

setting the table by danny meyer

Setting the Table by Danny Meyer: A Masterclass in Hospitality and Leadership

setting the table by danny meyer is more than just a phrase—it's the title of a renowned book that delves deep into the art of hospitality, leadership, and creating memorable experiences. Danny Meyer, a celebrated restaurateur and founder of Union Square Hospitality Group, has transformed the dining industry by emphasizing the importance of hospitality not only in restaurants but in all aspects of business and life. His insights, shared in "Setting the Table," offer invaluable lessons on how attentiveness, empathy, and genuine care can elevate any service-oriented endeavor.

If you've ever wondered how some restaurants consistently deliver exceptional experiences or how leaders can inspire teams to go above and beyond, Danny Meyer's approach holds the answers. This article explores the core principles of setting the table by Danny Meyer, weaving in related concepts such as hospitality leadership, customer service excellence, and building company culture through kindness and respect.

The Philosophy Behind Setting the Table by Danny Meyer

At its heart, setting the table by Danny Meyer is about more than arranging cutlery or decorating a dining space—it's a metaphor for preparing the environment and mindset to welcome guests warmly. Danny Meyer believes that hospitality is a proactive approach, one that anticipates needs and fosters genuine connections.

The Hospitality Equation

One of the most profound ideas Meyer introduces is his famous "Hospitality Index," which breaks down the elements that contribute to an outstanding guest experience:

- **Product:** The quality of the food or service being offered.
- **Setting:** The physical environment where the experience takes place.
- **Staff:** The people who interact with guests and deliver the service.
- **Hospitality:** The emotional connection and warmth that make guests feel valued.

While product, setting, and staff are essential, Meyer argues that hospitality—the genuine care and attentiveness—is what truly differentiates an average experience from an extraordinary one. This philosophy has guided Meyer in building some of New York City's most beloved restaurants, such as Gramercy Tavern and Shake Shack.

“Enlightened Hospitality” as a Leadership Model

Setting the table by Danny Meyer also serves as a blueprint for leadership. Meyer’s concept of “Enlightened Hospitality” extends hospitality beyond guests to employees, vendors, and the broader community. He believes that by taking care of employees first—offering respect, growth opportunities, and a supportive environment—businesses naturally flourish.

This leadership style fosters loyalty, reduces turnover, and creates an atmosphere where team members feel empowered to deliver their best. The ripple effect? Guests enjoy better service and memorable experiences.

Practical Lessons from Setting the Table by Danny Meyer

Danny Meyer’s book is filled with actionable advice that managers, restaurateurs, and anyone in the service industry can apply. Here are some key takeaways that highlight the practical side of setting the table by Danny Meyer.

Creating a Culture of Warmth and Respect

One of the standout lessons is the importance of culture. Meyer stresses that hospitality starts internally. Leaders should cultivate a workplace where kindness, respect, and open communication are prioritized. This culture encourages employees to treat guests with the same warmth they experience themselves.

For those managing teams, this means investing time in training, listening to employee feedback, and recognizing individual contributions. These efforts build trust and make hospitality a shared value rather than a checklist.

Anticipating Guest Needs

Setting the table by Danny Meyer isn’t just about reacting to what guests want but predicting it in advance. This proactive hospitality might look like remembering a returning customer’s dietary preferences or ensuring a room’s ambiance matches the occasion.

Meyer highlights that the smallest details—like a server’s smile or a personalized recommendation—can create lasting impressions. Attention to such nuances requires empowering staff to think creatively and act autonomously.

Balancing Efficiency and Empathy

While efficiency is critical in any business, particularly in high-volume restaurants, Meyer reminds us

that speed should never sacrifice empathy. Quick service is valuable, but genuine human connection is what guests remember.

Managers inspired by setting the table by Danny Meyer find ways to streamline operations without losing the personal touch. This balance can be achieved by thoughtful scheduling, ongoing training, and embracing technology that supports rather than replaces human interaction.

