

Know Your Servant Series #1

North American Waitress, coffee-shop variety



Cindy at Bob's Big Boy, Encinitas, California

October, 1976

When you find it difficult to be at your best with difficult customers, try to remember the following:

THE CUSTOMER

1. He is the most important person in our business, the life-blood of every food establishment.
2. He is not dependent upon us; we depend upon him.
3. He is not an interruption of our work; he is the purpose of it.
4. He does us an honour when he calls; we are not doing him a favour by serving him.
5. He is part of our business, not an outsider.
6. He is a human being with feelings and emotions like our own.
7. He is not someone with whom to argue or match wits.
8. He deserves the most courteous and attentive treatment we can give him.

—Ellen Adeline Harris, *Professional Restaurant Service* (New York, Toronto, London & Sydney: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Limited, 1966), p. 3.

HAIR neat, simply arranged, not highly lacquered; no scented hair spray. Shorter than shoulder length or tied back or held by invisible hair net. *Her hairdo is not more stylish than yours.* May be wearing special cap or "bandette."

Probably wearing lipstick, of moderate shade and conforming to natural lip line. Any other makeup is discreetly applied. Not wearing pancake makeup, heavy mascara, or false eyelashes. Brows not completely shaved off and redrawn. No obvious rouge spots on cheeks. *She is not more glamorous than you.*

Is not chewing gum, sucking candy, eating, or smoking.

Is not wearing earrings, with possible exception of gold posts.

Is not wearing cross, star of David, ankh, peace symbol, or other necklace.

May be wearing plastic sign on chest stating first name and Management's name, symbol, and/or slogan. *You may address her familiarly, but she cannot address you familiarly.*

Garment is a dress, probably one piece, belted or cinched at waist; knee length or shorter, often mid-thigh if age 30 or below; sleeves short or possibly three-quarter length; of common material, such as cotton or synthetic, and *no more expensive than yours*; of solid white or black or pastel color, and *no more attractive than yours*. May have collar of contrasting color, probably edged or bound. Clean and unwrinkled; no rips or parted seams. All buttons present and buttoned.

Is wearing an apron, perhaps tied with large bow. *The time-honored mark of her servitude to you.*

Slip is not showing.

Is wearing a brassiere and possibly a girdle.

Hands clean. Nails clean and short. No colored nail polish. No rings other than standard wedding and/or engagement ring.

Is not wearing bracelet(s). May be wearing conservatively styled watch. *Has no adornments to compete with yours.*

Is wearing patternless, transparent stockings or pantyhose; free of wrinkles, and of a color close to that of her skin or slightly darker.

Shoes not stylish. No high heels. Clean, neat, well-polished, in good repair.

All body hair is removed, including underarm and leg hair.

Has no discernible body odor. Not wearing cheap perfume. Not wearing expensive perfume.

Remarks: Conversation is pleasant, short, impersonal. Voice neither loud nor soft. Stands neither close nor far away. Does not solicit opinions, except about the food. Does not interrupt but listens attentively. Eases your decisions by making appropriate suggestions, with reserved appeal, stating choices clearly and slowly. Glance meets yours without shifting. Fills requests promptly. Disturbs you as little as possible when serving you. Does not block your view of fellow diners. Moves neither too quickly nor too slowly. Does not show effort or exertion. Does not drop or spill food or drink. Does not cough, sneeze, yawn, burp, break wind or frown. Removes dishes and silverware at close of course unobtrusively and courteously. Presents bill discreetly and thanks you warmly before retreating. □