sites

These tend to be excellent sites for a chili parlor. The typical format has large quantities of office workers, ranging in type from secretarial to executive, as well as tradesmen and public employees.

From our experience, these locations are expensive, but effective at sizes as low as eight hundred square feet if the layout is correct. The pattern of seating is key. The use of counter space and six-top tables, where people do not object to sitting next to strangers is the best pattern. Forty or more seats are required. A location such as this has many singles that move quickly in and out. The system for food ordering and delivery is the key. Speed is a requirement in a small, dense location.

Rental for these locations is typically high, but far below suburban malls. Take out business is handled at the counter, and it is extremely important to success of the Parlor. It must be handled as a separate line of business to optimize volume, and space must be adequate. In these locations people will wait a shorter time than in suburban locations due to time pressures created by what can be long walking distances and short lunch hours.

Quite often these locations are breakfast and lunch only. The breakfast component of the business is very important in dense locations, where few restaurants offer a hot breakfast menu (many offer bagels and breads only). A special plus is a nearby hotel. Typically hotels have high breakfast costs to their guests, and generate regular volumes of breakfast customers to a nearby chili parlor.

FULL TABLE SERVICE

VS.

LIMITED SERVICE

Full service restaurants provide table service to their customers. Normally, meals are served on china. Stainless steel utensils are used. Extensive seating is provided. In this format there is generally a take-out program using paper and plastic. This style offers custom service, and generally there is more time available to the customer in a more relaxed atmosphere. The waiter/waitress has some degree of influence over the selections through recommendations etc.

Fast food is a description applied to restaurants where customers must walk to an ordering position, wait for food, or order through a drive-up window. In this format, the food is served in paper or plastic together with napkins and condiments, typically with plastic utensils.

Key differences in the formats as apply to chile parlors

A chili parlor can be operated successfully in either the full or limited service format. The format is typically influenced by the location. A small location with little room for seating generally cannot support a full service program, but it could serve large quantities of to-go entrées with a limited menu.

The primary considerations regarding selection of format are size of the location, menu, and availability and cost of personnel. The full service format tends toward a higher check value per person. The reasons are several. One is the difficulty in handling complex expensive dishes such as slinger and chile mac as take out items. Another is the easy add-on of dessert, coffee etc. without having to wait in line with full service. Both types provide fast movement of customers in and out if managed properly.

In general, a full service O.T. Hodge will require one thousand square feet of space. A fast food format could reasonably occupy half this size. The fast food format, while generating additional paper costs, will require fewer employees than the full table service format. These are the considerations facing the potential licensee. Simply put, *will the convenience and ambience of table service drive volume up sufficiently to generate the additional volume necessary*

Costs	
Rent	\$1,500.00
Full staff*	\$6699.00
Total Rent and Labor	\$10,740.00
Profit from operations before taxes, depreciation utilities, empl. benefits insurance and operating expenses	\$4,010.00

In summary, the net financial effect of full table service vs. fast food operation is minor. The key is what fits the market in which the parlor resides, what properties are available, and labor conditions to include wage rates and general availability.

Management Burden

One variable in this decision is the management burden, which is considerably higher in the full service format than in the fast food format. The reasons for this additional burden are the following:

- More employees in the full service format
- More attention to detail, such as dining room setup and clearing
- Less ability to substitute employees for missing or late employees due to the strict difference in duties from one person (dishwasher) to another (waitress)
- Greater expectation of service from customers.
- Routine additional labor such as refilling beverages

Summary

This is a very superficial analysis of full service vs. fast service operation. Wage figures were estimated based upon normal three-meal working hours and prevailing wage rates in St. Louis in 2011. The location, to include the clientele is the most important determinant in this decision-making process. The full service format is more complicated, but if run properly it can generate more revenue to the operator. The downside is increased management responsibility, more personnel and more details.

If a market has the availability of quality service people, and especially potentially *regular visitors* from nearby offices and plants, the table service format should be considered if space is available. Many people will dine at a full service chili parlor several times per week under these conditions. Upon arrival they sit down immediately, which has appeal to many customers in downtown areas walking to a restaurant.

If a location serves transient drive by traffic on suburban roads the fast food format may be better and less expensive to provide.

STAFFING, POSITIONING AND SCHEDULING

There is no management task more important than the hiring and training of personnel. Proper personnel selection is key to the success of a chili parlor. With good personnel, properly trained, the manager's job is greatly simplified. Hiring the right people and training them properly also permits a manager to achieve the greatest economy of labor possible.

The Hiring Process

There are multiple avenues for finding chili parlor personnel, ranging from advertisements in newspapers, interaction with state and county employment agencies, referrals, and regular discussion with vendors. The placement of a help wanted sign on the restaurant construction site is also very helpful because it finds employees who live near to the restaurant, a major plus.

Desired Qualities of Restaurant Employees

There is considerable diversity of qualities needed within the various restaurant specialties. A good wait person desirably possesses a combination of friendly personality, good people skills (both with employees and customers) and quick movement while on the job. While experienced wait people are desirable, any person possessing these qualities is a good candidate for wait person. Money motivation is an important quality in a wait person.

Production personnel such as fry cooks, dishwashers and expeditors need different qualities. These are labor intensive jobs which require a considerable degree of strength and manual dexterity. Another quality is calmness under pressure. The pressure in a restaurant falls primarily on this group of people.

Certain qualities cover all specialties. One is reliability. There is no bigger problem in the restaurant industry than lack of reliability of personnel. This problem can destroy productivity and even the restaurant endeavor itself if not prevented or resolved. A quotation in a major Midwestern newspaper taken from a local restaurant owner states "I tell people who are thinking about buying a restaurant that the single biggest headache they will have – and they will have it every day – is to sit down a half hour before your open and wait to see who doesn't show up. You can almost bet that someone won't.*"

Recruiting

Sources for potential employees are noted above. Once located, it is imperative that the candidate be interviewed in person by the manager, and by multiple managers if possible. A good sign is someone who visits the restaurant personally to follow up on his/her interest, rather than by telephone.

The Interview

The interviewing process consists of more than one meeting. The first meeting is a qualification interview. The task is to determine if this individual has the basic qualities needed to perform the intended position. Although it varies by job type, experience has shown that it is wise for the manager to permit the candidate to speak freely during this interview. Key questions can be a general reference to the person's past employment, reasons for leaving, goals in a new position, ability to get to and from the job on time to include method of transportation.