How Setting the Table by Danny Meyer Influences Modern Hospitality

Since its publication, "Setting the Table" has become a touchstone for hospitality professionals around the world. Its influence extends beyond restaurants into hotels, retail, and any customer-facing business.

The Rise of Experience-Driven Service

In today's market, consumers crave experiences over mere transactions. Setting the table by Danny Meyer underscores this shift by showing how emotional engagement and storytelling enhance customer satisfaction.

Businesses that adopt this mindset focus on creating memorable moments that resonate long after the service ends. This might involve personalized greetings, thoughtful gestures, or creating a welcoming atmosphere that invites repeat visits.

Employee-Centered Business Models

Meyer's enlightened hospitality has also inspired companies to reconsider how they treat employees. From offering comprehensive benefits to fostering inclusive environments, many organizations now recognize that empowered and satisfied employees are the backbone of exceptional customer service.

This approach reduces burnout and builds a strong foundation for sustainable growth, proving that hospitality is as much about internal relationships as external ones.

Integrating Setting the Table by Danny Meyer into Your Own Business

Whether you run a small café, a boutique hotel, or a large corporation, the principles of setting the table by Danny Meyer can be adapted to fit your unique context. Here are some ways to start:

1. **Focus on Culture:** Regularly communicate your core values and celebrate behaviors that exemplify hospitality.
2. **Train for Empathy:** Provide your team with tools and scenarios to practice emotional intelligence and active listening.
3. **Empower Employees:** Encourage decision-making at all levels so staff can respond promptly and thoughtfully to customer needs.
4. **Pay Attention to Details:** Small touches—like remembering names or preferences—can turn a good experience into an unforgettable one.
5. **Lead by Example:** Demonstrate the behaviors you want your team to embody, from gratitude to patience.

By embedding these strategies, you not only improve customer satisfaction but also build a resilient and joyful work environment.

Setting the table by Danny Meyer invites us all to reconsider what it means to serve and lead. It reminds us that hospitality is a powerful force that, when practiced sincerely, can transform lives and businesses alike. Whether you're a seasoned restaurateur or someone looking to enhance your leadership skills, Meyer's insights offer timeless wisdom on the profound impact of kindness, attentiveness, and genuine human connection.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Setting the Table' by Danny Meyer?

'Setting the Table' focuses on the principles of hospitality and how creating a culture of genuine care and service can lead to business success.

Who is Danny Meyer, the author of 'Setting the Table'?

Danny Meyer is a renowned restaurateur and CEO of Union Square Hospitality Group, known for founding popular restaurants like Union Square Cafe and Shake Shack.

What is 'Enlightened Hospitality' according to Danny Meyer in 'Setting the Table'?

'Enlightened Hospitality' is Meyer's philosophy that prioritizes the well-being of employees and guests, believing that when employees are cared for, guests receive better service.

How does Danny Meyer suggest building a strong company culture in 'Setting the Table'?

Meyer emphasizes hiring for attitude and values, continuous training, empowering employees, and fostering a sense of community and respect within the workplace.

What role does hospitality play in business success according to 'Setting the Table'?

Hospitality is central to business success as it creates memorable experiences, builds customer loyalty, and differentiates a brand in a competitive market.

Can the principles from 'Setting the Table' be applied outside of the restaurant industry?

Yes, the book's concepts about hospitality, leadership, and culture-building are applicable to any service-oriented business or organization.

What are some key leadership lessons from 'Setting the Table'?

Key lessons include leading with empathy, valuing employee feedback, maintaining humility, and focusing on long-term relationships over short-term gains.

How does Danny Meyer address failure and setbacks in 'Setting the Table'?

Meyer discusses viewing failures as learning opportunities and stresses the importance of resilience and adaptability in leadership.

What impact has 'Setting the Table' had on the hospitality industry?

'Setting the Table' has influenced many hospitality professionals by promoting a people-first approach and redefining standards of service and management.

Does 'Setting the Table' include practical advice for entrepreneurs?

