



Tips to Prepare Restaurant Managers for High-Stress Situations

High-stress situations aren't the exception — they're the norm. From slammed dinner rushes to last-minute call-outs and guest escalations, restaurant managers operate in an environment where emotions run high and decisions must be made fast.



What “High-Stress” Really Looks Like for Managers

A server calls out
10 minutes before
the shift

A backed-up
kitchen with rising
ticket times

A guest demanding
a manager after a
service issue

Two tables seated at
once with no server
available

A delivery order
gone wrong that
derails the expo line

Staff conflict that
erupts mid-rush

These moments define a manager’s ability to lead,
and a restaurant’s ability to operate.

Tip #1

Train for Real-World Pressure

Restaurant managers must be trained for real service rushes, unhappy guests, and last-minute staff call-outs, not just ideal conditions. Practical, scenario-based training prepares them to stay calm and decisive during peak pressure.





Tip #2

Create Clear Playbooks for Critical Moments

When stress hits, there is no time to “figure things out.” Standard procedures for guest complaints, kitchen delays, staffing gaps, and emergencies allow managers to act quickly and confidently without panic..



Tip #3

Strengthen Emotional Control and Communication

High-stress moments require clear thinking and calm leadership.

Managers who can control their reactions, communicate clearly with staff, and de-escalate tense situations keep both teams and guests under control.



Tip #4

Ensure Leadership Support Is Always Visible

Managers perform best when they know they are supported. Access to senior leadership, proper tools, and clear authority reduces pressure and prevents reactive, fear-based decision-making.





Prepared Managers Lead Stronger Shifts

Well-prepared managers handle pressure with confidence, protect team morale, and maintain service quality even in the most demanding situations. Preparation turns chaos into controlled performance.

Strong preparation creates strong leadership.