During this interview, listen to the person. Does he/she appear to be interested in the job you have available? Is his/her appearance acceptable for your chili parlor. Is his/her personality compatible with restaurant work. Although many restaurant jobs have little interaction with customers, all have interaction with fellow employees which are critical to good communication in the chili parlor and which will lead to fewer errors and better efficiency.

Follow-up interviews are held only with candidates qualified from the initial interview. These people have the proper work ethic and meet the standards needed for the job. This is an in-depth interview compared with the first. Specific questions must be asked and answered by the applicant.

In general, the most important qualities which can be ascertained in a restaurant employee are:

Ability to arrive on time reliably for work each day.

Understanding what is expected of him/her in the job.

Ability to interact with other people, including other employees

Strength and endurance sufficient to handle the work in the job assigned.

Flexibility to do other jobs in the parlor if necessary

Honesty

Each manager's style of interviewing is different. However, every effort must be made to determine if the potential employee possesses the qualities above. Each of these items must be addressed specifically in the follow-up interview. In some cases this will mean asking the person to explain exactly how he/she will get to and from the parlor, or having a dishwasher physically pick up and carry a tray of dishes.

The Role of Part Time Employees

Restaurant hours today are long, extending into the evening and weekends when part time people are available to work. Often part time labor is as good as or better than the available full time labor. Students and housewives with good skills can perform very well in the restaurant. They also permit the operator to run a more dynamic schedule than would otherwise be possible. Adding a couple of part time waiters or waitresses for the dinner hour, with only a four hour shift adds productivity at a limited cost.

Part time people are often willing to do multiple tasks in the parlor. Such combinations as cook/dishwasher or waiter/cashier can permit the operator to have backup in every position while not having to maintain full time people in each specialty.

Training of Employees

The responsibility for training of chili parlor employees resides with the parlor operator or manager. Training is not an event. It is an ongoing process for both new and existing personnel. It is important that the manager remember this and ensure that each person is properly trained for each job he or she performs.

When the new hire first arrives on the job, it is extremely important to orient him/her to the tasks he must do as soon as possible. It is especially important not to leave a newly hired person idle in his/her early days on the job. Having the person work along with fellow employees during training is a good idea, making certain that the work produced is accurate and properly performed before the person is permitted to work unsupervised.

Experience has shown that the biggest reason for early employee turnover is poor supervision and low activity during the first days on the job. The manager must take special care to keep the newly hired employee busy consistently during the early days.

Positioning of Labor in a Chili Parlor

The chili parlor is not a nine to five job for all employees or managers. A dynamic system must be used to apply labor and management to the operation to capture the activity of the busy hours while keeping labor costs low during the slow times of the day. The parlor must be covered at all times. Over-coverage or under-staffing are both costly errors made often in the restaurant business. They must be avoided at all costs.

The first decision to make is which jobs require full time, and which jobs require part time personnel. At the minimum there should be two people in the parlor at all times, for service and safety reasons. Depending upon the hours of operation of the chili parlor, significant savings can be attained by avoiding overstaffing. For example, it is possible that in the morning when the parlor serves breakfast, no dishes need to be washed. They can be washed by a dishwasher who comes in four hours after opening, saving expense and still having plenty of dishes available for lunch service. Chemical based restaurant dishwashers, available normally on a leased basis permit quick turnaround of dishes, utensils and glasses after the dishwasher arrives.

When a chili parlor is new, the patterns of activity are unknown. However, a manager is far better off overstaffing than understaffing at this time. Over a period of weeks a pattern will emerge and corrections can be made.

Some methods of dynamically scheduling labor are the following:

Not all people should be brought in at the same time. It often is better to stagger the arrival of people during the business day, to provide lesser coverage during slow periods, but heavy coverage at lunch or dinner.

When weather is bad, business may also be bad, especially during snowy or stormy weather. In many cases employees will very happily delay or postpone work if contacted by the manager prior to their leaving home. Attempt to develop sales patterns by hour, by day. Use this data to schedule labor. For example, if Monday morning is always slow, schedule fewer employees than for normal mornings.

During slow times, ask if employees in affected areas wish to leave early. If used properly, especially with higher paid personnel, this can produce big savings. Remember that some jobs are real-time in nature, meaning that their activity is created by a food order and must be performed immediately. On the other hand, they may experience downtime during the day. Examples are the fry cook and wait people. It is important to use the downtime of real-time employees to perform lagging jobs that need to be performed but are less time-critical. For example, a fry cook could move to dishwasher for an hour, with someone else performing the very few frying jobs that come up during his absence in addition to his/her regular job. This can be the manager in many cases. This can also improve employee morale. In general, people prefer some degree of variety in their work and do not like to be idle. And cross-training of this type adds substantially to the efficiency of the operation.

Establishing a Positive Working Environment

Respect for management is the foundation of establishing a positive working environment in the chili parlor. Personnel must believe that the manager knows his job, knows the business, and understands the work being done by the employees. They must also believe that the manager cares about them.

The beginning of this process is to show respect to employees as people and for the work they perform. This includes praising work when appropriate and providing employees with an opportunity for growth on the job in line with their performance.

The staff in a chili parlor is a team. "It's not my job" will not work within this team. Cooperative people are valuable, and they should be cultivated. Uncooperative personnel should be corrected quickly and professionally. An example is a wait person passing by a customer who is in need of a cup of coffee and neglecting to offer to fill the cup because it is not his table. Many examples exist inside the kitchen operation as orders are filled for customers and employees must work together.

Rewarding good behavior is part of this process. Often simple praise, or small premiums such as free meals or tickets from vendors can accomplish this result.

Evaluating Employees

It is important for the manager to continually evaluate employee performance, reinforcing positive traits and addressing problem areas. This is normally a one on one process, where strong points are emphasized, and a plan is developed to overcome any weaknesses an employee may have.

At some point particular employees may need to be placed on probation in an effort to improve performance. This must be done with specific goals outlined by the manager, preferably in writing. The manager must follow up along the lines of a specified time schedule agreed upon by the manager and employee.

