



INTERVIEW GUIDE

(Restaurant General Manager)

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: This guide is designed to help restaurant managers conduct consistent, values-based interviews for the **Restaurant General Manager** position. Please follow the guidelines below:

- Consistency is Key: It's best practice to ask the same core set of questions across all candidates being considered for a position to ensure a fair and equitable evaluation process. It's acceptable to ask clarifying or follow-up questions but avoid substituting or skipping the core/standard set of questions you ask across candidates.

Please note: You are not required to ask all questions within each category below. Ask at least one from each category. If you have your own preferred question that aligns with a particular category (e.g. Positive Energy, Accountability, etc.) feel free to substitute your own preferred question under any category. The objective is to ask quality questions and be consistent.)

- Values-Focused Interviewing: This guide includes questions tied to our core values of **Positive Energy, Accountability, Recognition, and Servant Leadership**. Listen for specific examples and behaviors that reflect these values.
- Behavior-Based Approach: This guide also includes questions aligned to the core competencies required of employees in this position. Encourage candidates to share real-life examples using prompts like "Tell me about a time..." or "Give me an example..."

Please Note: If a candidate doesn't have experience in a particular area (e.g. leadership, etc.), ask them how they would handle the situation instead.

- Scoring: Take notes to document key interview feedback and quotes. Use the Interview Scorecard (at the end of the guide) to assign a score from 1–5 for each competency area.
 - Decision-Making: Use the guidance on the Interview Scorecard to determine whether a candidate is a strong fit, may have potential with development, or is not recommended to move forward.
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KEY COMPETENCIES:

- **Positive Energy:** Demonstrates a consistently optimistic, enthusiastic, and solution-oriented mindset.
- **Accountability:** Owns decisions and outcomes; inspires team accountability through example and expectation.

- **Recognition:** Celebrates team wins and individual achievements; builds a culture of appreciation.
- **Servant Leadership:** Leads with empathy, humility, and a commitment to developing others.
- **Business Acumen:** Understands restaurant P&L, KPI drivers, cost management, and goal setting.
- **Communication:** Delivers clear, honest, and motivating messages to team and leadership.
- **Time Management:** Effectively prioritizes tasks and balances competing demands in a fast-paced environment.
- **Operational Discipline:** Executes brand standards with consistency and attention to detail.

OPENING THE INTERVIEW (EXAMPLE ONLY):

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. We're excited to learn more about you and share what it's like to be part of the (BRAND) team! The Restaurant General Manager is the cornerstone of our restaurant's success. We're looking for a leader who represents our values of Positive Energy, Accountability, Recognition, and Servant Leadership, and wants to grow with our company.

EXPERIENCE & CULTURAL ALIGNMENT:

1. Tell me a little about your most recent role. What did a typical day look like for you?
2. Why are you interested in joining our team and this role specifically?

COMPANY VALUES ALIGNMENT:

POSITIVE ENERGY: Demonstrates a consistently optimistic, enthusiastic, & solution-oriented mindset.

3. How do you maintain a positive environment during a stressful day or short-staffed shift?

ACCOUNTABILITY: Owns decisions & outcomes; inspires team accountability through example & expectation.

4. Tell me about a time when your restaurant didn't meet performance expectations. How did you respond, and what actions did you take? (Follow-Up: What did you learn, and how did you hold yourself and others accountable moving forward?)
5. Describe a situation where a mistake was made under your leadership. How did you take ownership and address it with your team and your manager?

RECOGNITION: Celebrates team wins & individual achievements; builds a culture of appreciation.

6. Tell me how you celebrate your team's wins, big or small.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP: Leads with empathy, humility, and a commitment to developing others.

7. Tell me about a time when you stepped in to help your team with a task that wasn't part of your usual responsibilities. What motivated you to do so?

8. What do you do to actively grow the people on your team—not just train them, but truly develop them?

LEADERSHIP & COACHING:

9. Tell me about a time you turned around an underperforming team. What did you do and what was the outcome?

10. How do you coach and hold team members accountable without hurting morale?

GUEST EXPERIENCE & PROBLEM SOLVING:

11. What systems or routines do you use to ensure service and cleanliness standards are met consistently?

12. Describe a time when you had to weigh the needs of the guest against the needs of your team. How did you decide what to do?

13. Tell me about a recurring issue in your store that you identified and fixed for the long term.

14. Describe a time when you faced a major operational challenge (e.g., equipment failure, staffing shortage, etc.) during a peak shift. What was the issue, and how did you solve it?

OPERATIONS & FISCAL MANAGEMENT:

15. Walk me through how you manage your store's labor and food costs. How do you respond when you're over target?

16. What strategies have you used to improve a store's profitability?

17. How do you ensure health, safety, and food handling standards are met daily, especially when you're not on shift?

18. Have you ever led a store through an audit or inspection? What type of audit was it? How did you prepare?

CLOSING THE INTERVIEW:

19. Do you have any questions for me about this position or the company?

20. Is there anything else you'd like to share that we haven't covered?

INTERVIEW SCORECARD

(Restaurant General Manager)

HOW TO USE THE INTERVIEW SCORECARD: This Interview Scorecard is designed to help managers evaluate and rate the responses provided during a candidate's interview. Referencing your interview notes, use the scale below to score the candidate's responses under each category/competency area:

5 – EXCELLENT:	Strong, clear examples that align with job expectations and company values.
4 – GOOD:	Meets expectations with a few positive examples.
3 – ACCEPTABLE:	Shows basic understanding but lacks strong examples, even after prompting.
2 – BELOW TARGET:	Limited experience or misaligned with company values.
1 – POOR:	Does not meet expectations or raises legitimate concerns.
COMPETENCY AREA: RATING (1-5):	
Experience & Cultural Alignment:	
Positive Energy:	
Accountability:	
Recognition:	
Servant Leadership:	
Leadership & Coaching:	
Guest Experience & Problem Solving:	
Operations & Fiscal Management:	
OVERALL RATING:	

GUIDANCE FOR RATING-BASED HIRING DECISIONS

HIRING DECISION:	OVERALL RATING GUIDANCE:
Recommended to Hire:	Overall score of 32+ and no competency areas rated below 3.
Potential Hire but Needs Development:	Overall score of 22–27 with no more than two competency areas rated below a 3.
Do Not Move Forward:	Overall score below 22 or more than one area rated a 1 or 2.