

MZ-5.2 · V1.3 (DRAFT)

# MEZZÉ#1

MEDITERRANEAN EATERY & BAR



THE OWNER-LED VISIT BEFORE DAY 1

## SECOND INTERVIEW & ONBOARDING

ONE VISIT. TWO PHASES. OWNER-LED.

*Owned by Riad El Khaliabi & Irina Shlyakhova*

FIRST EDITION · 2026 · CONROE · FULSHEAR

## HOW THIS WORKS

## ONE VISIT, IN TWO PHASES.

Phase 1 decides. Phase 2 onboards. They flow into each other when the candidate says yes today.

## THE VISIT

PHASE	WHAT	TIME
Phase 1 — Second Interview	Brand voice check. Hard questions. Brief meet-and-greet. <b>Owner decides.</b>	~45 min
Decision moment	Three outcomes: yes today, yes after thinking, no.	5 min
Phase 2 — Onboarding <i>(only if yes today)</i>	Paperwork, logistics, certifications reminder, floor tour.	~80 min

**Total visit when they say yes today:** about 2 hours, end to end.

**If they say yes after thinking,** they come back another day for phase 2 only. Two visits in that case.

## WHO RUNS THE VISIT

**Default:** Riad or Irina, in person. **Backup:** a trained manager when neither owner is available. The manager who runs it must be approved by the owner.

## WHY THIS IS ONE VISIT, NOT TWO

Two visits add friction for a small restaurant. The candidate already trusted us once by coming to the first interview. Asking them to come back twice more wastes their time and ours. Folding the paperwork into the same day the offer is made respects everyone's schedule.

The protection: paperwork does **not** come out until after the offer is accepted. The decision moment stays clean. The candidate can still say *let me think* without seeing a stack of contracts on the table.



## BEFORE THE VISIT

# SCHEDULE AND TELL THEM WHAT TO BRING

Nothing is sent to the candidate between the two interviews. The FOH manager schedules the second interview after the first one passes.

## RIGHT AFTER THE FIRST INTERVIEW

The first interview is run by the FOH manager. If the candidate clears, the manager does one thing: **schedule the second interview with Riad or Irina**. No documents are sent. The candidate walks into the second interview without having seen our handbook, our employment agreement, or any other internal document.

### BRAND NOTE

We do not send internal documents to candidates we have not decided to hire. Handbook, tip policy, employment terms — these stay inside the restaurant until the offer is accepted.

## WHEN YOU SCHEDULE THE VISIT, TELL THE CANDIDATE THIS

So they arrive ready for phase 2 if they accept:

*“The visit will run up to two hours. The first part is our conversation. If we make you an offer at the end and you accept, we’ll handle the paperwork right then so you don’t need a second trip. Please bring: valid government ID, your Social Security card or other proof of work eligibility, and your bank account info for direct deposit. Block out the full two hours just in case.”*

## WHAT THE CANDIDATE BRINGS

Valid government ID (driver’s license, state ID, or passport). Social Security card or other proof of work eligibility (for I-9 and W-4). Bank account information (account and routing number, for direct deposit). A pen.

### BRAND NOTE

If they forget anything, phase 2 can still happen partially — everything except I-9 verification can be done. The I-9 alone requires the physical ID in hand. If ID is missing, the visit ends at the offer and they come back to verify ID before Day 1.



## PHASE 1 · THE SECOND INTERVIEW

# THE DECISION STEP

About 45 minutes. Owner present. Just the conversation — no documents.

## WHAT THIS PHASE IS

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The first interview filtered for experience, English, basic fit. Phase 1 is where the owner decides. The candidate has cleared the bar on skills. Now the owner is reading for natural fit, attitude, and whether this person can hold the standard.

## WHAT YOU COVER

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### 1. HOSPITALITY INSTINCT (10 MINUTES)

The candidate has not been trained yet. They do not know our pillars or our internal language. **Do not test them on it.** Test their instinct — what they notice, what they care about, how they think about service.