Yes, the book offers actionable strategies for building a successful business, including customer engagement, team management, and creating a unique brand experience.

Additional Resources

Setting the Table by Danny Meyer: A Deep Dive into Hospitality Excellence

setting the table by danny meyer is more than just a phrase; it encapsulates a philosophy that has transformed the restaurant industry. Danny Meyer, a renowned restaurateur and CEO of Union Square Hospitality Group, articulates in his book "Setting the Table" the principles that have driven his success and reshaped how hospitality is perceived in modern dining. This investigative review explores the core themes, business strategies, and cultural impacts embedded in Meyer's approach, while examining how "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" remains a seminal work for both hospitality professionals and enthusiasts seeking to understand service excellence.

Understanding the Philosophy Behind Setting the Table

At its heart, "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" delves into the concept of enlightened hospitality—a term Meyer uses to describe the balance between prioritizing customer experience, employee satisfaction, and community engagement. Unlike traditional business models that focus predominantly on profits or efficiency, Meyer advocates for a service-oriented mindset where genuine care and attention to detail create lasting value.

This philosophy is not merely theoretical; it is reflected in the operational strategies applied across Meyer's diverse portfolio, which includes iconic establishments such as Gramercy Tavern, Shake Shack, and Union Square Cafe. His insistence on hospitality as an emotional connection rather than a transactional interaction sets this work apart from other industry manuals.

The Core Principles of Meyer's Hospitality Approach

"Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" outlines several key principles that define his approach:

- **Hospitality Comes First:** Prioritizing the guest's experience above all else.
- **Employees as Ambassadors:** Investing in staff training and well-being to foster a positive work environment.
- **Community Engagement:** Building meaningful relationships with suppliers, partners, and local communities.
- **Constant Innovation:** Embracing change while maintaining core values.
- **Authenticity:** Providing sincere, personalized service rather than scripted interactions.

These principles contribute to sustainable business growth by cultivating loyalty and positive word-of-mouth, which Meyer argues are more valuable than short-term financial gains.

Business Strategies and Operational Insights

One of the strengths of "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" lies in its practical insights into business management within the hospitality sector. Meyer's transparent sharing of challenges, failures, and successes offers a realistic blueprint for aspiring restaurateurs.

Employee-Centric Culture and Its Impact

Meyer's emphasis on employee satisfaction is a standout feature. In an industry notorious for high turnover and burnout, his approach demonstrates how investing in staff can lead to superior customer service and business resilience. For instance, Meyer implemented comprehensive training programs and created an environment where employees feel valued and empowered.

Data from Union Square Hospitality Group indicates that establishments with higher employee retention rates consistently receive better customer reviews and see increased profitability. This contrasts with industry averages where turnover can exceed 70% annually, often disrupting service quality.

Customer Experience as a Competitive Advantage

"Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" explores how exceptional service differentiates a restaurant in a crowded market. Meyer believes that every touchpoint—from greeting guests to the ambiance—should contribute to an unforgettable dining experience.

This customer-first strategy aligns with modern consumer expectations, where personalized service and emotional connections often outweigh menu offerings alone. Industry comparisons suggest that restaurants emphasizing hospitality outperform competitors by generating repeat business and cultivating brand ambassadors.

Comparative Analysis: Setting the Table and Other Hospitality Literature

When positioned alongside other hospitality and business books, "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" distinguishes itself through its narrative style and actionable content. Unlike technical manuals focused solely on operational efficiency, Meyer's work combines storytelling with strategic insights.

Books such as "The New Gold Standard" by Joseph Michelli and "Be Our Guest" by the Disney Institute also emphasize customer service, but Meyer's unique contribution is his focus on the emotional intelligence and authenticity behind hospitality. His candid discussion of failures, including the closure of his Michelin-starred restaurant Tabla, adds a layer of credibility and relatability often missing from more polished texts.

Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths:**

- Clear articulation of hospitality principles.
- Balance of personal anecdotes and business lessons.
- Applicable to diverse hospitality contexts beyond fine dining.

- **Limitations:**

- Less emphasis on quantitative financial analysis.
- Some strategies may require significant resources, limiting scalability for smaller operators.
- Focused primarily on the American market, which may affect global applicability.

Despite these limitations, "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" remains a vital resource for understanding how hospitality can be leveraged as a strategic asset.

Impact on the Restaurant Industry and Broader Business Practices

Danny Meyer's influence extends beyond his own restaurants. The principles articulated in "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" have inspired a shift in how service industries approach customer relations. Many restaurateurs and service providers have adopted his enlightened hospitality model, recognizing that employee happiness and authentic guest interactions foster sustainable success.

Furthermore, Meyer's emphasis on transparency and vulnerability in leadership challenges traditional corporate hierarchies, promoting a culture of openness and continuous learning. This has implications not only in hospitality but also in retail, healthcare, and other sectors reliant on customer experience.

The Role of Technology and Innovation

While "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" primarily focuses on human elements, Meyer acknowledges the role of technology in enhancing hospitality. From reservation systems to customer feedback platforms, technological tools can support the delivery of personalized service if integrated

thoughtfully.

However, Meyer cautions against over-reliance on automation, emphasizing that genuine human interaction remains irreplaceable in creating memorable experiences. This nuanced stance is increasingly relevant as the industry grapples with digital transformation.

Final Reflections on Setting the Table by Danny Meyer

"Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" offers a comprehensive exploration of hospitality as both an art and a business strategy. Its enduring relevance stems from its ability to blend heartfelt philosophy with practical application, providing valuable lessons for anyone involved in service industries.

Whether for restaurateurs seeking operational guidance or business leaders aiming to foster customer loyalty, Meyer's insights serve as a foundational text. As the hospitality landscape evolves, the principles embedded in "Setting the Table by Danny Meyer" continue to inspire a more empathetic, human-centered approach to business.

Setting The Table By Danny Meyer

setting the table by danny meyer: Setting the Table Danny Meyer, 2009-10-13 The bestselling business book from award-winning restaurateur Danny Meyer, of Union Square Cafe, Gramercy Tavern, and Shake Shack Seventy-five percent of all new restaurant ventures fail, and of those that do stick around, only a few become icons. Danny Meyer started Union Square Cafe when he was 27, with a good idea and hopeful investors. He is now the co-owner of a restaurant empire. How did he do it? How did he beat the odds in one of the toughest trades around? In this landmark book, Danny shares the lessons he learned developing the dynamic philosophy he calls Enlightened Hospitality. The tenets of that philosophy, which emphasize strong in-house relationships as well as customer satisfaction, are applicable to anyone who works in any business. Whether you are a manager, an executive, or a waiter, Danny's story and philosophy will help you become more effective and productive, while deepening your understanding and appreciation of a job well done. Setting the Table is landmark a motivational work from one of our era's most gifted and insightful business leaders.

setting the table by danny meyer: *Summary of Setting the Table by Danny Meyer* QuickRead, Lea Schullery, The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business. Those with a passion for food and hospitality often dream of opening up their own restaurant or becoming the next celebrity chef. And why not? After all, it seems as if restaurateurs and celebrity chefs live a life surrounded by good food, great drinks, and even better people. People pursue this passion because they believe that their love of food is enough, but these people also struggle, and more often than not, they fail. Opening a restaurant is more than just having a passion for food, it's also about learning the business of an increasingly competitive industry. Author Danny Meyer is one of the most successful restaurateurs in the United States because of his passion for hospitality and his knowledge of the business. So if you want to learn how to build a restaurant empire like Danny Meyer, then keep on reading! As you read, you'll learn how to adopt a successful business model, why it's important to give to the community, and how you can go the extra mile in treating your guests. Do you want more free book summaries like this? Download our app for free at <https://www.QuickRead.com/App> and get access to hundreds of free book and audiobook summaries. **DISCLAIMER:** This book summary is

meant as a preview and not a replacement for the original work. If you like this summary please consider purchasing the original book to get the full experience as the original author intended it to be. If you are the original author of any book on QuickRead and want us to remove it, please contact us at hello@quickread.com.

