

T25 Fraternal Lodge Bartender Interview Guide

1. Why do you want to work as a bartender at our establishment?

Candidate answer:

The unique vibe of the place and the meticulous attention to detail in every cocktail you serve here are what caught my eye.

I'm passionate about creating customized drinks and seasonal cocktails and your establishment is known for that. I believe my creativity and mixology skills align perfectly with your standards; I'd be excited to join a team that cares so much about quality and the customer experience.

Assessing candidates' motivation is just as important as evaluating their skills.

2. How do you feel about seeing the same people and faces working in a private fraternity?

Candidate answer:

I find people interesting anytime and will be able to remember their names, favorite drinks and family names when conversing.

I also follow magazines, television, weblogs and Instagram accounts to stay updated on new trends. I can always cheer people up when their feeling down or celebrate with them when their un the upswing.

3. How would you create a drink based on a customer's vague preferences? Walk us through your process.

Candidate answer:

First, I'd ask a few simple questions to narrow down their taste preferences – sweet or bitter, strong or light, fruity or herbal.

Then, based on their answers, I'd suggest a base spirit and a flavor profile. I'd explain the ingredients I'm considering to see if there's anything they dislike. If I have their green light, I prepare the drink – and make sure it looks beautiful, too.

4. How do you make your cocktails look good?

Candidate answer:

Aesthetics are super important when creating the perfect cocktail.

I love playing with colors, layering, and garnishes to make each drink look nice. Fresh herbs, edible flowers, a piece of fruit, or even smoke can really help with that. I'm also mindful of choosing the right glass and size of the ice cubes to make sure everything looks perfect.

5. Describe your most sophisticated cocktail recipe.

Candidate answer:

One of my signature cocktails is called "Midnight in Paris". It contains gin, lavender-infused honey, fresh lemon juice, and a hint of pear brandy. The drink is then topped with a sprinkle of edible gold dust. It's an elegant cocktail that most customers love.

6. How do you handle criticism from a supervisor?

Candidate answer:

I listen attentively to make sure I understand my supervisor's feedback and expectations. I ask for examples if needed; this helps me understand where they're coming from and what I need to change.

Then, I discuss with them ways to improve and define a plan to address the issue. A follow-up meeting might also be helpful to see if I'm making progress.

7. Your point of sale (POS) system is down. What do you do?

Candidate answer:

First, I check whether a quick reset might solve the issue. If it doesn't, I let my manager and my team know and switch to cash transactions until everything is fixed. I also use a pen and paper to keep track of orders, if needed.

I let customers know about the issue and also point them to the nearest ATM, if needed. I make sure we handle their orders quickly to compensate for the inconvenience.

8. You run out of a popular ingredient. How do you handle this?

Candidate answer:

The first thing I'd do in this situation is to check whether we can get it quickly from a nearby supplier; if yes, I'd simply ask a team member to go and buy some. If that's not possible, I check what substitutes we could use.

If patrons order drinks with this ingredient, I check with them whether they'd like me to use an alternative. If not, I make a personalized recommendation for each person for another cocktail they could try. This helps transform a potentially negative experience into a positive one.

9. Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer. How did you handle the situation?

Candidate answer:

Once, a patron was unhappy with the waiting time during a particularly busy shift. I acknowledged the problem and apologized for the inconvenience – and also offered him a complimentary drink to make up for it. By showing him I cared about his experience, I managed to turn the situation around; he was happy and even left a generous tip at the end.

10. What techniques do you use to remember regular customers and their favorite drinks?

Candidate answer:

At the bar where I was working last year, we had a dozen regulars; it was always a pleasure to serve them.

I always engaged in small talk with them and paid close attention to their preferences. I made a mental note of any particular likes or dislikes and tried to tie it to the topic of the conversation to remember it easily next time. In nine out of ten cases, it worked great.

11. What's your take on the importance of building relationships with customers?

Candidate answer:

People go to bars to connect with others. So, when you know your customers, you can personalize their experience, make recommendations they'll love, and even just ask about their day in a way that makes them feel good. This helps create a feeling of community, which is the main reason why people come back.

12. What do you think makes for an outstanding customer service experience in a bar?

Candidate answer:

Bartending is not just about preparing drinks – it's about providing a great experience, which is dependent on the overall vibe and interactions with the staff. I love adding personal touches to my cocktails or making customized drinks. I also make sure I remember regulars' favorite drinks, which they always appreciate.

13. What do you do if a customer has had too much to drink?

Candidate answer:

Handling such situations is delicate, but it's crucial for the safety of the customer and the atmosphere of the bar. I approach them with empathy, suggesting they try out a non-alcoholic drink or get some water or a snack. If needed, I'll offer to call a cab or a friend. It's all about making sure they feel taken care of, not judged or embarrassed.

