

In order to become a crew member at Cold Stone Creamery, you have to go through 3 days of online training videos, as well as a week of hands-on training before you can work without a manager's assistance. There is a lot of memorization involved, as well as learning many techniques for mixing ice cream, preparing mix-ins, prepping cakes and decorating cakes, as well as cleaning up the store.

On your first day of training through videos, you learn mainly about sanitation. One of the most important things they teach you is how and when to wash your hands. You are taught to wash your hands as soon as your shift begins, anytime you touch your face or hair, after using the restroom, after taking out the trash or using any cleaning products and right before you help customers. We use a 3-compartment sink, which needs to be tested every shift to make sure that the sanitize water is at the proper PPM (parts per milliliter). We also use sanitize buckets throughout the store and those need to be replaced every shift as well. The videos also emphasize the importance of being "Q'd". Once a quarter, a member from Corporate visits every store in the country to make sure that all procedures are being done correctly, also to check the cleanliness of the store, as well as the customer service of the members. In order to receive a perfect score, you have to master customer service, as well as having everything clean and sanitary. It is a requirement to put a date on every single product that enters the store. Whether it is an expiration date or the date it was received, it must have a date. Also, food has to be stored at least 6 inches off the ground in order to meet the health inspector's requirements. When they are checking the customer service of the group, they are looking to make sure that the employee is properly dressed in their Cold Stone uniform (Cold Stone shirt/polo, visor, black or khaki pants/shorts, a clean apron and a nametag), that their hair is properly groomed and tamed, and that they have a smile on their face. The corporate member is looking to see if the crew member mentions a new promotion that is currently going on, asking the customers if they would like to try any samples, mentioning any new products, and fulfilling the customer's needs. It is also a requirement to repeat the customer's order to assure that you are making the customer exactly what they want. You have to mix the ice cream in a short time (5-10 seconds). Also, it is important to upsell, whether it is asking the customer if

they would like to add an additional mix-in or asking if they would like a waffle bowl with their ice cream.

On the second day of video training, you learn more about the actual ice cream process. You learn about the 4 sizes, as well as the 3 take home sizes, their ounces, how many mix-ins are included with each take home size, and you learn portioning for everything. There are different portions for each size. For the kids size and the like it size, you get the same portion, which is a level scoop, 1 candy bar, or one figure 8 of sauce. For the love it size and the gotta have it size, you get a rounded scoop, 2 candy bars and two figure 8s of sauce. If your portions are off, you will get in trouble and you will have to “weigh in” for a week. Weighing in is where you actually weigh every ice cream you make to see if you are portioning it correctly. It is also important to know how to make cakes. You have to memorize the amount of ice cream that goes in each size of cake and you have to weigh each and every cake. You also have to know what type of cake, ice cream and mix-ins go in each cake. Once you learn to prep cakes, you have the option of learning how to decorate them. Once you are good enough, you can then do cake orders and theme cakes. If you prep or decorate a cake incorrectly, you face the risk of having an unhappy customer, who in some cases may make you remake the cake, or they may refuse to pay for it. It is a situation that can easily be avoided by reading the cake order more than once and if you have any questions, ask the person who took the order, or call the customer to verify. The customer would much rather you ask them questions and get it right, than you get it wrong and mess up their cake.

The third day of videos deals completely with customer service. Knowing what to do in any type of situation with a customer is one of the most important things you can learn. The basics of customer service at Cold Stone include making eye contact with the customer, answering with a smile, answering any questions they have with a positive attitude, informing them of new flavors and offering samples. Some more detailed training deals with how to deal with complaints. It is important to listen to what the customer has to say and respond with a positive statement like, “I apologize for your unpleasant experience, is there anything I can do to help?” If a customer didn’t like their ice cream, kindly ask if they would like you to make

them a new ice cream at no additional charge. If a customer finds a hair in their ice cream, ask them if they would like you to remake it at no additional charge. If the customer doesn't want a new ice cream, offer them a refund of their money. If a customer is unhappy with a cake, simply ask them what the problem is. If it has the wrong name or something is misspelled, let them know that you can rewrite it and it will only take a few minutes. If it is completely different than what they ordered, offer them a choice of any cake in the display freezer for 20% off, or they can take the cake order for 20% off as well, or offer them some free candles. It is always important to handle the situation before it turns into a call with our manager or even a formal complaint with corporate.

Once you have completed the online videos, you are required to take a test that covers all of the videos. You have to score above a 90 or you have to watch the videos again. Once you have completed the test, you are then given a tour of the store, told where everything is, how everything works and some more basic knowledge. You are then put on register training, where you learn how to clock in and out, how to ring up ice cream, cakes, shakes, smoothies, etc., and how to do a refund or a discount. After you are comfortable on the register, you are required to weigh in. You have to try different ice creams, understand the different consistencies and try every size. After our managers are comfortable with your sizes, he/she supervises you assisting your first customers. Within your first three days, you are required to memorize all of the signature creations as well as all of the tip songs. You are quizzed on them after your third day. After your first week of handling customers under supervision, you are then able to help them on your own. At that point in time, you learn the checklists for each shift. Typically, there are only a select few who use the Opening Checklist, but everybody is taught the 3 to 7 Checklist and all 3 Closing Checklists. For the Closing Checklists, you have to learn the Shift Leader Checklist, which entails closing the till, cleaning the lobby and restocking product, even if you aren't a shift leader, the Stone Closer Checklist, which entails closing the stone and front area and the Back Room Closer Checklist, which entails, emptying the blast freezer, washing all dishes and cleaning the back room. After you have proved yourself worthy of being a Shift Leader, you get promoted. Once you have proven yourself for a Manager, you get promoted.