Quizzing employees in a friendly way is very useful. I refer to asking them the price of a particular item, or the complementary items associated with a particular entre. This can be built into the routine in a restaurant by a good manager. Good people do not mind this type of quizzing as the operator attempts to make certain the restaurant is being represented properly to the customer.

*quotation taken from St. Louis Post Dispatch, December 15, 2003, page E4.

UNDERSTANDING INVENTORY

There is a direct relationship between inventory control and profit or loss. Poor controls equate to lost revenue and reduced profitability. The inventory control process begins with ordering, and flows through the entire restaurant process. Daily usage, yields from products, periodic counting, and waste prevention are all components of the overall Inventory Control System.

Inventory Control accounts for most of the success of the restaurant. Such lapses as running out of food, losing food to waste and spoilage, or paying excessively to finance and store un-needed food are can take all of the profit out of the Chili Parlor enterprise.

Related to this topic is the issue of computerized point-of-sale systems, now so widely available. In our opinion these systems can be extremely helpful, but there is no substitute for understanding the underpinnings of inventory control upon which these systems are based. Proper systems for counting, receiving and reporting can be either manual or computerized. But prior to computerization the operator must get a handle on each physical task related to inventory control. The following methodology relates to such a manual system.

Methodology for Controlling Inventory

The methodologies for controlling inventory will develop over time. Early in the life of a new chili parlor inventory should be counted each week. Obviously there is a cost to using personnel to perform a physical inventory count. However, this cost is well justified in the early months of the operation of the Chili Parlor, when such items as yields, usage requirements and waste are being determined for the first time.

When the operation is under control, which means that the operator knows yields, waste, and daily usage, physical counts can be reduced to twice monthly. One of these counts should be done at the end of the month, when all financial information is being consolidated and inventory data must be available for the operator to understand his financial position.

Purpose of Inventory Control

Inventory control is used to measure the amount of product used for a specific period of time. The information is then compared to sales information from that same period of time. This measures how much it costs to produce a specific amount and type of sales during a specific period of time, or your critical measure "cost of sales" in the chili parlor. *There is no other measure in the Chili Parlor which is as important as the cost of sales. The tool to determine this key index is the overall inventory control process.*

Data from inventory control keeps management in touch with usage, so that they can make accurate orders for food, products and supplies. It also keeps

management up to date on pricing, which may have to be updated weekly in response to inventory data.

Starting an Inventory Control System

The first step in Inventory Control is the initial physical count. From this count, all items are priced and quantified in value. Here is a method for gathering and processing data from the physical count based upon a purely manual system.

1. Develop or obtain an Inventory Control Sheet. All data from the physical count will be placed on this sheet. This will be what is called *beginning inventory*. *It is priced out by unit and total on the form. From this data, usage during the week will be deducted, yielding "ending inventory" for the week.*
2. As purchases are made daily or weekly, they are entered on this sheet under the appropriate date and added to the starting inventory. At the end of the week, when a week-end physical count is made, ending inventory is subtracted from *beginning inventory plus weekly purchases* to determine weekly usage. This data is quantified in dollars by multiplying usage times price of item. This figure, which calculates every item in inventory is *cost of sales for the week*.

Summarizing the above, the formula is as follows:

Beginning Inventory plus Purchases, minus Ending Inventory equals Usage for the period.

Notes Regarding Inventory Control

Understanding that Inventory Control to include physical counting is an extremely important part of owning and operating an O.T. Hodge Chile Parlor, we recommend that the owner, a trusted manager or key employee conduct the physical count. Over and above this level of control, we strongly recommend that the owner himself or herself spot check inventory counts periodically on a personal basis. This is *your* inventory. Stay on top of it on all times.

A note on this is that sometimes an operator might find it useful or needed to perform a physical count of key items more often. For example, in the O.T. Hodge environment in St. Louis, chili product and burgers generate 80% of the revenue, and amount to 80% of the value of the store's inventory. Counting these items more often, even daily is quick and easy. Comparing ending inventory to that called for by yesterday's inventory minus usage can quickly point out a problem and permit it to be monitored or fixed. We have seen shortages of twenty burgers over a day occur. This could be caused by incorrect receiving math, theft, waiters giving out free meals to friends or damage to food during preparation. Once isolated these problems are correctable.

Controlling Inventory

Ordering

*Keep inventory low
GM checks order in
Proper rotation must be maintained, first-in, first-out.
Receive credit for all spoiled or incorrect product
Use approved vendors only.*

Receiving

*Use a two-person check-in of items received.
Check all frozen product for damage, also to make certain it is completely frozen.
Always store frozen product immediately.
Check for dented cans, which indicate rough usage or spoilage.
Check egg cases for damage.
Check freshness of all products.
Check dates on all cases and products and date all products*

Product Storage

*Check freezer temperature regularly
Keep freezer doors shut
First-in, first-out.
Check ice buildup on coils.
Do not overstock.
Check walk-in or cooler temperatures regularly
All products must have lids.
All products must be off floor, at least four inches.*

Food Preparation

*Prepare yields daily
Use proper measuring utensils
Manager designates how much to prepare
Follow recipes, including chili preparation recipes
Make sure all containers (cans, bottles, bags) are completely empty.
Use spatula to clean product out of cans for use.
Prep salads in line with demand, not prior to demand.
Monitor portioning by employees
Manager must stay visible in the front of the restaurant.
Maintain a waste bucket. This should be counted at day end.
Regularly check food temperatures.
Regularly check chili thickness as it cooks to prevent overserving.
Regularly check water levels and temperatures in steam tables.*

Monitor daily inventories for usage.

Accounting

Compare inventory price to actual invoice prices

Track all waste

Make sure all invoices are processed in a timely manner

Make sure cash tickets are processed in a timely manner.

Make sure End of Month procedures are performed properly.

Do daily inventory and cash audits.

Remember inventory is tied-up money, a resource sitting on a shelf not making a dime. Inventory monitoring and control is essential to profitability.

