

# 5 Things to Consider Before Going for Restaurant Consulting

The restaurant industry is highly competitive. With low initial profit margins and high staff turnover prevalent, about [one in every three](#) restaurants close within a year of opening up. Most restaurant owners are well aware of the odds they have to fight against if they want to make a success out of their business.

In such a cutthroat scenario, opening up a new restaurant or expanding your current concept can seem scary. And while there is a lot to learn and accomplish on your own, this is where hiring restaurant consulting services can provide the much-needed guidance for your business to take off.

## What Is The Role Of A Restaurant Consultant?

Restaurant consultants are professional advisors that help in improving businesses by observing their operations and providing crucial insights. A restaurant consultant may be part of a consulting firm, or they may work independently.

Companies hire these professionals to identify challenges and provide services for the growth of their establishment. The role of a restaurant consultant is to guide your operations, finances, and employees to achieve the overall growth of your business.

Restaurant consulting firms specialize in these areas:

- Designing brands, themes, and concepts
- Providing accounting and financial services
- Reducing food and labor costs
- Filing for licenses and permits
- Selecting property and location for the restaurant
- Recruiting and training staff

## What To Expect From A Restaurant Consultant?

### Research And Audit

Restaurant consultants will usually start their work by conducting research and auditing, both on your restaurant and the market. They will measure the popularity of your concept within the market landscape of your region. They can also do research on your competitors and compare performances.

Restaurant consulting firms will observe your front-end and back-end operations to get a feel of your current establishment. They can also interact with customers, bartenders, and other staff of your restaurant to know more about the details of your business.

## **Business Analysis**

For new restaurants, it is wise to hire consultants as early as possible to benefit from their experience and avoid making costly beginner mistakes. Restaurant consultants will talk to new restaurant owners about their business concept and discuss strategies and plans for implementation.

With the data collected from research and audit, consultants will pinpoint areas in your business that need improvement. After you have opened your establishment, your consultants will constantly check in to ensure smooth functioning.

## **Strategies For Improvement**

Based on their observations, the consultants will offer plans for your business to make the necessary changes. These can range from big shifts, like rebranding, to small tweaks, like retraining of the staff. They will work with you to implement the plan of action and suggest changes in areas like menu, interior design, customer service, branding, and other aspects of your business.

Once you have found the focus areas that need work from your restaurant consulting plan, you can outsource the execution part to specialized agencies and save money. For example, after a consultancy firm has suggested you go for a rebrand, you can hire a PR firm to carry out the necessary changes.

## **How To Know If You Need A Restaurant Consultant?**

Restaurant consulting services can be used by all restaurant owners, whether they are veterans or newbies. Typically, restaurateurs engage with consulting firms once they realize that they need professional help in overcoming certain obstacles or in bringing about some changes.

Restaurant consulting can be helpful in situations such as:

### **Opening A Restaurant**

You can hire industry experts well before the grand opening to maximize your chances of success. Instead of hiring consultants to make changes to an established business, you can seek their expertise right from the outset. If you are nervous about the first-year statistics of restaurants, consultants can help you overcome that fear and pass the first mental hurdle.

### **Expanding Your Restaurant**

If you want to open up your restaurant in new locations, consulting firms can help you decide the exact regions that will work best for your business concept.

Consultants can do market research in the desired location of your choice and inform you about the receptivity of that audience to your business. You can save a lot of money by having this kind of data well before you make your move.

## **Extending Your Brand**

Once you have decided to extend your brand beyond food to other products and services, restaurant consulting firms can help you navigate through unknown waters.

Consultants can do the job of analyzing competition in the new service and exploring the viability of your new product. Whether you want to start offering personal chef services or meal delivery kits, consultants can develop the right strategy for your growth in the new direction.

## **How Much Does A Restaurant Consultant Charge?**

Different restaurant consulting firms work on different fee scales. Depending on your needs and the extent of services, you can choose from the following options:

### **Hourly, Daily, and Monthly Rates**

Usually, the fees of restaurant consulting firms range anywhere between \$250 to \$1000 per day. This translates to hourly rates of \$40 to \$120 per hour. There are other factors like the experience of the firms and the location of your restaurant that can influence consulting fee rates. You can also opt for a monthly retainer fee if you want the services for an extended period.

### **Project-Based Rates**

You also have the option to pay restaurant consultants as per the project or the specific goal that you have in mind. Consulting firms will include the estimated time for the completion of the project in their proposal and charge accordingly.

Of course, if the services continue beyond the estimated time, you can pay them on an hourly or per day basis for the remaining period. Make sure to include other expenses like travel costs and out-of-pocket costs within the overall proposal.

Since you are paying for a limited period of service, you need to be efficient with your time. Remember to give your consultant all the necessary information about your restaurant and its challenges to gain maximum benefits from the consulting time.

## **4 Things To Look For In Your Restaurant Consultant**

There are certain preliminary things that you can do before hiring a restaurant consultant, like clearly defining your goals, conducting preliminary research, looking for referrals from industry experts, doing background checks, and taking interviews.

However, when it comes to the final decision, you need to keep certain qualities in mind while selecting the right restaurant consultant.

## **Experience Of The Firm**

Nothing is more valuable than a first-hand experience of the industry. And when it comes to the restaurant industry, this experience is hard to teach. That is why those consultants who know the ins and outs of running a restaurant are the most qualified for the job.

Make sure that your restaurant consultant has enough experience in operating a successful business in *your* city. These professionals can help you with a better understanding of the laws, demographics, and dining culture of the city. They can also help you with acquiring permits and licenses for your restaurant.

## **Cost Of Services**

Operating a restaurant is already a big-budget enterprise. So, you have to be careful with the money you spend on consulting services. Compare the costs of different consultants before taking the final call.

Find out the exact cost and the range of services the consultant provides, and if possible, ask for a discount. You can find other means of reducing consulting costs like paying in installments or removing certain services from the proposal that you do not want. Let the consultant know about your budget, and they will help you by accommodating services at an agreeable price.

Be pragmatic with your decision. Do not invest in consulting services so much that your business end starts to suffer.

## **Personality Of The Consultant**

Before hiring your restaurant consultant, make sure that you are comfortable with them and can work together for long hours. Once you hire a consultant, they become a representative of your restaurant. Make sure that they have a likable personality and are not afraid to be direct and firm with their opinions.

There are several options for hiring consultants, and you do not have to make your decision based only on reviews and experience. After all, *you* are an equally important part of the partnership. Pick a consultant only if you like their vibe and can communicate effectively with them.

## **Strength Of Their Network**

Building a solid reputation is key in the restaurant business. A strong network of connections in the industry can not only help you become a reputed establishment but also make your daily operations far easier.

An efficient restaurant consultant has connections all over the industry, from lawyers to contractors to accountants. They can utilize their experience in the industry while negotiating prices for different services for your restaurant. They can also speed up your paperwork, like gaining permits from the health department.

Once you hire the right consultant, you have the opportunity to tap into their network and leverage the value of their experience to build your own reputation.

## **Enhance Your Restaurant Consulting Experience With The Right Restaurant Management Software**

Once you have hired the right person for the consulting services, you can add additional support to their work by using the [Posist](#) restaurant management software. Posist's subscription-based software, with its rich integration platform and automation services, can add further speed and efficiency to the work of your consultant and provide better results to the overall consulting process.