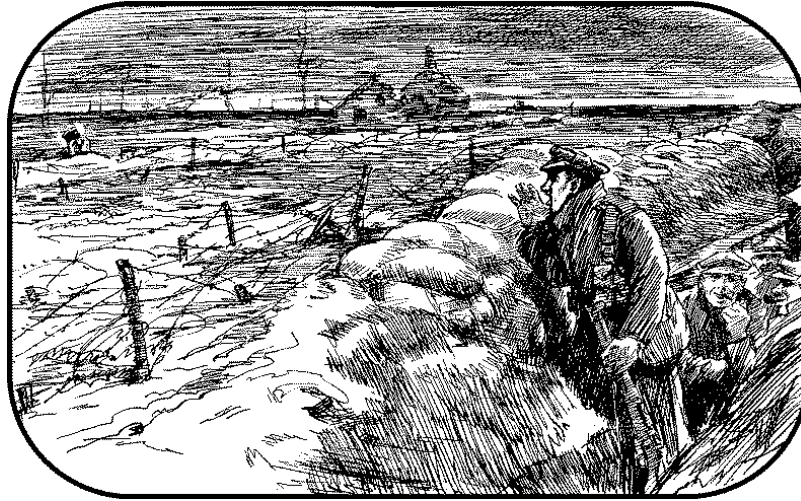


TOP 10 VIEWS FROM THE TRENCHES



As the adage goes, “when a man with money meets a man with experience, the man with experience ends up with the money and the man with the money ends up with the experience.”

Working behind a bar is a great way to gain insight into the food and beverage experience. Life in the trenches comes with a fabulous view. You see and hear just about everything that can be seen or heard. We’ve polled our experts and come up with a list of the most important things for bartenders to heed when slugging it out in the trenches.

- **DON’T TRANSFER STRESS** — Sure it’s busy and you’re absolutely swamped, but don’t vent that built-up stress on your clientele or co-workers. It’s not their job to keep track of what you’re doing. The crunch will pass. So chant, don’t vent.

- **ECONOMIC POWER OF FUN** — A bartender can positively impact how much people enjoy themselves, even if they’re standing six feet from the bar. So kick it out, have fun. Be entertaining. Make people smile. It’s the best gift you can give.

- **PUT THE HOUSE FIRST** — Don’t lose sight of who you’re working for. You owe the house your loyalty. Life gets too complicated when you operate in someone else’s business with a hidden agenda. Keep it simple, look out for the house.

- **ERGONOMICS** — Learn to work smarter, not harder. Do things in the fewest number of steps, in the least amount of motions. It’ll save you time and energy, which in turn, will allow you to be more productive and earn more money.

- **GO HOME OCCASIONALLY** — Every night doesn’t have to be a party. Learn to pace yourself. Go home, save your money, preserve brain cells, and enjoy some peace and quiet occasionally. You’ll last a lot longer if you do.

- **DRINK MAKING IS AN ART** — Appreciate that not everyone can do what you do. Being a skilled mixologist is something to take pride in. Every drink should reflect that and be the best drink you can make.

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- **TREAT EVERYONE LIKE A GUEST** — Hardware stores have customers, bars and restaurants serve guests. It's an important distinction. When you view your clientele as guests, your attitude will naturally become more gracious and accommodating.
- **KEEP YOUR BAR CLEAN** — Keeping a bar clean can be a challenge, but the alternative is unacceptable. A dirty bar reflects horribly on the cleanliness of the rest of the house and your degree of professionalism.
- **DON'T FRET ABOUT TIPS** — A sure fire way to step on your tips is to worry about them while you're working. Make good drinks, give great service, and your tips will take care of themselves.
- **WHEN IN DOUBT, SMILE** — Under nearly any circumstance that you find yourself in behind the bar, the best course of action is to keep on smiling. Rarely is a smile inappropriate, while a frown or deadpan expression is always out of place.

Robert Plotkin is a judge at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition and the author of numerous books including the 5th edition of *The Bartender's Companion: The Original Guide to American Cocktails and Drinks*. To read more from Robert (and other members of BarMedia) visit his blog, barmedia.com/blog. You can reach him at BarMedia— 1-800-421-7179 or robert@barmedia.com.

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