List of Inventory Items Needed in the Chili Parlor

1. Chili
2. Tamales
3. Spaghetti
4. Crackers
5. Eggs
6. Bread – white, wheat, rye, buns-hamburger, hot dog
7. bacon
8. ham
9. sausage
10. hot dogs
11. brats
12. gravy mix
13. red hot sauce franks
14. jelly- mix pack
15. honey
16. hot cake syrup
17. shortening
18. whirl (for toast)
19. pickles
20. jalapenos sliced
21. lemon juice
22. ketchup – bottled and packs
23. mustard – ""
24. salt and pepper, bulk and packs
25. relish – sweet
26. bulk sugar, packets
27. sweet and low
28. salad dressings
29. mayonnaise

30. dehydrated potatoes
31. hash browns
32. cheese, block, shredded American and cheddar
33. parmesan cheese grated
34. juices, cans orange, tomato, grape
35. frozen French fries
36. onions
37. lettuce
38. tomatoes
39. milk – gallons and individual cartons
40. hamburgers
41. sodas
42. coffee
43. pancake mix
44. cereal box, individual
45. oatmeal box individual
46. butter- individually wrapped
47. biscuit frozen
48. desserts

OTHER

1. Napkins
2. Cling wrap
3. filter cones, grease
4. coffee filters
5. foam trays – various sizes 8x8,3x2,8x8x3,
6. scotch brite heavy duty pad
7. dome lids – for containers
8. foam links for drinks
9. plastic cups for takeout mustard, ketchup (soufflé)
10. bathroom tissue
11. paper towels
12. deli paper
13. bags – brown #12, 20, 4, 8
14. wax paper
15. plastic knife, fork spoon
16. guest checks
17. foam cups 16,32,6,8
18. squat containers 12oz, 16oz, (chili) plus lids
19. unbreakable knife fork spoons
20. soup spoons
21. cleanser
22. stainless cleaner

CHILI PARLOR EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

(This list presumes that the location has exhaust and fire safety in compliance with local ordinances and laws, and any other equipment required by the governing authorities in the Licensee's area. These include fire-safety systems.)

- Four foot (minimum) grill (gas or 220v electric)
- Double vat fryer (gas or 220v electric)
- Six position steam table (gas 110)
- Stove, either counter stove, minimum four burners. (220 or gas)
- Waffle maker, commercial (110v)
- Toasters - 3 (two operational, one backup) (110)
- Cold bar (put lettuce, tomatoes, onions) This has an underneath cooling system also. This is an electric device. (110v)
- Two commercial freezers, sizes optional. 110v.
- Ice Maker - bought or leased, rented. recommend leasing. leasing incl. service. This item has a maintenance overhead to consider, whether leased or bought.
- Soda system. Provided by Coke or Pepsi, recommend Coke unless prohibited by landlord.
- Coolers, 2 each. Size optional.
- Prep tables 2 each, size optional, stainless steel.
- Heat lamps. 2 each elect 110
- Warmer.
- Bun warmer. Usually under a counter, 110v
- Cup and chile container holder. These contain Styrofoam, bought by size of container
- Napkin dispenser, salt & pepper dispensers, sugar dispensers,
- Bacon press. Mechanical device
- Shelving - stainless or metal
- Guest check bar. Go on the hood, to hold guest checks for grill man.
- Spatulas -6 each, different types
- Grill scrapers, 2 minimum

- Cash register or Point of Sale system. Number of machines depends upon type of operation and flow of orders (see section on order flow)
- Butter roller - mechanical
- Tea maker. Free from coffee purveyor.
- Coffee machine. Ronnoco. Manhattan -4 burners
- Microwave - commercial and programmable. Program for chile/tamale dish.
- Miscellaneous pots, pans, inserts for steam table. Marie pans. Skillets included in this group.
- Cooler for bottled soda. - question whether this is needed.
- Chair, tables.
- Counter. If they have an exhaust system, probably have a counter. If not, must buy a counter. If bought, stainless steel.
- Colanders for spaghetti
- Dishwasher - recommend Auto Chlor. These are leased, with charges including soaps and drying agents.
- Safe
- Operating Supplies - Full Service
- Utensils,
- Napkins
- Paper items to go.
- Plates, bowls, saucers, cups, (China)
- Cleaning supplies incl. brooms and mops, sanitizing agent.
- Straws
- Guest Checks, register tapes. Calculators
- Fire extinguishers conveniently located.

OPENING AND CLOSING THE CHILI PARLOR

Opening Procedures

Opening times vary from one chili parlor to another. The person responsible for opening should arrive at the store at least one hour before store opening. Upon arriving, disable the burglar alarm system. Turn all lights on. Do a visual check, making sure all refrigeration and equipment is working properly, including the ice machine. Turn on all equipment to include the steam table, grill, fryers. Check heat or air conditioning settings, adjusting them to normal daytime levels.

Presuming that unused chili from the previous day has been refrigerated, remove chili from coolers and place in the steam table. Based upon the expected volume and the amount of chili retained from the previous day, break out new portions of chili and place them in the steam table containers per instructions in the chapter on Care and Handling of the chili product. Retrieve tamales sufficient for the breakfast meal and place in the steam table container.

Start putting potatoes on the grill for breakfast dishes. While potatoes are cooking, start your tea cooking process, and begin to make coffee. If applicable, cook spaghetti for the day's business following instructions in the chili parlor Product Preparation chapter.

Set up grill area for breakfast customers. Get out butter to soften, get a tray of eggs out of refrigeration. Precook bacon in preparation for morning orders. Perform a broad check of inventory, looking for items which might need to be replenished during the day. Note these for later ordering.

If a manager opens the day, he/she should count cash in registers or safe and make certain that there is a sufficient amount of small change in bills and coin to meet the day's business. If a cash balance of \$500 is the standard, the recommendation is to keep \$200 in singles, \$100 in fives, \$150 in quarters, and the remainder in smaller change.

Turn on the POS system if applicable, or registers. Run any reports to make sure that the system had been cleared the evening before.

With these tasks completed, when your personnel arrive you will be ready to start the business day.

Closing Procedures

The recommended procedure is to have a specified listing of tasks for each of the staff members who will be active in closing the Parlor. The following are general procedures covering the entire process.

Shut down all cooking equipment. Remove all chili products and beans from the steam table for cooling. This will require approximately one hour. To speed

cooling, use shallow pans to cool the chili. When cooling is completely cooled, place chili and beans in the refrigerator. Remove and discard any remaining tamales from the steam table. Each cold bar item in refrigeration should be individually wrapped and replaced in the cold bar. If an item is too low to retain until the following day, discard the item and put the pan aside for cleaning.

