

Teaching the Teachers

Building and running successful education programs for you team

Who is this dude, and why should I care?

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BEER30

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- Vice-President of Sales & Marketing for **Beer30** and Vice-President and Co-Founder of the **American Craft Beer Hall of Fame**
- Advanced Cicerone, Certified Pommelier, WSET Level 2 Spirits Award with distinction, (AF)(NA) Beer Certified, Certified Cheese Scholar, Certified Pain in the Ass
- A decade of telling other people what to do what to do with their companies. Mostly successful, often annoying
- Have worked with dozens of beverage companies as an employee, consultant, advocate, partner, and platform provider
- I'm a Facebook influencer, because apparently that's a thing… barely
- You all wish you were secure enough to be as adorable a cat as I was in this picture



Why is staff education important?

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The Importance of Education

- Helps your team do their jobs more effectively
- Helps to reinforce your brand and positioning
- Improves cross-departmental cohesion
- Cuts down on mistakes
- Improves quality of beer and service
- Increases employee engagement
- Creates new opportunities for your staff



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This is the part where Aaron gets his soapbox out

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Everything you do and everything you serve deserves the same level of care as your beer!

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Staff Education - Core Principles

- Meet people where they are at
- Focus on the information they need to do their jobs well
- Training starts with new hires, but is a continuing and never-ending process
- Encourage questions, and make it a conversation, not a lecture
- What people can see, touch, taste, and smell is more important than any number of words
- Most importantly - MAKE IT FUN!



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Formal Training - Part 1

- Establish who your lead trainer is
  - Passion and communication are more important than just knowledge
- Set a regular, predictable cadence
- Initially, focus on the fundamentals of beer and how it is made
  - Tailor the level of detail to the audience
- Beer styles are important, but focus on how customers see them, not BJCP guidelines



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Style Buckets

- Fizzy Yellow Beer
  - Pilsner
  - Kolsch
  - Helles
  - Blonde Ale
- Wheat Beer
  - Witbier
  - Hefeweizen
  - American Wheat Beer
- Amber Beer
  - Amber Ale
  - Altbier
  - Vienna Lager
- Dark Beer
  - Porter
  - Stout
  - Barleywine
- Sours

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Formal Training - Part 2

- Focus on the company
  - Beer styles that you make should be the focus
  - All core or major beers should be covered individually
  - Cover the company's brand, story, positioning, and differentiators
- Comparison is your best friend
- For new beers, have the trainer do a quick rundown with all relevant staff when it's ready to be announced / released



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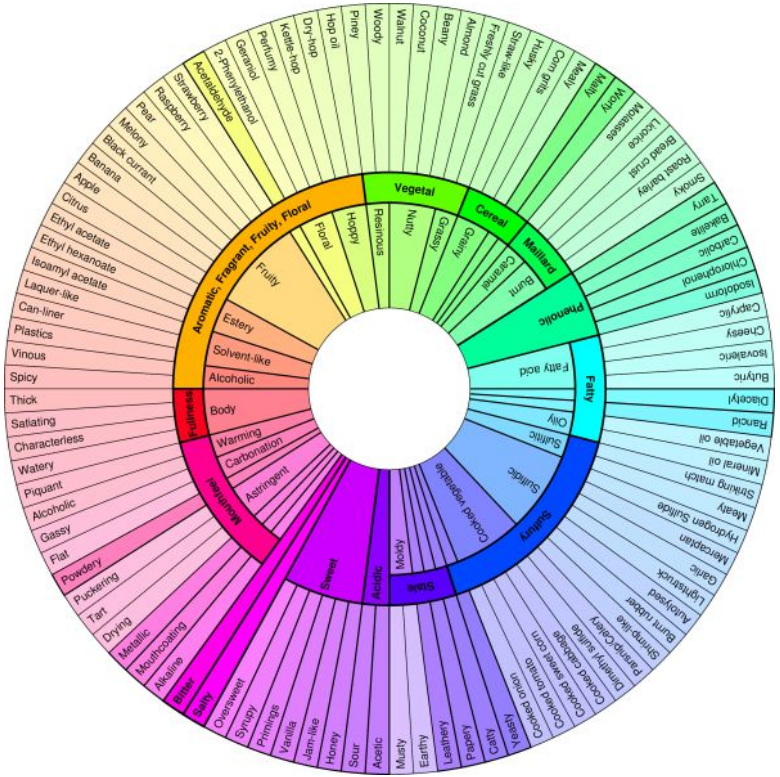
Sensory and QA / QC

