
International Domestic Placement Group

www.DomesticPlacementGroup.com

Daily Reminders

Treat EVERYONE as the most important person in the world.

It is a courtesy and shows respect to knock prior to entering any room - all staff.

The butler is the top man of the house - does not mingle with the staff - maintains a professional relationship at all times.

Don't say 'My Staff' - it is derogatory in some cultures.

How do you ask for something? You must have: a rapport = a communication tool, and a reason = knowledge of the house/ family/ area of need. This cannot be done at the beginning of the job.. you must learn their ways and reasons before you change the rules!

Walk around furniture to shake one's hand - never over a desk!

In the dining room, don't let anyone have a watch - guests are distracted if someone is 'watching the clock'. You wear a watch to keep the event running in a timely fashion.

Give a hand in the kitchen and with laundry on occasion to maintain a high quality of work ethics among the staff... look for shortcuts that compromise quality, suggest efficient ways of completing tasks, ask how staff is doing - keep tabs.

When guests are expected, ask the housekeeper 'Have you finished/ Are you ready?' then 'May I have a look?' then 'Oh, I see we need another ___ in this room. Everything else looks great! You've really outdone yourself this time!'

Serving less than 20 guests, you need 4 staff members, for more than 20, use 2 sets of staff and serve starting at opposite ends of the table - gets warm food out faster. Prefer permanent staff over temporary.

When out in public - even off duty - you are an ambassador representing the household/ family & profession. If behaving/ appearing inappropriate (drunk, swear, gossip [employers/ duties/ private info], vent frustrations, unlawful, unkempt), you send negative messages to others. If caught in a bad situation say 'you will excuse me please, I really must be on my way.' Choose your friends very carefully. Know whom you can trust with personal information.

You must ask your employer's permission prior to bringing a personal guest into your quarters. Staff must ask you. If there is a fire in the house we must know who & how many are inside each building. (W/O permission, you may be embarrassed for not asking and may put someone in danger).

Everyone MUST be ready (freshened up, coat put away, toilet, etc...) PRIOR to the 'official start time'. Arrive early.

Cleaning - butlers must know how to care for every item in the home, so that we may instruct others, maintain the highest of standards.

Butler/ HM/ EM has the ultimate responsibility for the entire estate and staff.

You are only as good as your staff; the butler/ HM/ EM sets the standards for the household.

Butler/ HM/ EM is the middle person between the employer and the staff - especially for employers who don't know how to treat/ manage staff.

Relations: poor communications are when the staff only converse with the guest/ employer and not each other. Replace the 'guest/ employer' with the butler and the whole group works as a team rather than on their own. The butler/ HM/ EM sees all the B. S. that goes on between the staff members - better you than the employer! Staff may resent your position with the employer.

Outside Staff

When forced to use outside staff, instruct as to proper etiquette (cell phones, smoking, breath and body odor).

Keeping Staff

If you realize that someone has a hearing problem, try to assist him or her in obtaining medical attention.

Try to take over purchasing of the entire household - including food- even if the Chef has done it for years. Work WITH the Chef - he is very important- work together. Impress that HE is the professional and you rely on his EXPERTISE.

If a member of staff is persistently late, prior to dismissal, ask if there are problems with transport. If yes, offer for them to start a bit later, but then they must stay that much later at the end of the day.

The kitchen staff should never be in the rest of the house. House staff should stay out of the kitchen if there is a chef on staff.

Chef

The kitchen is HIS domain. ALWAYS knock and request to enter. Treat with respect. The butler usually hires the chef, but assists the chef when he interviews the other kitchen staff. Refer to as Mr. Chef, or simply 'Chef'. First names are ok when in meetings w/o other staff.

Maid

The butler assists the Mrs. when interviewing the maid, but the butler assists the maid when she interviews the additional household help. Refer to as Mrs. ??, first names ok when in meetings w/o other staff.

The Hiring Process

Promotions From Within the House - try to promote from within the house - except for Senior posts

(example: you are interested in Tommy the dishwasher of 2 years)

Approach the chef telling him that there is an opening for dinning room staff and inquire about Tommy. 'Would you miss him here in the kitchen, chef?' Oh, Yes I would. 'May I talk to him, chef?' yes. 'Hi Tommy, have you ever been outside the kitchen? Would you like to see the rest of the house? I'll show you tomorrow.' Show him the home and point out that he has played a

significant part in creating all the beauty. Ask if he would be interested in working here if there was an opening. Give the chef notice that you would like to transfer Tommy when the chef has found and trained a replacement. Tell Tommy that in 2 weeks (1 to interview and hire, 1 for Tommy to train the new dishwasher) he will begin training in the dining room.

Staff's cultural history - Hispanic women will not vacuum or use a ladder - considered 'heavy work'.