Understand that it is not proper to take hot chili or tamales and place them in the refrigerator. Their heat will cause the temperature in the refrigerator to rise, often for hours, creating a situation where spoilage can occur.

Tasks for Grill Operator

*Thoroughly clean grill.
Wipe down all stainless behind counter.
Sweep and mop behind counter.
Help where needed thereafter
Empty grease trap.*

Tasks for Dishwasher

*Wash all plates, cups, pots, pans, utensils and miscellaneous items in the dishwashing area.
Take all trash out (under management supervision).
Wipe down all equipment in the dishwashing area.
Sweep and mop the area.
Clean rest rooms, sweep and mop, empty trash.*

Waitress

*Thoroughly clean all tables
Check all salt and pepper and condiment bottles, filling as needed.
Set up tables for next day's business
Sweep, mop or vacuum customer area.
Wrap silverware for next day's business.*

Manager

*Perform daily inventory of critical items.
Balance cash.
Count safe and balance safe.
Supervise all cleaning personnel
Close, alarm and lock facility.
Assist other personnel as needed during the process.*

For security reasons it is wise to have the restaurant staff leave the premises at one time. This permits double-checking that doors are locked and alarms set, and provides an extra measure of control and security.

Note: In addition to the items listed above, it is imperative that all local governmental regulations related to closing a restaurant facility be known and followed.

MAINTENANCE OF THE CHILI PARLOR

Cleaning and Sanitation

Sanitation is not just good restaurant practice. It is a matter of law and government regulations. The chili parlor operator must perform a thorough cleaning of the chili parlor at least once per day, with supplemental cleanings throughout the day. The ideal time for the major cleaning is at day end. Alternately, this cleaning can be performed in the morning before opening. The recommendation is to perform a complete cleaning at day end each day. The possibility of having a short staff or weather problems in the morning is very real, and the cleaning absolutely must be performed before opening the Parlor for business in the morning.

County Health Regulations

Each county in the U.S. has a health department which regulates restaurants. Most require certification of one or more restaurant employees before granting a license to operate a restaurant. Each county has specific standards for safety and cleanliness which must be followed by restaurants in their jurisdiction. Each restaurant owner should obtain a copy of the county rules and follow these rules. Often it is possible to obtain a copy of the county inspector's checklist from the county. The information below is not meant to substitute for the county health and safety regulations. These are additional rules and guidelines which are meant to improve restaurant cleanliness above the minimum requirements set by the county, and to make dining in the chili parlor a pleasurable experience.

Daily Check List

- If applicable take all ashtrays off tables and clean them.
- Remove gum from floors.
- Sweep, mop all floors
- Clean bathroom sinks
- Clean bathroom urinals and toilets
- Clean and shine bathroom mirrors
- Make sure all toilets flush
- Check toilet paper for daily supply
- Check paper towels, bathroom and kitchen
- If applicable, clean and sweep around dumpster

- Clean and sanitize all table tops
- Mop and clean kitchen area
- Clean office if applicable
- Clean all glass (mirrors, glass doors) with Windex
- Wipe down fan blades as applicable.

Weekly Check List

- Move all tables and sweep underneath each
- Clean all bottoms of tables
- Dust all shelving, including stockroom
- Clean all AC return grills
- Check and clean exhaust fans
- Scrub moldings
- Wipe down all walls
- Clean all light bulbs
- Dust pictures, ornamentals

Periodic checks during the Business Day

- Check temperatures of chili product in the steam table
- Check temperatures of refrigeration units
- Check calibration of soda dispenser
- Check temperature of grill and fryers

THE CHILI PRODUCT FOR YOUR CHILI PARLOR

In its early days, O.T. Hodge Chile Parlors prepared the chili product daily in each of its restaurant locations. Since this was a multi-hour task, it was possible to run out of chili during the business day, essentially bringing the restaurant down, since 80% of the food served has a chili component.

For that reason our company began manufacturing the chili product centrally in a meat processing plant with USDA certification. This has many advantages. Primary is the constant availability of chili in the parlors. Our chili is prepared condensed, which makes it less voluminous to store than a fully hydrated product. The parlor manager can easily store a week's worth of frozen or refrigerated chili in the parlor itself, and cook fresh chili within an hour if the need arises. Another advantage is consistency, which is more easily accomplished in a commercial meat processing facility.

We have also found that chili can be a more successful restaurant product if it is manufactured to serve as a topping more than as a standalone item. We offer chili over eggs, ham, tamales, burgers, nachos and other entre items. The relatively mild taste of our brand of chili permits us to do this. It doesn't dominate the entre it covers.

For a single parlor operation, choice of a chili product represents a choice for the operator. If he possesses a proprietary recipe it may not be possible to have it commercially produced in quantity. In that case there is no other choice but to prepare it fresh each day. If, however, the operation grows to multiple units, our recommendation is to seek a commercial chili manufacturer to make the recipe.

These manufacturers also often carry house brands available to the restaurant trade. This is also true with the foodservice providers, who carry brands of chili for their customers.

If the restaurant is in the planning stage we would recommend surveying these commercially available products to see if they could become the standard chili for the parlor. The benefits of doing this are great, and the cost may be no higher to the operator than preparing chili in the restaurant. The production capabilities of the commercial meat processors give them economies of scale, and their proficiency with ingredients give them methods of preparation that may be considerably less costly than those available to the restaurant.

Serving Chili

Use one eight ounce ladle for a single portion of chili. A double portion is one full ladle and one half ladle, or twelve ounces. Standard dishes such as chili mac, tamale in and slinger require one eight ounce portion of chili. Double portions require twelve ounces.

The chili should be poured last in preparation of a dish. The heat of the chili will warm any dish. Once poured, serve immediately.

Cooling and Storage of the Chili Product

The chili remaining at the end of the day may be refrigerated at 40 degrees Fahrenheit for use on the following day. However, it is extremely important to remove the chili from the steam table heat and to cool it for at least one hour before storage. If this is not done, the heat of the chili will lower the temperature of the refrigeration unit, causing sourness or even spoilage of the chili product. The chili product may require movement to shallow pans to achieve the desired temperature, which is approximately room temperature.

