



THE BURNT CHEF
PROJECT

The Perfect Pairing

Research Highlights

Background: The following themes have been identified from research conducted with 750 hospitality professionals in the UK. We will use these themes within a press release as well to support the launch of a social media campaign, competition and the creation and launch of the Perfect Pairing videos.

The extraordinary qualities of the UK hospitality industry foster a unique environment for friendships to thrive. This is a strong, unifying force across the industry that runs throughout team structures and within various venues.

- Three-quarters (76.8%) of UK hospitality workers have a best friend at work
- This trend is almost universal across the industry; from servers (70.9%) to directors (93.3%), from hotels (86%) to cafeterias (92.9%), and from teens (72.2%) to the over 60s (85%)
- 73.9% say it's easier to make friends in the hospitality industry than in other industries, attributing this to:
 - The people-centric (43.9%), fun (55.2%) and creative (30.9%) environment of hospitality
 - As well as some of the more challenging aspects such as bonding over difficult customers (39.4%), long shifts (30.4%) and working in a small space (24.4%)
- Over three-quarters agree that work is the ideal place to meet a new best friend, with over half (57.2%) saying they have more in common with friends made at work
- Nearly half (47.5%) of friends in hospitality have even made a big life change together, such as moving in together, moving jobs together or going on holiday

The friendships that make up the hospitality industry are key to its success. They work to support the health and wellbeing of staff as well as boosting workplace performance.

- Friendships in hospitality support good mental health by:
 - Reducing stress (62.2%)
 - Reducing anxiety (49.7%)
 - Boosting general wellbeing (45.5%)
- Friendships can improve standards of work by facilitating good teamwork (70.5%), efficiency (51%), customer service (45.7%), productivity (51%), and ultimately, guest satisfaction (32%)
- Professionals believe that being with their best friend improves their work as:
 - They are calming in stressful situations (58.4%)
 - They understand how they work best (61.6%)
 - They know their strengths (73.8%) and weaknesses (47.2%)



- Despite the strong positives, businesses need to be conscious of the pressures that friendships can have on employees such as extra pressure not to let their team down (10.4%) and making it harder to take time off (8.6%)

Friendships are so vital to the industry they can affect staff turnover and job satisfaction. Yet despite this, not all hospitality operators run regular social events to support workplace friendships.

- 83.5% feel it's important to forge friendships in the sector
- Without these friendships, hospitality professionals warn that:
 - Their mental health can be affected including feelings of isolation (57.7%), boredom (45.7%), loneliness (49.3%) and stress (42.4%)
 - Businesses may also see reduced performance including staff disengagement (36.5%), limited morale (43.8%), poorer teamwork (51.2%) and even a reduced quality of customer service (22.3%)
- 92.8% of hospitality professionals would stay longer in their role if they had close friendships within their team
- One-third would even be more likely to call in sick if their best friend wasn't at work
- One in five feel more connected and loyal to the company they work for when they are on shift with their best friend
- Friendships also increase job satisfaction (52.2%) and boost morale (45%)
- Despite this, one in six employers don't throw social events for their staff, while the majority (54.4%) of businesses only run socials once a quarter or less.

Friendships aren't the only vital perfect pairing in the industry. Employees say it's also necessary to secure the right external partnerships.

- Professionals say it's vital to secure the perfect equipment (70%), find the ideal suppliers (59.7%), and source the perfect products (49.1%) to run a successful hospitality establishment
- Sustainable business partnerships are also high up the agenda (41.3%)
- One in three even state reliable equipment servicing as a vital consideration

When asked what their best work friends mean to them, UK hospitality workers said:

- "We can solve problems together as two heads are better than one"
- "They are the best teammate ever. It means that us two alone could do what a team of five usually do"
- "My support and my biggest cheerleader"
- "They are the person that I can tell everything to, I can trust and who understands all aspects of my life, personal and work."
- "The reason I work there still"
- "It makes getting up in the morning to go to work feel easier and I look forward to seeing what the day brings"



- “She is honestly like family. She understands me more than most”
- “Someone who just gets it!”
- “A loyal and reliable partner in crime”
- “She is the calm to my crazy. She makes the tough days so much better. I’m extremely grateful”

[ENDS]