setting the table by danny meyer: Summary of Setting the Table: the Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business by Danny Meyer BestPrint, 2021-12-07 In *Setting the Table*, famous restaurateur Danny Meyer explains how to develop a great restaurant. Drawing on his own experiences of working his way to the top of the industry, he outlines the sheer power of great hospitality and the wondrous success it can bring.

setting the table by danny meyer: Summary, Analysis, and Review of Danny Meyer's Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business Start Publishing Notes, 2017-08-15 PLEASE NOTE: This is a key takeaways and analysis of the book and NOT the original book. Start Publishing Notes' Summary, Analysis, and Review of Danny Meyer's *Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business* includes a summary of the book, a review, analysis & key takeaways, and a detailed About the Author section. PREVIEW: *Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business* is the autobiographical account of Danny Meyer, a world-famous restaurateur. The owner of an eclectic group of eateries including Gramercy Tavern and Shake Shack, Meyer draws on his twenty-one years of experience in the industry to describe the unusual business values that underpin his wild success. Hospitality stems from the basic human need for food and family, all of which were important to Meyer from an early age. He grew up in St. Louis, packing on pounds as an adolescent who gorged on Chicago-style hotdogs. As a child, he spent a lot of time abroad and he was heavily influenced by these opportunities to soak up cultural experiences. His parents had a special fondness for France that shaped his aesthetic and gastronomical tastes. Italy was another favorite.

setting the table by danny meyer: Summary of Danny Meyer's Setting the Table Everest Media,, 2022-05-21T22:59:00Z Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample Book Insights: #1 I've learned more about life from people than from books. I'm on the road a lot, and when I travel, I visit food markets, pastry shops, butchers, and grocery stores. I read menus posted outside restaurants. I watch the residents argue back and forth with the merchants over the virtues of their wares. #2 I have always been curious about what people eat, and as I grew up, I developed a fascination with food. I would swap and share sandwiches with other kids at school, not because the other kids' lunches were better, but because this was the best way to learn about another family. #3 I have a passion for discovering the best food and restaurants, and I have applied this passion to the restaurant business. I have a list of ten things that can be expected from an Indian restaurant in New York, and then I ask myself what Tabla might add to these expectations. #4 My parents, Roxanne and Morton Louis Meyer, had spent the first two years of their marriage in the early 1950s living in the city of Nancy, capital of the French province of Lorraine, where my dad was posted as an army intelligence officer.

setting the table by danny meyer: The Mission Always Wins Tod Bolsinger, 2024-08-13 Change requires tough decisions. But when the focus is blurred, how can we stay on track? It's time to further the mission—not the boss, not the team, not the stakeholders. In this volume in the *Practicing Change Series*, Tod Bolsinger guides us through naming competing values and realigning the driving purpose with missional clarity.

setting the table by danny meyer: The Storyteller's Secret Carmine Gallo, 2016 How did an American immigrant without a college education go from Venice Beach T-Shirt vendor to television's most successful producer? How did a timid pastor's son surmount a paralyzing fear of public speaking to sell out Yankee stadium, twice? How did the city of Tokyo create a PowerPoint stunning enough to win them the chance to host the Olympics? They told brilliant stories. Whether your goal is to sell, educate, fundraise, or entertain, your story is your most valuable asset: a strategic tool with irresistible power, according to the NYT. Stories inspire; they persuade; they galvanize movements and actuate global change. A well-told story hits you like a punch to the gut; it triggers

the light bulb moment, the 'aha' that illuminates the path to innovation. Radical transformation can occur in an instant, with a single sentence; THE STORYTELLERS teaches you how to craft your most powerful delivery ever. In his hugely attended Talk Like TED events, bestselling author and communications guru Carmine Gallo found, again and again, that audiences wanted to discover the keys to telling a powerful story. THE STORYTELLERS offers the answer, in 50 lessons from visionary leaders - each of whom cites storytelling as a crucial ingredient in success. A good story can spark action and passion; it can revolutionize the way people think and spur them to chase their dreams.