- Ask what they know about MEZZÉ#1 from before today. Did they look us up online? Walk by? Eat here? *(Tests preparation and curiosity.)*
- Ask about a favorite restaurant they have worked at — and what made the service feel right. Listen for the words they choose. *(Tests their ear for hospitality.)*
- Ask: 'What is the difference between a server who is good and a server who is great?' Listen for the answer. *(Tests their philosophy.)*
- Ask: 'Tell me about a time you turned a guest's bad experience into a good one.' *(Tests their instinct under pressure.)*

If they cannot answer any of these, they may not be ready for MEZZÉ#1 yet. The brand can be taught. The instinct cannot.

### 2. THE HARD QUESTIONS — THEIR SIDE (10-15 MINUTES)

Invite the candidate to ask the questions that only the owner can answer:

- Pay structure — tip-out, hourly, who gets what.
- Schedule — what days, how flexible, blackout periods.
- Growth — how a server moves up. Lead. Bartender. Assistant manager.
- Culture — how disputes are handled. How feedback flows.

If they have no questions, that is a flag — they have not thought about working here.

### **3. BRIEF MEET-AND-GREET (5 MINUTES)**

Introduce the candidate to one senior server or the assistant manager if anyone is on shift. Not an interview — a handshake. So the candidate sees the team they will work with.

### **4. THE OFFER CONVERSATION (5 MINUTES)**

If the owner is confident, this is where the offer is made. If the owner needs to think, this is where the candidate is told the timeline ("I will call you tomorrow"). Move into the decision moment cleanly.

# IV

## DECISION MOMENT

# HOW PHASE 1 ENDS

Three outcomes. Paperwork stays in the drawer until they say yes today.

## OUTCOME A — YES TODAY

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If the owner is confident, end phase 1 with a clean question:

*"We would love to have you on the team. The role is yours if you want it. You can take a day to think about it and come back — or we can do the paperwork right now. If we do the paperwork today, you can start training as soon as tomorrow, or we pick a date later this week or next week. Which way?"*

If they say yes today — move directly into phase 2. The visit continues.

## OUTCOME B — YES AFTER THINKING

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If they pause, hesitate, or ask for time, that is fine. End the interview here:

*"Take the time you need. Call me by [date] either way — yes or no. If yes, we will set the onboarding visit then. Either is okay."*

They come back another day for phase 2 only. **Do not pressure.** A candidate who feels pushed into signing on the same day starts the relationship with resentment.

## OUTCOME C — NO

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If the answer is no, say so. Do not ghost. *"Thank you for coming in. We are going with someone else. If anything changes I will reach out. I wish you the best."* If you cannot have the conversation in the room, send a written message within 48 hours. Use the template in the Hiring Guide.

### BRAND NOTE

**Within 24 hours of any verbal yes** — today or after thinking — Riad or Irina sends a personal welcome text: *"Welcome to MEZZÉ#1. See you on [date]."*

## V

PHASE 2 · ONBOARDING

**YES TODAY — KEEP GOING**

Four blocks. About 80 minutes. Then they walk out a hired team member.

**BLOCK 1 — PAPERWORK (30-40 MINUTES)**

Five documents must be signed in person. The owner or trained manager walks through each one, then witnesses the signature.

DOCUMENT	WHY IN PERSON
<b>I-9 Employment Eligibility</b>	Federal law. Manager must physically verify ID documents. No exceptions.
<b>MZ-5.4 Employment Agreement</b> (FOH or BOH)	Legal contract. Pay, schedule, at-will terms. Witnessed signature.
<b>MZ-5.4 Confidentiality &amp; NDA Agreement</b>	Legal contract. Recipes, vendor info, owner-personal information. Witnessed signature.
<b>W-4 Tax Withholding</b>	Tax document. New hire may need help filling it out.
<b>Direct deposit form</b>	Banking information. Done in 7shifts with manager present so it is verified.

Then explain the four read-and-sign-at-home documents — Welcome Letter, Handbook, Safety PDF, Emergency Contact. These are in 7shifts. The new hire signs them in 7shifts before Day 1 — at home that evening, or right now at the restaurant if they want to leave totally done.

**BLOCK 2 — LOGISTICS (20 MINUTES)**

- Back-door code shared.** So they can let themselves in for Day 1 and beyond.
- Day 1 confirmed** — date, time, what to bring (their own black shirt and black pants).
- Name spelling confirmed** for the name tag. Get it right now. Name tag is printed between now and Day 1.
- Pre-shift meal explained — one team meal per shift, eaten before service.
- Phone use rules explained — phones in the break area, never on the floor.