Try not to culturally mix your staff - issues of communication/ attitudes/ rolls/ values. Always be aware of any cultural differences you may have.

When hiring staff with restaurant experience (chef, kitchen, servers) they MUST change their focus from that of a restaurant (you'll be served when it's ready) to that of the whims of the Lady of the house.

Advertise in a local paper/ hotel/ catering school/ area college/ staff lounge - a current member of staff may have a spouse or family member who is interested. Don't give the employer's info in ads, use a P.O. Box # to collect c.v.'s 'Private household staff needed - flexible hours. FT/PT'

When people apply, check against pantry book notes for previous applications & read notes - applicant may have been ruled out for a good reason. If note says 'NEVER', don't even interview them, it says 'GREAT' call ASAP.

Schedule interviews 30 minutes apart. Have their cv on hand.

Staff Interviews

Have another member of staff with you= chef/ kitchen staff, Housekeeper/ maids, Groundskeeper/ pool attendant.

Always extend a hand to shake to staff, especially interviews, they should not offer theirs to you.

Would you like a cup of coffee? Before getting the coffee/ beverage, give them a job description and house rules (covering: bag searches, drug testing, background search). Have them sign the forms.

'Why did you leave your last position?'

'What have you done before?'

'Do you have any questions?'

'Did you have any expenses?'

Yes, \$16.

'May I see your receipts?'

I do not have a receipt.

'Why not?/ Why don't you have a receipt?'

Well, I was going to take the train, but someone gave me a lift.

'I am sorry, I can only reimburse expenses actually paid.'

Make a note in the pantry book that this candidate is not trustworthy, do not hire.

Near the end, explain expectations, work schedule and benefits: 'Your working days will be _-, time off_, vacation_, pay_, benefits_, perks.

'We will let you know'.

The Follow-Up

The only applicants who have second interviews are: the Nanny - usually 2 working days (paid cash) with the children; the Chef- cooks a luncheon for the Lees. The Chef will not know what he is to prepare until he arrives. He will make appetizers, 2-3 soups, 2-3 main courses, 2-3 desserts, etc... He will bring his own knives.

After the interview, phone their last employer and say 'Hello sir, I am interviewing Tommy Jones for a position as ___. May I ask you just one question?' yes. 'Would you hire him again?' Yes- consider, No - don't hire.

If they make the short list (second interviews) show them the area they will be working in- especially if staff quarters are included.

How do you choose between several good candidates? Ones not chosen will be noted in the pantry book for future reference

Give them a 'Do & Don't' list which spells out all your & employer expectations.

Provide uniforms that stay on the property with locker& keys.

Once Started

Trial periods/ probation, generally 6 weeks for most staff, 2-3 months for management and 2-3 weeks for a chef (you don't want to be stuck if they cook poorly!) - either party may end the arrangement for any or no reason. Employer must pay out remainder of trial period if it is their decision to sever the arrangement.

Ending A Staff Members Employment

Beyond trial period, generally 1 weeks pay. If we want to get rid of someone we let them go straight away, this prevents damage to property, staff moral and the Lee's privacy.

If you should see someone stealing, confirm with the Lees that they have not given something to that person. Have someone with you when you confront them, ask to check their bag - reminding them that they agreed to this (have sheet handy) when hired. Call the police if needed - if there is not a security on staff.

If the staff member has been there for quite a while, inform the Lees so they are not upset by the situation. If you were to let them go w/o their knowledge they may be upset with you.

If a member of staff is persistently late, prior to dismissal, ask if there are problems with transport. If yes, offer for them to start a bit later, but then they must stay that much later at the end of the day. If this does not work, you must call in to your office another member of management with the staff member (as a witness) to be written up (two verbal have been given). Have prepared his pay and an additional week's pay - all in cash. Have him sign for it, and witness countersign.

Don't listen to anyone grovel, NO ONE SEES MR. LEE! Take all keys; help clean out locker and escort off the property (by cab if needed). Change the locks.

Mission Statement:

We will be running homes larger than a small business, therefore, we may want to develop a mission statement. If someone is at odds with our mission (team player) they should not be working for you. (You have a 24 hour service policy and the employee wants off at 3pm every day.)

Business Meetings:

- May be located anywhere (butler's pantry, front hall).
- Schedule when convenient for everyone – this way you will have their full attention.

- Be sensitive to holidays and religious days.
- Make sure that all attending are introduced.
- Maintain control of the meeting.
- Start and finish on time – don't wait for late persons (unless it is your employer).
- Keep a record, take down the 'minutes', note things accomplished and agreed to.
- Attending meetings scheduled by employer: know why so you will have all the info needed for that meeting. Do not introduce yourself to unknown persons at this sort of meeting.