setting the table by danny meyer: The End of Work John Tamny, 2018-05-07 From the author of Popular Economics comes a surprisingly sunny projection of America's future job market. Forget the doomsday predictions of sour-faced nostalgists who say automization and globalization will take away your dream job. The job market is only going to get better and better, according to economist John Tamny, who argues in The End of Work that the greatest gift of prosperity, beyond freedom from painful want, is the existence of work that is interesting.

setting the table by danny meyer: The Hottest Seat on Campus Angel B. Pérez, 2025-09-02 An essential aid for training sitting and aspiring admissions officers in the skills required to succeed in higher education today The college admission deanship—often called “the hottest seat on campus”—requires navigating institutional politics, legal hurdles, revenue allocation, and more, all while overseeing enrollment that meets demographic and financial objectives. A seat with high turnover, its opportunities for professional growth, in terms of extending networks, burnishing leadership credentials, and gaining invaluable institutional insight, are nevertheless unmatched. In The Hottest Seat on Campus, veteran counselor Angel B. Pérez helps newly appointed and rising admission deans get a handle on the role's core expectations and nuances for success. As CEO of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Pérez knows firsthand how underprepared deans can be for the “business” side of their job. Drawing on his own experience, as well as from interviews with current and former admissions leaders who represent a range of perspectives and institutions, Pérez demystifies the deanship and shares strategies for building teams, leading through crisis, navigating shared governance, leveraging the power of storytelling, and self-management. Pérez points to the deeper characteristics and qualities that make for enduring success as a chief enrollment officer and admissions counselor, such as self-awareness, reflection, and the ability to ask the right questions before offering solutions. Grounded in Pérez's clear sense of the diverse skills practitioners need, the book offers an action plan professionals can quickly adapt to their own contexts.

setting the table by danny meyer: Know What Matters Ron Shaich, 2023-10-24 A Wall Street Journal and USA Today bestseller Ron Shaich, founder and former CEO of Panera Bread, shares the lessons he learned from a lifetime of asking what really matters and then making the transformations necessary to bring what really matters to life. Shaich is a business visionary who has been part of building three iconic restaurant brands: Au Bon Pain, Panera Bread, and now Cava. Along the way, he developed fast casual, a \$100 billion-plus segment of the industry. Now he reveals what he learned about entrepreneurship, running large enterprises, business transformation, and life itself. He illustrates these lessons with his experiences turning a 400-square-foot cookie store into 2,400 restaurants with \$5 billion in revenue, delivering annual investor returns of 25 percent over two decades, and outperforming both Starbucks and Chipotle. How did Shaich succeed repeatedly in such a notoriously tough industry? By discovering today what will matter tomorrow and never hesitating to undertake sweeping transformations in order to get the job done. Shaich offers clear-headed lessons for the entire life cycle of an enterprise, from bootstrapping a startup to going public to managing large companies to selling a business. And the relevance of his message doesn't end in the boardroom. He challenges readers to grapple with how the business impacts life, sharing his own struggles and setbacks with as much candor as he describes his successes. Telling yourself the truth, knowing what really matters, and getting it done is the path to creating and sustaining a meaningful life, a market-leading business, and even a healthier society. Shaich's reflections are sometimes practical (Make smart bets), sometimes philosophical (Conduct an annual

pre-mortem), often challenging (You don't own the business, the business owns you), and always incisive (You take the money, I'll take control.). *Know What Matters* is a powerful guide to building transformative businesses while leading a life you respect and leaving a positive impact on the world.