# VI

PHASE 2 (CONTINUED)

## CERTIFICATIONS & FLOOR TOUR

Final two blocks of the visit. About 20 minutes.

### BLOCK 3 — CERTIFICATIONS REMINDER (5 MINUTES)

Both certifications are required within 14 days of hire. The new hire pays and registers themselves online. Tell them clearly today so it is not a surprise.

- TABC Seller-Server Certification** — required for any FOH role serving alcohol. ~\$10-15 online.
- Texas Food Handler Certification** — required for any FOH or BOH role. ~\$10-15 online.
- Both must be uploaded to 7shifts within 14 days.
- The manager checks 7shifts on Day 14 that both certifications are uploaded.

### BLOCK 4 — FLOOR TOUR (15 MINUTES)

Walk the dining room and the kitchen. Introduce the new hire to whoever is on shift — a senior server, a line cook, the dishwasher. Low pressure. They see the room and a few faces before Day 1.

### END OF VISIT

Walk the new hire to the door. The owner says: *“See you on [Day 1 date]. Thank you for joining MEZZÉ#1.”* Shake hands. That is the end of the visit.

#### BRAND NOTE

The new hire walks out hired, with paperwork signed, the back-door code in their phone, certifications scheduled or planned, and a face seen on the floor. They have spent two hours with us and seen the standard up close. That feeling is what makes Day 1 land.

# VII

BETWEEN THE VISIT AND DAY 1

## HOSPITALITY MOVES

Three optional touches that separate MEZZÉ#1.

### 1. THE WELCOME TEXT FROM THE OWNER

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Within 24 hours of the verbal yes, Riad or Irina sends a short, warm text. *“Welcome to MEZZÉ#1. We are glad you are joining. See you on [date].”*

**Owner-to-employee, not manager-to-employee.** The candidate hears from the people who own the restaurant before they hear from anyone else. Sets the tone.

### 2. THE WELCOME LETTER AT HOME

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Sent through 7shifts during Phase 2 paperwork. Bilingual EN/ES. They read it between the visit and Day 1, on their own time. If Day 1 is the next day, they can read it that evening — or read it during Phase 2 if they want to leave totally done.

### 3. THE OPTIONAL COMP MEAL AS A GUEST

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Between the visit and Day 1, invite the new hire to come in for a meal — as a guest, not a trainee. They sit a table. They taste the menu. They see the service from the guest side.

Riad, Irina, or the manager stops by the table briefly — a handshake, a thank-you. Then leaves them to enjoy the meal.

#### BRAND NOTE

This is generous and not required. One comp meal teaches the new hire more about MEZZÉ#1's service standard than three documents combined. Reserve for hires the owner is confident about. Use judgment.

## VIII

WHAT WE GIVE · WHAT WE DON'T

## AVOID CONFUSION

*The new hire knows what to expect on Day 1.*

## ON THE VISIT

ITEM	STATUS
Back-door code	Shared verbally during phase 2. So they can enter for Day 1.
Apron	Not handed over. Comes Day 1 morning.
Name tag	Not handed over. Name spelling confirmed; tag printed between now and Day 1.
Personal locker	We do not have personal lockers. Personal items go in the break area.
Phone	We do not issue phones.
Key card	We do not use key cards. Back-door code covers entry.
Rezku (POS) login	Created Day 1 morning by the manager. Trainee uses it to clock in and ring training comps.
Uniform pieces beyond apron + name tag	The new hire brings their own black shirt and black pants. We do not provide these.

## BRAND NOTE

If the new hire does not show up on Day 1, the apron stays clean and the only cost is the name tag print. This is why apron handover is held back — not because we doubt the hire, but because no-shows happen at every restaurant.

## ON DAY 1 MORNING

Before the trainee arrives, the manager has: created the Rezku login number for the trainee; apron and printed name tag ready for handover; Training-003 Trainee Edition, FOH Steps of Service PDF, and Allergen Pocket Card printed; kitchen blocked for the menu walkthrough.