Catering BEO & Quote Kit — Free Sample

Free sample — 2 complete items from the full kit. Try it before you buy.

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SOP 01 — Taking a catering enquiry

Purpose: To answer every enquiry quickly, in the same way, so no detail is missed and no good lead is lost because someone forgot to ask about the date, the guest count, or the budget. **Scope:** This covers every first contact with a possible client, by phone, email, website form, or in person, for weddings, corporate lunches, and private parties. It covers Ember & Oak Catering only. **Who does it:** The owner or the bookings lead. If anyone else takes the call, they take the details and pass them to the bookings lead the same day.

Steps

1. Answer within one working day. Thank the person for getting in touch and confirm the event date first, because the date decides everything else.
2. Ask for the client's full name, phone number, and email address, and repeat the email address back to them so it is spelled correctly.
3. Ask what kind of event it is, where it will be held, and what time food should be served. Write down the venue name and address exactly as the client gives it.
4. Ask how many guests they expect, including children, and whether that number is firm or a rough guess. Ask for the lowest and highest number they expect.
5. Ask what style of food they want, such as a sit-down dinner, a buffet, canapés and drinks, or a working lunch, and whether they want drinks, staff, hire items, or just food dropped off.
6. Ask about the budget per person, and about any dietary needs, allergies, or cultural food rules. Note anything that affects the menu.
7. Check the diary while you are still talking to them if you can. Tell them honestly whether the date is free, held for someone else, or already booked.
8. Send a short summary email within 24 hours repeating the date, venue, guest count, and food style, and ask them to reply to confirm or correct it. Save it in the client file.
9. If the date is free, offer a quote or a tasting call, and give a clear date by which the quote will arrive. If the date is not free, say so kindly and offer the nearest free dates.
10. Log the enquiry with the date, client name, event date, guest count, and outcome, even if the client does not go ahead.

Quality check: Before you send the summary, read it back against your notes. The date, venue, guest count, and food style must match. **If it goes wrong:** If you gave the wrong date or price range, call the client straight away, apologise, and send a corrected summary the same day. If two clients want the same date, the first to pay a deposit holds it. **Records:** Keep the enquiry log, the client's contact details, the summary email, and any notes about the venue, budget, or dietary needs in the client file, under the event date.

SOP 03 — Writing a BEO (banquet event order)

Purpose: To turn a confirmed booking into one document that tells the kitchen and floor team exactly what happens and when, so nothing is guessed on the day. **Scope:** This covers every confirmed event once the deposit is paid. The BEO is the only source of truth; if it is not on it, it does not happen. **Who does it:** The bookings lead writes it, the owner checks it, and the event manager runs the event from it. Chef and lead server each get a copy.

Steps

1. Start from the signed quote and final choices. Check date, venue, numbers, timings, menu, and dietary needs.
2. Write event facts first: client, event type, date, venue, guest count, contacts, and day lead.
3. Write the timeline in order, with times for setup, service, speeches, cake, and pack-down.
4. Write the menu in full, with dish numbers and dietary versions. Add drinks and bar times.
5. List staff by role and number, with arrival times, and list equipment and food quantities.
6. Write totals at the bottom: deposit paid, balance due, and extra charges for running over.
7. Send it to the client seven days before the event. Ask for written checks; fix errors and reissue.
8. Print copies for kitchen, floor, and event manager. The manager keeps the master and notes changes.

Worked example — Wedding BEO, Ember & Oak Catering

- **Clients:** Maya and Daniel Thompson, wedding, 12 June 2027, Old Barn at Willow Creek, 80 guests, Maya 555-014-2287.
- **Timings:** 14:00 setup; 15:30 canapés ready; 16:00 ceremony ends; 16:15 canapés; 17:30 seated; 17:45 starter; 18:30 main; 19:15 dessert, speeches; 20:00 cake; 21:30 snack; 23:00 bar closes, pack-down.
- **Menu:** Salmon blinis, mushroom tartlets, tomato skewers. Tomato soup. Herb chicken with roast potatoes, or mushroom wellington (9). Lemon tart. Late snack: sausage rolls, cheese toasties.
- **Dietary:** 9 vegetarian, 4 gluten-free, 2 dairy-free, 1 nut allergy. Allergy dishes plated separately, labelled.
- **Staffing:** 1 event manager, 2 chefs, 1 kitchen assistant, 6 servers, 2 bartenders. All arrive 14:00, bartenders 15:00.

- **Equipment:** 80 place settings, 10 tables, 80 chairs, 2 portable ovens, 3 chafing dishes, 1 mobile bar, 90 wine glasses, 90 water glasses, linen and napkins.
- **Totals:** Canapés $960; dinner $5,440; snack $640; drinks $2,240; cake $160 = $9,440. Staff $1,850; hire $620; delivery $350 = $2,820. Subtotal $12,260; service 10% $1,226; tax 5% $613. Grand total $14,099. Deposit $7,049.50. Balance due 5 June 2027: $7,049.50.

Quality check: Read the BEO as if you have never seen the event. You should be able to run it from the page alone, and it must agree with the quote. **If it goes wrong:** If the client changes the menu or guest count, issue a new version the same day, tell the chef and event manager, and confirm the new total. **Records:** Keep the final BEO, every earlier version, the client's approval, and the marked-up master copy in the client file.