setting the table by danny meyer: The Executive and the Elephant Richard L. Daft, 2010-08-02 Lessons for leaders on resolving the ongoing struggle between instinct and the creative mind Kings, heads of government, and corporate executives lead thousands of people and manage endless resources, but may not have mastery over themselves. Often leaders know that right action is important, but have little (if any) understanding of what prevents them from acting in accordance with their intentions. In this important book, leadership expert Richard Daft portrays this dilemma as a struggle between instinct (elephant) and intention (the executive) using the most current research on the intentional vs. the habitual mind to explain how this phenomenon occurs. Based on current research and real-life examples Offers leaders a method for directing themselves more productively Written by an expert in leadership, organizational performance, and change management Through real-life examples and recent studies in psychology, management and Eastern spirituality Daft provides guidance to all of us who struggle finding our own balance and cultivating the behavior of others.

setting the table by danny meyer: The Ultimate Guide to the Top 100 Cooking & Food Books Navneet Singh, Introduction Cooking is both an art and a science, combining creativity, tradition, and technique. The best food books teach us not only how to cook but also the history, culture, and science behind food. This book highlights 100 must-read cooking & food books, offering summaries, author insights, and why each book is influential. Whether you're a home cook, professional chef, or food enthusiast, this guide will help you explore the most essential reads in the culinary world.

setting the table by danny meyer: Organizational Storytelling for Librarians Kate Marek, 2011 A primer on how to develop storytelling skills --

setting the table by danny meyer: Smart Casual Alison Pearlman, 2013-04-15 "A delicious romp through America's rapidly changing and diverging restaurant scene . . . an informative, witty, and delightful book." —Andrew F. Smith, editor of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America* Haute has blurred with homey cuisine in the last few decades, but how did this radical change happen, and what does it say about current attitudes toward taste? Here with the answers is food writer Alison Pearlman. In *Smart Casual: The Transformation of Gourmet Restaurant Style in America*, Pearlman investigates what she identifies as the increasing informality in the design of contemporary American restaurants. By design, Pearlman does not just mean architecture. Her argument is more expansive—she is as interested in the style and presentation of food, the business plan, and the marketing of chefs as she is in the restaurant's floor plan or menu design. Pearlman takes us hungrily inside the kitchens and dining rooms of restaurants coast to coast—from David Chang's Momofuku noodle bar in New York to the seasonal, French-inspired cuisine of Alice Waters and Thomas Keller in California to the deconstructed comfort food of Homaro Cantu's Moto in Chicago—to explore the different forms and flavors this casualization is taking. Through lively on-the-scene observation and interviews with major players and chefs, *Smart Casual* will transport readers to restaurants around the country to learn the secrets to their success and popularity. It is certain to give foodies and restaurant-goers something delectable to chew on. "This study is erudite and hip, written with both verve and a keen analytical eye." —Ken Albala, author of *Beans: A History*

setting the table by danny meyer: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to The Power of Beliefs in Business Ari Weinzwieg, 2016-07-14 Ari's new book is the culmination of a lifetime of learning and thirty four years in business, the last three of which have been spent intensively studying, reflecting on, and writing about the critical role of beliefs in the businesses and organizations of which we're a part. The fruits of that labor are now available in this new 600-page book. We could tell you more about what's in the book but we think John U. Bacon, author of the New York Times' bestseller, *Endzone: The Rise, Fall and Return of Michigan Football*, said it better than we ever could! "Some business leaders know practice. Some know theory. Ari Weinzwieg is one

of the few who knows both. He has built a famously successful organization, while giving it more thought than do the business gurus who merely philosophize about such things. The insights Ari shares here are both deeply perceptive and highly practical, from the ideas of Howard Zinn, Viktor Frankl and Anais Nin on one page, to the importance of learning your employees' names on the next. Like its author, this book is uncommonly smart, helpful, and just plain fun."