These rules are extremely important to follow. If any amount of sourness is detected in the odor of reheated chili, or in its taste, discard it immediately and re-examine your handling procedures. Do not serve chili which has been improperly handled even if it appears to be in good condition.

If it is not possible to allow one hour for the chili product to cool at days end, it is recommended that it be kept on the steam table at a temperature of 150 to 165 degrees Fahrenheit rather than refrigerated in the hot condition. This evening heating will not harm the product. It may require the addition of water before use the following day.

Tamale Product Preparation and Storage

The tamale product used in the chili parlor can be delivered in frozen or refrigerated form. Our recommendation is to refrigerate the Tamales upon receipt. Obtain the safe shelf life from the foodservice provider.

Tamales require approximately thirty five minutes of cooking at 205 degrees before serving. Once cooked, they can remain in the steam table for two hours or more. The tamales cannot be refrigerated and re-used the following day. At the end of the day discard any unused tamales. This process demands careful monitoring to keep an adequate number of tamales available, but fresh during the serving day.

Because of their inability to be reused, be careful not to cook more tamales than you feel will be needed. In emergency situations tamales can be micro waved if additional tamales are needed beyond expectations. Time of microwave is 1.5 minutes with a tamale on a serving platter.

Spaghetti

Our standard is the Barilla spaghetti available from the foodservice providers. This spaghetti product has great durability in a commercial foodservice operation because it holds together when cooked.

Spaghetti can be easily worked into your serving program through a pre-cooking process used in the O.T. Hodge Chile Parlors for years. In this process, a quantity for a day or two is cooked in a large quantity of water with some oil, in a heavy pot. Cook only until the spaghetti is semi cooked, or "el dente," with a remaining white center. Remove the water, and quickly rinse the spaghetti in a container of clear, cool water. This removes the starch from the product. After washing, place the semi-cooked spaghetti in a five gallon stainless steel pot, cover with cold water and place a lid on the container. Add two tablespoons salt to the product. If used for more than one day, remove the water, add fresh water and salt to the container. In its properly prepared condition, semi-cooked, it will not stick while in the container

Serving Spaghetti

Each day, or each meal, remove a quantity of pre-cooked spaghetti from the container, and store it without water, refrigerated at 40 degrees in a covered plastic or stainless steel container near the serving area.

Dedicate one or more steam table containers for spaghetti cooking. Fill them half full with clean water. Use a colander or a metal basket to cook the spaghetti to order in the steam table containers. Take the desired portion, drop it into the colander in the steam table for thirty seconds, and then remove. Shake water off of the spaghetti, place on the serving dish and cover with chili to serve.

Chili Beans

Purchase dried pinto beans, not small reds or kidney beans. Ask for "triple cleaned" beans to avoid stones and sand. Soak in warm water 1.5 hours, and then boil 2-2.5 hours. Drain water; put fresh cool water on top of the beans. They are ready for serving. Beans may be kept in the steam table or refrigerated. Serve beans on the bottom of any chili dish, covered with chili.

Do not cook chili together with beans. This will cause a softening of the beans and damage the quality of the chili product. Instead, mix beans with the chili when serving.

**JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES**

GRILL OPERATOR/FRY COOK

Basic Responsibilities

The Grill Operator is responsible for all items cooked on the grill or fryer. He/she receives orders from a terminal or waitperson, quickly puts product on the grill, and if necessary, and drops fry orders into the fryer. Upon completion of the cooking, he transfers the order to the expeditor or places it in the waitress pickup location. He also dispenses chili alone or as part of entrees.

Experience and Qualities Required

Generally speaking, this can be a new position for a person with the proper capabilities and attitude. This person does not need to have prior cooking experience. However, several qualities are required:

An ability to operate under stress, and to work quickly.

An ability to interact with other employees in the Parlor

Dependability. This person is key to the operation of the Parlor.

Physical agility and endurance

Must have knowledge of all products to be cooked and cooking techniques for each product (see below).

Must have a high standard for the dishes he prepares.

Must have a good short-term memory for keeping track of orders in process.

Check with your county health department for any other qualifications or certifications required for this person

Specific Duties and Methodology of performing the job

Make certain that cooking equipment, to include grills, fryers, fans, steam tables, are turned on and at the proper temperature before beginning work.

Check grill station prior to starting shift, making certain that all input items are on hand. Perform other preparation such as cutting tomatoes, retrieving cheeses, making certain spaghetti is in place ready for warming, chili is hot and of proper consistency, tamales are in steam table, etc.

Accept orders from the originating terminal or person.

Place menu items on grill, in fryer or in steam table. Cook in prescribed manner (see below).

Making sure that grill and cooking equipment is clean for all cooking purposes.

The entire cooking area is the responsibility of the grill person, who must make certain that it is clean, neat and well stocked with product.

Maintaining a high degree of cleanliness in work, to include making certain that any order is served in an appetizing manner on clean plates or containers without grease or other debris.

Routine

This is a full time job, and probably the key working job in the restaurant. The grill operator is in charge of every aspect of creating cooked orders. This includes preparation of the area, maintaining cleanliness of the area, keeping food available in quantities sufficient for upcoming entrees without needless removal of un-needed food from refrigeration.

The grill operator operates very independently, generally without assistance from others. This includes refilling the cold bar, keeping refrigerated items available at the grill, cleaning the grill and other cooking equipment during the business day, watching for safety in the grill area, advising management of shortages or problems with any aspect of the grill or grill items.

GRILL PREPARATION OF ENTREES

Breakfast Entrees

Temperature of Grill *350 Degrees for all entrees*
Fryer Temperature *375 Degrees for all entrees*
Other Items *American fries are cooked and on grill*
 Oil is on grill, replenish as cooking continues

Egg Dishes – cooking of eggs

Over Easy – Cook on first side until liquid is starting to solidify. Turn, leave on
Grill for approximately forty five seconds.

Sunny Side Up – Eggs are placed on grill. Cooked until done, whites solidified
Approximate time is two minutes

Scrambled – Two eggs are cracked in a bowl, beaten with a whisk or fork.
Pour on grill. Turn. Approximate cooking time is two minutes.

