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Stuff that matters to Wayne

Top Ten Ways to Get Rid of Customers at Closing Time

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Everyone who has worked in a cafe for the closing shift knows about one thing all too well - the customers who just don't seem to understand that you don't want to stand there and watch them chat after closing. They are usually very well-meaning people but they just don't 'get it'. Maybe they haven't worked in a food and beverage business before? Who knows. All we know is that at closing time we want to, as politely as possible, encourage them to go outside and enjoy the weather so we can go home while trying to avoid losing them as a future customer. I therefore present to you, the Top Ten Ways to Get Rid of Customers at Closing Time List This list in most polite to most severe order. We all hope we never get to number one, but keep all the tools in your toolbox. This list should be modified to meet your unique environment. 10. Walk around to all the customers and collect any washable items while politely saying: "I'm going to run the last dishwasher load now so may I take these dishes?" - make sure you do it to everyone so they know you are kicking everyone out equally. If some people don't have dishes, make sure they can hear your voice as you speak to others. 9. Start wrapping up food items and other such things in front of the existing customers. 8. Make (or fake) a very 'obvious' phone call with a dialogue that sounds something like this while making sure all the customers hear you as you walk around:

"Hi Honey! I'm almost closed. I'll be home as fast as possible after closing. I'm sure I'll be out of here in just a few more minutes. We have just a few customers finishing up right now. I can't wait to see the kids!"

7. Turn off the air conditioner in the summer. Turn off the heat in the winter. This will send 85% of people running within 10 minutes. 6. Start giving very loud and obvious warnings to new customers something like the following, while making sure the camping customers hear you loud and clear:

"I just wanted you to be crystal clear that we are closing in ___ minutes and I need to leave right at close tonight so you may want to reconsider ordering."

5. Shut off the music - Completely. The silence will create an immediate awkward and eery feeling that is certain to get 80% of people to pack up and move on. 4. Mop as close as possible to the customers while making sure mop water has a double dosage of bleach to get all of their senses in tune with the fact that they will be leaving with you shortly. If possible, you could add a vacuum into this step if you have one. 3. Make excessive noise while moving large items like patio tables, metal signs, chairs, etc, from the outside patio in. This combined with the eery silence created by Step #5 will leave only the most oblivious and/or selfish customers 2. Shut off the lights. All of them. Start with one set and gradually move the darkness towards them until it's just you and them in pitch darkness. Offer them your cell phone as a flashlight to help them see each other. 1. Say to the customer with a huge customer service friendly smile:

"Hi there! I'm so happy you have been enjoying our establishment but, as you can see from the darkness that has enveloped us, we are closed now [laugh a little here]. Would it be alright if I lock

the door and go home now? "

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