



ASSOCIATION FOR
HEALTHCARE
FOODSERVICE



2023 CONFERENCE SESSION TAKEAWAYS

Use these high-level take-away notes from each of our 2023 Annual Conference sessions to share your experience with your leadership and your team. We hope this will help you remember all you learned and bring it back to your operation.

Deep Dive Workshop - Exclusive Insights from the C-Suite

Top Takeaways:

- Don't create work for the C-Suite.
- Match how you communicate up to how your executive likes to receive information.
- Pitch to the C-Suite on one page.

The State of Healthcare Foodservice Distribution: 5 Things to Mitigate Cost & Service Impacts (Sponsored & Presented by DMA)

Top Takeaways:

- Be flexible in a "fragile" foodservice supply chain world and be willing to change up as needed to meet your customer demands.
- Partner with your manufactures and distribution teams for proactively communicate any issues.
- Decrease the number of deliveries a week, increase your inventory/stock, decrease proprietary items requirements, make sure your orders are correct before placing.

FISH Talks & Panel Discussion: How to Navigate Through to Tomorrow: Difficult Conversations & Operational Challenges

Top Takeaways:

- How long we live and our quality of life along the way is very connected to our body's biology.
- Make leading with integrity and ethics a habit.
- Create a list of what not to do. Identify tasks that can either be eliminated or delegated.

Association for Healthcare Foodservice (AHF)

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Hurricane Ian Survival Panel: How Leaders Staff and your Vendors Can Support Each Other During Crisis Management

Top Takeaways:

- Leaders are not used to working in an incident command center. It's often out of their scope of normal duties.
- Put great importance on the need for USEABLE water as a main resource.
- You can never underestimate the importance of establishing strong vendor relationships.

Concurrent Session: Transitioning Senior Living to Self-Op: Acquisition Stage to a Year Later

Top Takeaways:

- Make sure you have records from the contractor, but keep them separate from your own records.
- Try to not drastically change workflows during the first month (due to safety & regulatory concerns)
- Lean on the resources of AHF to help with the transition. Not only will the resources help you with the transition itself but the resources will also help you better understand your new position.

Concurrent Session: What Should a Leader Know about DEI

Top Takeaways:

- When no one gets left behind, everyone moves forward.
- Everyone has some unconscious biases.
- Monitor diversity, equity and inclusion within your department. Does everyone feel they belong?

Concurrent Session: Operating Models: What Are They & How Do They Drive results?

Top Takeaways:

- Operating models are key in managing your operations successes and opportunities.
- Investment in time and team in order to all be moving in the same direction is key.
- It is so important to change your conversations with your team - walk up with the data to share here is where we are, here is what we want to do, and how do you think we can get there.



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Discussion Groups: Stay A Step Ahead: Navigating Department Challenges, C-Suite Changes, and Succession Planning

Top Takeaways:

- Staffing is still a challenge in facilities overall across all positions.
- There's often a career ladder for clinical positions, but not for other positions within foodservice. Creating leadership programs for more positions will likely improve employee satisfaction and retention.
- We need to rethink the term "career ladder" because that assumes the only way to move is up. Instead think of a career roadmap.

Panel Discussion: An Exploration of Succession Planning Needs at Entry, Mid and Senior Level Management

Top Takeaways:

- Succession planning is key to a department's success.
- We have contingency plans for all sorts of emergencies but we don't place as high of an importance on succession planning.
- It's important to cross-train but to also keep in mind the job you might want to have one day.

Sustainability & Electrification of the Non-Commercial Kitchen

Top Takeaways:

- Electric equipment mandates are coming, so start budgeting and planning for electric now.
- When going through kitchen redesigns, utilize all business partners involved and make sure to include the foodservice staff.
- The transition to electric will require training and education of leaders.

Concurrent Session: Leveraging Technology in Your Self-Operation

Top Takeaways:

- To be successful one must be creative when applying the technology and look for additional ways to use it.
- Be resourceful. Leverage the resources the vendors offer as well as other options like your AHF network. Don't be afraid to go visit another operator using this technology.
- Be open. Technology will continue to adapt and evolve and you have to be ready to roll with the changes and be open to new possibilities.

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Concurrent Session: Gen Z: An Insider's Guide to Employing the Next Generation

Top Takeaways:

- Be open. Technology will continue to adapt and evolve and you have to be ready to roll with the changes and be open to new possibilities.
- Utilize the different learning experiences and styles between generations to support on-going training mentorship and feedback with a fact and results-based approach.
- Gen Z holistically is not confident about entering the workforce so the interview, training, and on-boarding experience along with a positive work environment and career growth opportunities are important to help nurture the Gen Z employees.

Concurrent Session: The AHF Think Tank Room - Steal My Idea & Industry Hot Topics

Top Takeaways:

- Talk about ladders of growth when interviewing for new employees. Have 2 department supervisors in the interview in case the candidate is better fit for one position over the other.
- Create a template for communication with the C Suite - more prepared, shorter meetings, direct and to the point so you can get help with what you need.
- Develop a loyalty bonus program to encourage retention.

Bridging the Gap Between Culinary Medicine, Educators, & Food Insecurity

Top Takeaways:

- Expect that a series of grants can fund future operations - they don't need to be capitalized for future performance.
- Think about access to food rather than simply functional foods.
- Get clinicians on the project to “prescribe” food as medicine.

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