Poached Eggs – Recommend use of egg poacher. Eggs are cracked, put in
Poacher containing heated water. This is done on the grill. Leave in
Poacher until eggs solidifies.

Omelet – (ham and cheese) – Break or crack three eggs in bowl, whisk, pour on
Grill. Smooth out. As eggs are starting to solidify, put pre-cooked ham and
Cold cheese in center. As edges start to brown, fold omelet, both sides
Into the center. Place on oval plate.

Cooking of Bacon

Bacon can be precooked for day's business. Bacon is placed on grill. Using a
Bacon press, put on top of bacon. Cook bacon until done on one side
Performing same procedure on other side.

Bacon can also be cooked in a commercial oven at times when the griddle is
crowded with such items as potatoes.

Cooking of Sausage Patties

Sausage pattie can be precooked for the day's breakfast. Sausage pattie is
placed on grill. Using a sausage pattie press, put on top of sausage pattie.

Cook sausage pattie until done on one side, pforming same procedure on other side.

Cooking Ham Slices

Place one slice of ham on grill, cooking until bottom portion is turning brown, or

For one and one half minutes. Turn, perform same procedure on second Side.

Hot Cakes

Hot Cake batter is made ahead of time, prior to opening, using instructions on

Container. Pour batter into hot cake gun. Place gun on grill. Pull lever

Once, for one hot cake. Hot cake is left on grill until sides are starting to

Brown. Turn to second side, cook until done, lifting up to make certain

It is done, approximately two minutes on second side.

Biscuits and Sausage Gravy from Mix

Follow instructions on biscuit package. Cook biscuits ahead of time, keeping them in a warmer until ready to serve. Gravy is also made per

Instructions on package. After gravy is mixed, put in steam table to keep

Hot. Recommend cut up sausage patties and place in gravy.

Dry Cereal

This item comes in individual boxes, one per serving. Pour serving into bowl. Fill

Bowl with milk.

Oatmeal

Oatmeal comes in individual packets. Pour packet in bowl, add milk. Put in

microwave for two minutes. When removed, add slice of butter and serve.

French Toast

Start with three pieces of Texas toast. Dip in mixture of two eggs and milk whisked together. Dip toast in batter, place on grill. Grill first bottom side is

Brown/tan. Turn, repeat for second side. Add any complementary items such as cinnamon etc.

Lunch Menu

See chili preparation section for instruction on creating chil, tamale and spaghetti dishes.

Other Dishes not included in Chili Preparation Section

Nachos and Cheese

Warm nachos in microwave for 30-45 seconds. Remove, cover with cheese from cheese gun. Cover with one eight ounce serving of chili.

Burgers

Change temperature to 375 degrees for all meat product grilling including burgers.

A two ounce hamburger patty is standard. As an option, a four ounce patty may be used. These instructions refer to the two ounce patty.

Place patty on grill. Salt and pepper is optional. Cooking time is approximately one minute on first side. At this point you should see blood on top of patty. Turn when bottom side starts to turn brown and blood appears. At this time, take bun, brush butter on both pieces, place on grill. Cook second side of patty one and one half minutes until well done (all meat products must be cooked well done). For reference the internal temperature of a hamburger should be 160 degrees.

For cheeseburgers, use instructions above. Approximately thirty seconds before removing patty, lay one slice of cheese on top of patty, cooking to completion.

Hot Dog

Hot dogs are fully cooked when received. Check use date on the package before cooking. They must be sufficiently warmed before serving. One suggestion is to split the hot dog lengthwise, laying it flat on grill with split side down, cooking until light brown on both sides. If the volume of hot dog business is high, hot dogs may be prewarmed in the steam table, ready for serving.

Bratwurst

Use the same procedure described above for hot dogs.

Grilled Cheese

Take two pieces of bread. Butter the bread on one side, laying it flat on the grill. Grill until golden brown. Butter second side. Place two slices of American cheese on one slice of bread. Cook until cheese is starting to melt. Place other half on top. Split diagonally and serve.

Grilled Ham and Cheese

Follow instructions for grilled cheese above. Place one slice of ham on grill. Cook until golden brown. Turn to second side, cooking until brown. Place ham on cheese, top with other piece of toast. Cut diagonally.

Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato

Place two pieces of bread in toaster. Bacon is pre-cooked. Lay bacon on grill to warm, turning once, approximately forty five seconds per side. Place three slices of bacon on toast, then add lettuce and one or two slices of tomato (depending upon size of tomato). Put mayonnaise on both sides. Cut diagonally.

Patty Melt

Toast two pieces of bread in a toaster. Place one patty on grill. Cook per specifications above for hamburger. Add one piece of white cheese onto burger and cooked onions. Cook until melted. Slice diagonally.

Reuben

Toast two pieces of bread. Place individually packaged corned beef on grill. Cook approximately one minute. Turn and cook one additional minute. Put on bun. Add approximately two ounces of sauerkraut. Place thousand island dressing on one side of toast. Cut diagonally and serve.

Chicken Fingers

Place two pieces of chicken in fry vat basket. Cook for three minutes approximately, or until chicken floats. A good guideline for any fried item is floating when completed. Take out of fryer, hold basket to drain shortening, place on two slices of bread.

Cod Filet

Follow same procedures as for chicken fingers.

French Fries

French fries arrive in a four ounce bag. Drop fries into fryer basket. Cook for 2.5 to three minutes, or until they float.

EXPEDITOR

Basic Responsibilities

This is the person who sets up the orders for the waiters or waitresses. He/she makes certain that the order is complete, correct and delivered to the wait person in a timely manner. Essentially, this person fills the order in complete for delivery by the wait person to the table.

This is an interim position during the work day, primarily during busy hours. In some parlors this position may not be required.

In the ideal situation where orders are all coming to the wait staff correctly prepared, and where the system is moving quickly, this position is not required.

Experience and Qualities Required

Knowledge of all products in the Parlor.

Ability to work under stress

Ability to shift from one job to another in the parlor without difficulty, including cashier

Technical ability to operate as a grill person, either primary or backup

Ability to work well with other employees

Good service and customer service orientation

Specific Duties and Methodology of performing the job

Take food orders from the cook, check and consolidate them, place them at the delivery point for the waitperson.