setting the table by danny meyer: *Take Back the Tray* Joshna Maharaj, 2020-05-05 A beloved chef takes on institutional food and sparks a revolution Good food generally doesn't arrive on a tray: hospital food is famously ridiculed, chronic student hunger is deemed a rite of passage, and prison meals are considered part of the punishment. But Chef Joshna Maharaj knows that institutional kitchens have the ability to produce good, nourishing food, because she's been making it happen over the past 14 years. She's served meals to people who'd otherwise go hungry, baked fresh scones for maternity ward mothers, and dished out wholesome, scratch-made soups to stressed-out undergrads. She's determined to bring health, humanity, and hospitality back to institutional food while also building sustainability, supporting the local economy, and reinvigorating the work of frontline staff. *Take Back the Tray* is part manifesto, part memoir from the trenches, and a blueprint for reclaiming control from corporations and brutal bottom lines. Maharaj reconnects food with health, wellness, education, and rehabilitation in a way that serves people, not just budgets, and proves change is possible with honest, sustained commitment on all levels, from government right down to the person sorting the trash. The need is clear, the time is now, and this revolution is delicious.

setting the table by danny meyer: *Indulge Your Senses* Michael Dorf, Paul Keegan, 2019-10-08 "Simply put, Michael Dorf is a true hustler. When the internet upended the music business, he wasn't romantic to the way things were done and like any great entrepreneur, focused on what's happening today. It has been fun for me to watch Michael operate in this ever-changing world. There is a lot that can be learned from this man."—Gary Vaynerchuk, Founder and CEO, VaynerMedia; and author, *Crushing It* As founder of the iconic Knitting Factory music venue in New York, Michael Dorf became one of the earliest pioneers of digital music in the 1990s and found himself addicted to the seductive promise of the Internet. But losing everything in the dot-com bust led to a renewed appreciation for the sensory pleasures of life and inspired him to gamble big with his latest crazy idea: Launching a wine-making facility in the middle of Manhattan for patrons who could also have dinner in a cozy three-hundred-seat venue while watching concerts by artists such as Elvis Costello, Steve Earle, Suzanne Vega, and Esperanza Spalding. After surviving another economic cataclysm—the Great Recession of 2008—Dorf found that his City Winery concept worked beautifully and he expanded it into a national network of clubs that continues to grow rapidly. Along the way, he realized why his venues are sold out nearly every night, from Boston to Nashville: Trapped in a digital bubble, increasingly separate from the real world, people are eager for the visceral, sensory experiences he offers. In *Indulge Your Senses: Scaling Intimacy in a Digital World*, Dorf tells riveting tales from his wild ride through three decades of business escapades and dispenses invaluable wisdom for readers—entrepreneurs, executives, students, professionals, lovers of music and wine—who are struggling to balance the virtual and the real in a world awash in technology. "Music, wine, food, and community—not only has Michael Dorf cracked the code on a recipe so many of us crave most in an increasingly disconnected world, he's also managed to grow a brilliantly successful business while listening to his gut and sticking to his values. It's a feat that all entrepreneurs would be wise to study closely." —Danny Meyer, CEO, Union Square Hospitality Group; Founder, Shake Shack; and author, *Setting the Table: The Transforming Power of Hospitality in Business* "The lessons learned in Michael Dorf's fascinating career make this as much a business book about how to thrive by indulging a customer's senses in our digital age as it is a gripping tale from an insider in the New York rock and jazz world during a period of massive technological change."—Steve Case, co-founder of the investment firm Revolution LLC and former CEO of AOL "Sonic Youth, Beck, John Zorn, Cecil Taylor—Michael Dorf showcased them all at his cutting-edge Knitting Factory. Neil Young, Aaron Neville, Macy Gray, Shawn Colvin—those artists and more have

graced his upscale City Winery. It's hard to imagine anyone in New York who has presented more great live music over the past thirty years. This book is the colorful story of how Dorf pulled it off, both before and after the Internet upended the music industry and changed our lives forever. It's inspiring reading for anybody who cares about music, culture, and wine, and explains how to thrive by offering people a live experience they will always remember." —Rita Houston, WFUV Program Director

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