



## Kitchen Positions and Descriptions

### Executive Chef

If the business's management wants to oversee operations and leave the running of the kitchen to a qualified professional then it needs to hire an executive chef. An experienced executive chef will be expensive but will be able to perform all of the management, supervision, menu and production needs. Chefs will be very helpful in putting together the logistics and pricing for clients and menus. They are good at taking care of and overseeing food costs, ordering, quality control, staff scheduling and supervision. Their experience will help in the setup and development phase of the business. They should be expected to help hire and train staff.

- ❖ Oversees kitchen operation
- ❖ Plans and develops menus
- ❖ Meets with customers
- ❖ Plans and oversees food production
- ❖ Controls food costs
- ❖ Orders food and supplies
- ❖ Maintains quality control
- ❖ Supervises and schedules staff
- ❖ Assists in all areas of kitchen

### Kitchen Manager

A kitchen manager knows the ins and outs of running a kitchen. They may do the ordering and manage the staff, but may not have advanced culinary training. Kitchen managers are great at getting the food produced and maintaining consistency. A good kitchen manager knows all of the standards for the operation and production of food. They can follow recipes and cook food well, but they don't need to be creative or focused on technique. Kitchen managers should be able to train staff and should be very production-focused and efficient. Kitchen managers do not require as high a pay as an executive chef and can be a good fit for the business.

- ❖ Oversees kitchen operation
- ❖ Supervises and schedules staff
- ❖ Plans and oversees food production
- ❖ Controls food costs
- ❖ Orders food and supplies
- ❖ Maintains quality control
- ❖ Assists in food production



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### Sous Chef

The sous chef (pronounced “sue” and is from the French language meaning under) is the kitchens’ second in command. The sous chef is usually the workhorse of a kitchen. They are different from a kitchen manager in that they will be able to contribute ideas and recipes and are generally looking to move into an executive chef position. They can also function as the one in charge when the executive chef is not around. A sous chef can learn or handle ordering, inventory management, and food costing. A sous chef will likely pick up on the creativity of the executive chef of the business, understanding the style of cooking and food philosophy. Some chefs use them as assistants. But other sous chefs actually run the kitchen. If the operation is large enough several sous chefs could be utilized.

- ❖ Plans and oversees food production
- ❖ Supervises staff
- ❖ Orders food and supplies
- ❖ Maintains quality control
- ❖ Acts as the head line cook

### Line Cook

A line cook is assigned to a station on the line (the section of the kitchen where food is prepared or cooked for orders or events). The line is made up of kitchen stations dedicated to different preparation techniques, like the grill, sauté, fryer, and so on. Most line cooks should have some kitchen experience before working on the line. Many cooks start in prep and work up to the line. Line cooks should be able to perform prep duties along with plating and packaging. Depending on the business’ concept, it can start inexperienced line cooks on a cold station, like the pantry, pastry, or prep and then cross-train them on other stations as their abilities and interests develop. Usually, these cold stations have a more limited menu than the hot stations and require fewer skills to run. Typically, the sauté cooks need the greatest amount of kitchen experience because this station has the most volume and requires the most expertise.

Cross training is ideal on the line. During a slow period it’s good to cross-train employees. If one employee can work the end of the line with the oven and fryer plus know their way around the pantry, it gives the chef/manager flexibility in scheduling other staff. Labor dollars can be saved while maintaining full menu and service levels.

- ❖ Prepares recipes for production
- ❖ Operates ovens and stove tops
- ❖ Maintains quality control
- ❖ Cleans production area



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### Prep Cook

Prep is short for preparing, or making preparation. Food preparation is the root system of the kitchen and prep cooks are the backbone. They do the daily grunt work. Prep cooks prepare food to be cooked and recipes to be completed. The prep cook is a very important member of the staff. Prep cooks need to possess good knife skills and should be able to follow instructions. They should be efficient and detail oriented. Prep cooks can be trained in all of the tasks necessary, but kitchen experience is helpful. Prep cooks should have a working knowledge of the storerooms and coolers so they know where to find product and store products. They also need to know how to operate many kinds of equipment such as food processors, meat slicers, fryers, or even grills. Experience from a restaurant is always a plus. If applicants don't have experience but seem like they could be good employees, consider them as candidates for the dishwasher position. A dishwasher often can be trained to take on prep duties.