14. How would you handle a situation where a customer is unhappy with their drink?

Candidate answer:

If this happens, I see it as an opportunity to show our commitment to customer satisfaction.

I'd apologize and ask for their feedback to understand why they aren't happy with their drink. Understanding what was wrong enables me to address the issue, whether it's remaking the drink to their liking or offering an alternative.

I always make sure the customer leaves happy and satisfied with their experience.

15. How would you handle a conflict between two customers?

Candidate answer:

If I see that two customers are starting to argue or fight, I intervene quickly and calmly. I would aim to de-escalate the tension, perhaps by suggesting a change of seating or offering a round on the house, if appropriate. It's important to resolve these situations discreetly and make sure all other patrons can have a good time.

16. What strategies do you use to keep your bar area neat and tidy?

Candidate answer:

Maintaining a clean and organized bar always leaves a good impression on patrons and other staff members, so I prioritize this even during busy shifts.

For this, I wipe each area clean immediately after use. I also have a structured system for tools and ingredients, so everything has its place, reducing clutter during service hours. At the end of each shift, I wipe everything and make sure everything is sparkling clean. Weekly deep cleaning sessions are also a part of my routine.

17. How do you organize your work during particularly busy shifts?

Candidate answer:

I always prioritize efficiency and clear communication, but that's especially important when we have lots of customers. I focus on one order at a time while mentally queuing the next.

Clear communication with coworkers is also vital and helps ensure everyone is on the same page. I also make sure to stay calm and not get overwhelmed by the rush.

18. What do you do during slower shifts?

Candidate answer:

Slower shifts are an opportunity for me to deep clean the bar, restock supplies, and experiment with new cocktail recipes. It's also a great time to engage more personally with customers, building relationships with regulars and new customers.

19. How do you keep up with multiple drink orders during peak hours?

Candidate answer:

Making sure I don't mess up orders during busy shifts requires focus and a methodical approach. I take orders in batches, grouping similar drinks to speed up the process, and make sure I remember who ordered what. I also communicate clearly with staff and customers to manage expectations on waiting times.

20. Let's try a test pour for a drink.

Have the interviewee make a drink using water in a bottle to test how much they free pour to ensure they don't over pour, and we lose money.

21. How do you deal with coworkers not pulling their weight during a shift?

Candidate answer:

If a coworker seems disengaged and isn't doing what's needed during a shift, I first check in with them and see if there's a reason for it. For example, if they're dealing with a personal issue, I offer my support; often, a conversation is all that's needed.

If I notice that this happens often, I'd talk to them again and focus on how their behavior is affecting the entire team. I might involve a supervisor, but only after having tried to address the issue directly through honest conversations.

22. What's your experience with inventory management and ordering supplies?

Candidate answer:

I have extensive experience with inventory management, ensuring optimal stock levels. I meticulously track our inventory and plan for trends and upcoming events. I also know how to negotiate prices and delivery times with suppliers to make sure we have everything that's needed for the bar's operation.

23. How do you make an:

Old fashion?

Pass ☐ Fail ☐

Candidate answer:

- 1 sugar cube, or 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 3 dashes bitters
- 2 ounces bourbon or rye whiskey
- Orange peel, for garnish
- Maraschino cherry, for garnish

Place a sugar cube or sugar in an old-fashioned glass and saturate it with bitters. Muddle or stir to mix.

Add the whiskey, fill the glass with ice, and stir well.

Express the orange peel over the drink before dropping it into the glass: Twist up the peel and give it a good squeeze (directed toward the glass, not your eyes) and bits of citrus oil will spray into the drink. Add a cherry if you like.

Sea Breeze?

Pass ☐ Fail ☐

Candidate answer:

- 1 1/2 ounces vodka
- 3 ounces cranberry juice
- 1 1/2 ounces grapefruit juice, freshly squeezed
- Garnish: lime wheel

Add the vodka, cranberry juice and grapefruit juice into a highball glass with ice and stir.

Garnish with a lime wheel.

Cosmopolitan?

Pass ☐ Fail ☐

Candidate answer:

- 1 1/2 ounces citron vodka
- 3/4 ounce Cointreau
- 3/4 ounce lime juice, freshly squeezed
- 1/2 ounce cranberry juice cocktail
- Garnish: lime wedge

Add the vodka, Cointreau, lime juice, and cranberry juice cocktail into a shaker with ice and shake until well-chilled.

Strain into a chilled cocktail glass.

Garnish with a lime wedge.