

Employee competences

AF: I wonder if you could say a little bit about how you actually run the restaurant. Do you have employees?

MSO: Yes we do otherwise this could not work. So well my wife and I do the directing, so we do the economy and most of the time we are the ones running the floor as well, meaning that we are the waiters and we serve drinks and such. I guess there are 2 reasons for that and one is that until the economy is so good that we can employ both full kitchen staff and waiters then we do that part. But another reason is that we are the faces of the restaurant you can say. So, it should not be like an anonymous place where you just come in and some young guy or girl who doesn't know what's really on the menu, doesn't know what this is all about. So, it's important that all waiters completely understand why we do what we do and answer all questions and sort of take the guests by the hand, give them the idea that we know what's happening and we have some surplus of energy. So, in the kitchen, of course we have hired chefs. Right now, in this moment we have two chefs and one apprentice chef. Uhm we have had for a period, 3 chefs and one apprentice chef when we had the most staff. So that's sort of it these days. We are interested in, of course, over time increasing the amount of, the number of staff but that's sort of a slow process where we keep looking at how much can we grow compared to how much money do we make and how do we make sure that everybody who is here follows the same ideology or logic or thinking. We should all be on the same page, that's really important

AF: So, one of the really key issues for me is what do you wish your staff could do when they came to work for you or do they already do it? What sort of competences are you looking for?

MSO: Well for the kitchen, we need people who, of course, are very good at cooking. That's obvious. And who are, you know, willing to share the ideology. meaning that, and I know that from the university and I know that from here, it's not all that different. That there are different ways of being an employee. You can count up your hours and think that well you meet in between this hour and that hour and that you do those tasks that are at hand. But you can also instead of that, take responsibility and think well I'm not so preoccupied with hours, I'm more preoccupied with tasks that need to be done and to see it as a kind of game. Take this playful..., I mean, you cannot have a playful, creative menu if you don't work in a playful, creative manner. So those things need to go hand in hand. You cannot organize the staff and say well now we all meet between... you're needed at 4 and then you leave at ten. And before six then you do this, this, this, then you cannot have this creative environment that we're interested in. We wish for all staff members, regardless of their position, to take responsibility and to take part in this and to share the ideology or see where we're going with this and why we do what we do and then we are not the other way as almost you can say. If employees don't count hours then neither do we. If employees don't sit around and say well 'I need to do this and that...', if they are sharing this work with us or if it's like a shared project, then of course if an employee says I need to go to France to see my mother or I need to do whatever, then of course I mean you don't need to say well you have had so many days of vacation then I mean you try to keep the... of course you need to control the administration but the administration can be up front so that that is your entrance to the company, that is through the glasses of administration, or the administration can be in the back letting out the project and the common things and the... So we try not

to have a hierarchy. Of course, we have that underneath because when we need to make a quick decision then everybody knows how this hierarchy works. But on an everyday basis it's not very visible that there is a hierarchy because again the best idea should win and I'm not really sure I'm answering your question but these are some of our thoughts about how to have staff.

AF: I think I was thinking about whether it would be an advantage for the staff you had to have been schooled in sustainability principles and have a basic idea of what it entails

MSO: Yeah well that can be an advantage. But otherwise they'll be schooled here. I mean it's enough to have an interest. And it's enough wanting to do something. And then you figure out stuff together. Because so many things are obvious if you just lose, get rid of prejudices and ideas or whatever you come with and just think whoa! how can we do things ethical as possible and if you do that as a group, then you move somewhere

AF: So, you never find yourself in a situation where somebody is throwing something away and you say "Hey stop you could be doing this".

MSO: Yeah well it happens but not so much anymore. There are things that we do that you don't typically do. But we do once in a while have those discussions but that's not like the carrot top oil. That's like as if people get used to thinking that everything is a product. You know it becomes a challenge that's it'd be fun to take. Then it becomes like a sport to say how can we use everything? How are apple peels a product? How are potato peels a product?

AF: Have you used apple peel?

MSO: Yes, we have made a sauce that was only made from apple peels.