- ❖ Prepares recipes for production
- ❖ Assists line cooks
- ❖ Assists dishwasher
- ❖ Use kitchen appliances
- ❖ Maintains quality control
- ❖ Cleans food prep areas
- ❖ Cleans storage areas (stock rooms and walk-ins)

### Line Cook / Prep Cook

While the business is growing it's good to have cross-trained employees. This employee has been cross-trained and can perform both prep cooking and line cooking duties. They can help in either area when needed.

- ❖ Skilled in food preparation
- ❖ Can perform prep and line duties

### Dishwasher

The size of the operation will determine if a person is assigned the responsibilities of dishwasher. In smaller operations the duties of the dishwasher is shared by or assigned to prep and line cooks. Pots and pans need to be cleaned and are a way of life in the food industry. In some cases, everyone should be able to help in the dish area if the job requires it.

Dishwashing is a job requiring physical labor, it is, to say the least, "a dirty job". Dishwashers are often hard to find and even harder to keep. Most experienced chefs and managers agree that dishwashers are among the most important people in the building. Clean equipment is essential to producing amazing food.



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Many cooks and chefs start out in the dish area. If they have the desire, dishwashers can move from dish to prep to line to sous chef. Promotion from within the organization is an ideal way to sell an employee on working in the dish area. If someone shows motivation and pride in dishwashing, it is a sign they will work the same way in other areas of the kitchen. Working in dirty pots and pans is tough and promotion can be an incentive for the employee. If the business is able to keep a dishwasher and move them up the ranks, it will usually get a good hardworking employee. This will also be great for cross training when help is needed during busy times. Dishwashers can always help with packaging and portioning food. Don't forget that all employees should be able to help keep the kitchen clean and running. Make sure all employees are willing to chip in and get the dishes done. When first starting out the business may not have the ability to hire a dishwasher, which will require other employees shoulder the dishwashing load.

- ❖ Runs the dish machine
- ❖ Cleans all pots, pans, utensils
- ❖ Sweeps and mops kitchen areas
- ❖ Cleans rest rooms

### Counter Person

Operating a business with walk-in and pickup services will require a counter person to attend to customers. This position can be shared among the staff, but in a kitchen, it is difficult to stop and start preparing food and attend to a customer. This is especially difficult during peak hours of sales. If you are hiring one person for customer service, they should be trained to take orders, work with and be responsible for money, answer the phones and keep the customer areas clean and stocked.

The employee should be personable, professional and have knowledge about the business and be able to sell and fulfill customer orders. They may also be used to package, prep, clean and even serve.

- ❖ Cleans and maintains customer area
- ❖ Greets and assists customers
- ❖ Operates cash registers and credit card machines
- ❖ Stocks display cases
- ❖ Answers phones
- ❖ Takes phone and Internet orders
- ❖ Assists in food packaging



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### Delivery Person

On occasion a business will need to hire a delivery person. If deliveries are a big part of the business, set a schedule of specific times customers can elect to have food delivered. This allows the hiring of part time or full time employee to make deliveries. The delivery person can also be a prep or line cook helping out with food production and packaging along with delivery duties.

- ❖ Puts together orders for delivery
- ❖ Deliverers food to customer
- ❖ Packages food
- ❖ Collects payment (if necessary)

### Summary

A single owner operator just starting out will obviously perform all of the previously mentioned jobs and tasks. However, as business grows and dictates it's time for additional help, the first employee will perhaps be the hardest to hire. A commercial kitchen operation is a hands-on type of business and when help is needed, letting go of certain jobs or tasks will be hard. Start by making a list of the jobs and tasks that are the bottleneck of the operation. That is where the relief or help is needed.