Check orders for accuracy before delivery to the waitperson

Spot Check orders for accuracy in write-up by the waitress (such as incompatible items in one order)

Routine

The expeditor is placed in the job during the work day. This is generally not a full time position. Movement back to another position during the day is the norm.

The setup of the prep station is the first item of work. This includes all condiments which accompany orders, such as crackers, soup spoons etc.

To handle an order, the expeditor retrieves the order from the cook, together with cooked items. He/she then compiles the final order and notifies the wait person.

It is his responsibility to place the order paperwork (either POS or guest check) on the tray for the waitperson.

CASHIER

The cashier receives cash from sales, and is responsible together with management for the maintenance and accuracy of cash. The cashier is also responsible for all point of purchase materials to include promotional stands or "tents" on tables in the chili parlor and coupons. Also included are flags, banners and miscellaneous advertising and promotional items.

Equipment and systems

Equipment will vary from one chili parlor to another. It is possible to use manual cash registers or more sophisticated equipment such as computerized "Point of Sale" systems. However, the cashier retains responsibility for the accuracy of the process of taking money to include credit cards from customers and maintaining an accurate cash balance.

Duties

The cashier is responsible for notifying management of complaints, dissatisfied customers, and errors that occur regarding transactions. Normally the cashier is not responsible for handling these problems, or correcting errors. The responsibility is a reporting responsibility.

In some chili parlors the cashier also has duty of notifying waitresses of tables needed, people waiting for tables, dirty tables needing clearing and people needing refills.

This is typically a part time job in a chili parlor. However, the responsibilities are significant.

Control of Cash

Control of cash begins with the beginning of the cashier's shift. A chili parlor will keep a specific amount of additional cash in the register. We will presume the amount is \$50. *Upon beginning his/her shift, the cashier must count the register to make certain that this amount is in the cash drawer, no more, no less.* Generally there is also a requirement to make certain that specific denominations are on hand. That is, there should be singles, fives, tens and silver in specific quantities.

The Cashier's Business Day

After initial log-in and counting of cash, the cashier's job begins. Customers will present the cashier with guest checks and (if accepted) credit cards. Generally a chili parlor will not accept personal checks as payment.

Although it may vary by chili parlor, in a manual system environment, the recommendation is that all checks be paid at the cashier station. Presuming that this is the case, the cashier is handed the guest check by the customer. The check is pre-tallied by the wait person. Upon receiving the guest check with payment, the cashier accepts payment, keys in the amount of the sale, and gives the appropriate change to the customer. It is generally a good idea to ask the customer if everything was acceptable with the meal at this time and to note any problems with management as they occur.

Insofar as procedure, the recommendation is to accept the guest check with payment, placing the money on the ledge of the register. Enter the transaction with the money still on the ledge. Hand the customer the change, getting his/her acceptance, then place money in the cash drawer.

If there is any discrepancy involving payment for a guest check, contact the manager. If time allows, it is good practice for the cashier to communicate with customers in a friendly way as they wait for a table or present their checks.

End of Shift Duties

At the end of the shift the register is totaled out by striking a key or key sequence in the register device. This is normally done by a manager. This will produce a tally of sales during the shift. At this time the cashier, normally together with a manager, will count cash in the drawer in a private place, balancing to the original fixed amount (\$50) in the drawer plus sales accepted during his/her shift.

The count should produce a reconciliation with the machine tally. Specifically, the amount of money in the drawer should equal the \$50 starting balance plus the total sales from the machine tally. If there is a discrepancy, recount the money remaining in the drawer to make certain that \$50 is in the drawer, no more, no less. This often clears the discrepancy.

If the amount in the drawer is correct, recount the cash from daily sales. If this still does not clear the discrepancy, notify the manager. A reconciliation against the machine tape must be performed. During this reconciliation, the manager will be looking for unusual sales entered during the shift, such as a sale which is too low or too high.

If this does not clear the discrepancy, review transactions of the day mentally, and review the guest checks, looking for unusual occurrences, such as an incident when a customer claimed to give a \$20.00 and the cashier believed he/she received \$10.00.

DISHWASHER

The dishwasher is an important person in the operation of the chili parlor. Without a steady supply of clean dishes, utensils, glasses and cooking pans, the parlor is literally unable to operate. Therefore, this job must be done properly and efficiently.

Duties of the Dishwasher

Each chili parlor has a required amount of each cooking and serving piece which must be available and clean. It is the responsibility of the dishwasher to keep this amount at its proper level. The dishwasher is also responsible for delivering the dishes and other washed items to their proper position in the chili parlor and for removing rubbish removal within the chili parlor.

The Business Day

Upon arrival at the chili parlor, the dishwasher will set up the washing machine with the proper water level and temperature, checking to make certain that he has an ample amount of soaps and sanitizing solution. Normally during the interval when the equipment is filling and heating up, the dishwasher will collect any soiled dishes, utensils, etc., from the night before that might be remaining unwashed, returning them to the dishwashing area. He/she should also remove any trash which has accumulated prior to his arrival.

As the day progresses, the flow of items to be washed continues. Depending upon the procedure in place, the dishwasher either retrieves dirty dishes or front personnel will bring them back to his area. In any event, there should be a regular flow of items to the dishwashing area and back.

Upon receiving dirty dishes, the first task is to clean the plate of any excess food residue using hand operated equipment provided by the parlor. Each plate, saucer and all utensils are then manually sprayed with a hand sprayer.

Having sprayed all items, they must be separated for placement in their respective dishwasher baskets. Once the baskets are full, they must be placed in the machine and the door closed. The machine should be started and run full cycle. During this cycling time the dishwasher should be retrieving additional items to be washed and filling baskets for new loads.

When the washing cycle is completed, the dishwasher should check to make certain that all items are clean. The main item that may not be clean is utensils, which must be carefully checked. Depending upon parlor procedure, dishes are returned in the basket or stacked.

During slack periods the dishwasher should clean down his machine and sideboards. He/she should also assist in such tasks as bussing tables in the parlor.

End of Shift Duties

All dishes, cups, silverware must be clean and ready for the next shift. All trash must be taken out of the parlor. Machine then is drained, turned off, and completely cleaned. Depending upon chili parlor procedures, generally it is the dishwasher's responsibility to clean the restrooms, and to sweep and mop the floors in his/her operating area.