- Better trained staff means more palates and eyes on your products, both the beer and all of the materials surrounding them
    - Bar staff and sales staff are just as important for end-to-end quality as your brewers
- Sensory classes help create more off-flavor or profile drift detectors, and improve engagement
- Triangle tests are a great way to test recipe changes and train staff at the same time
- Keep a beer library, and leverage a range of people when comparing against past batches



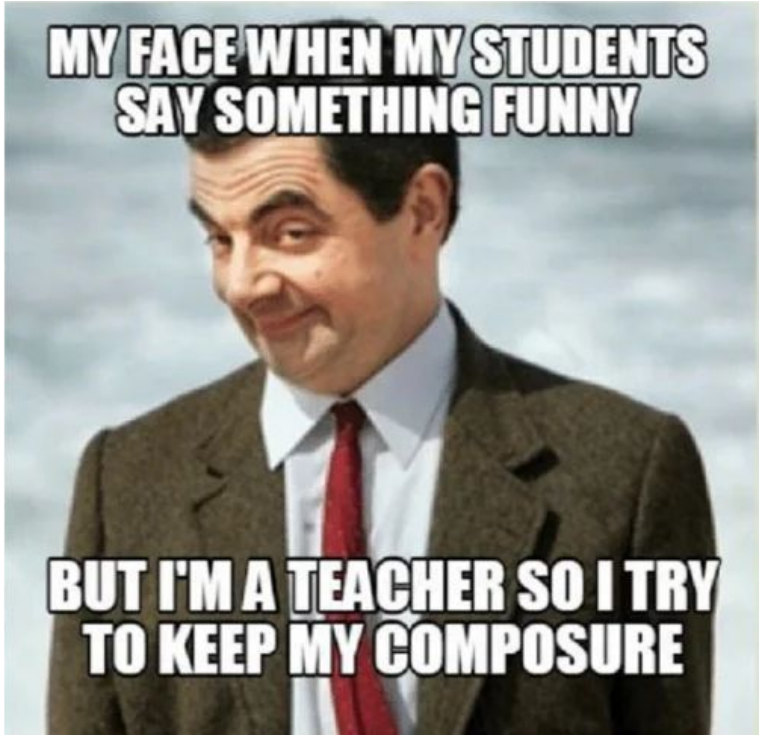
Service and Market

- Serving and Pouring
  - Pouring Beer (draft and packaged)
  - Glassware (as applicable)
  - Service Flow
  - Draft Systems
- Beer and Food
  - Don’t overdo it. Focus on reliable pairings from your own menu, but most of all on listening to their tastes
- Market Insights and Trends
  - Keeps everyone aligned and avoids myopia and hyper-focus just on your own internal business



Tips & Tricks - Part 1

- Create Accountability
  - Requiring testing, or Certified Beer Server Status, or even just mandatory training, is needed
- Education is a job responsibility, but should be compensated as such
  - Offer free admission to team members for educational events
- Offer to cover the cost of Cicerone or equivalent training, and create opportunities for personal development



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Tips & Tricks - Part 2

- Get folks into the brewhouse
  - Improves engagement and understanding
- Create an in-house resource library, including a lending library of books
- Create a “Beer Bible” and “Brand Bible”
  - Give plenty of detail, but create cheat sheets for quick scanning during or before shifts
- Remember, your team need to be educated, because your customers won’t be, and that’s okay



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Recommended Resources

- Books
  - Tasting Beer
  - Brewmaster's Table
  - The Beer Bible
  - The Oxford Companion to Beer
  - IPA
  - The Complete Beer Course
  - Hooray for Craft Beer
- Podcasts
  - BeerSmith
  - Rockstar Brewer Academy
- Websites / Blogs
  - Beervana
  - Under the Jenfluence
  - Appellation Beer
  - The Beer Professor
- Programs
  - Cicerone
  - BJCP
  - WSET
  - Hopsonomy

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Questions?

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