Objectives

- Understand why a cooking demo is an effective way to spread your nutrition message.
- Discover the steps going into the execution of a professional and memorable cooking demo.
- Develop skills used by pro food stylists, media spokespersons, and chefs to make your cooking demo appear effortless and magical.

The 4 Ps

- Plan
- Prep
- Practice
- Passionate Execution

Why Just Talk the Talk When You Can Walk the Walk?

- Message trifecta: Tell, do, review
- The way to a person’s brain is through their stomach
- It’s fun!
Step 1: Plan

Crucial Questions
- How long of a demo?
- How many attendees?
- How long of an event?
- About the facilities?
- Budget?
- Fire code?
- Audience?

Choosing the Theme
- Season
- Event theme?
- Nutritional considerations

Request Ahead of Time
- Tables
- Lavelier mic, if needed
- Assistants
- Hand-washing facilities
- Tablecloths
- Extension cords
- Waste receptacles cans
- Equipment
- Coolers
Help Wanted

- Don’t be afraid to ask for help
- Interns, students, utilize local list serv

They can
- Find recipe
- Source/create handouts
- Shop
- Day of assistance

Choosing the Recipe

- Audience
- Season
- Time available
- Appeal
- Where to get?
- Copyright issues?
- Comfort level of yourself and audience

“I do something much simpler than I think that I need to. Choose simple recipes to illustrate your point.”

– Jill Nussinow, MS, RD “The Veggie Queen”

Recipe Example

“Show a large variety of uncooked grains in whole form for people to touch and see, such as red quinoa.”

– Crystal Petrello, MS, RD

Props

- Seasonal or related to topic
- Ingredients from recipe
- Final dish
- Produce/grains in raw form
- Under liners
- Accents
The Script

- 3 main talking points
- Keep it positive
- How to fill moments of silence?
- Action verbs, descriptive adjectives
- Forecast potential questions
- What don’t you know?
- Memorable tips

Messaging Example

1. **Following a heart-healthy diet is smart at any age.** And as part of a nutritious diet and active lifestyle, research suggests that dark-purple Concord grapes may play a role in heart health.

2. **Eating an array of colorful fruits and vegetables is central to heart-healthy living.** And Concord grape juice can be an easy, delicious way for the whole family to enjoy the heart-healthy goodness of this purple fruit.

3. In fact, more than a decade of research suggests that **Concord grape juice may benefit the heart by helping to maintain healthy, clear and flexible arteries**, which in turn can help promote healthy blood flow throughout the body and to the mind.


Prepping Your Demo

- 3 days ahead:
  - Determine how many samples
  - Make grocery and supply list
  - Copies of recipes
  - Other giveaways

- 2 days before: purchase

- 1 day before: prep ingredients
What to Prep for Chunky Grape Salsa?

Helpful Tools for Behind the Scenes

- Plastic gloves
- Spoons
- Large "tweezers"
- Paper towels/rags
- Garbage bags
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Crate, cooler on rollers

Photo: freedigitalphotos.net

Essential Tools On Set

- Camera ready pots, pans, cutting boards, hand towels
- Spoons, spatulas
- Tasting fork and plate
- Small dishes and utensils
- Sampling supplies

Nice to Have Gadgets

- Lemon press
- Auto pepper grinder

Operation: Food Safety

- Proper temperature during transport and storage
- Hand washing
- Gloves
- Serving utensils
- How will it be served?
Step 3: Practice

- Practice, practice, practice!
- Fully tested recipe
- Use a timer
- Smooth switch out
- Dry rehearsal
- “Dress” rehearsal

The Cherry On Top
- Door stops
- Risers
- Solid colors
- Cloth napkins & place mats
- Themed decor

Special Considerations for TV
- Finished dish
- Less time
- Precautions for dressings, sauces
- Teases and bumps
- Tasting
- Involve host?
- Ask host questions
- Live or taped?
Special Considerations for a Large Audience
- Prepare samples in advance
- Choose recipe that is easily served.

Step 4: Passionate Execution

After Arriving Early
- Make sure equipment is plugged in and works
- Set up
- Get samples ready

Performing the Demo
- Flag one or two take-home tips
- Pre-heated pan
- Magical, effortless
“You can say whatever you want, but you must be absolutely fascinating.”

-- Michelle Dudash, RD

“...And don’t be boring!”

Engaging
- Audience volunteers
- Show of hands
- Ask questions
- ABC

“The best thing you can do is make it over and over yourself and then give your personal experience and presentation. If you get someone to help you from the audience that makes it easier and more fun without any work!”

-- Judy Doherty, Food and Health Communications

Post Demo
- Thorough clean up
- Follow up with answers to questions
- Post recipe on your website
- Plenty of recipe copies and business cards

Special Considerations for Cooking Demos for Kids

Julie Negrin, MS, CN
Special Considerations for Cooking Demos for Kids

**STEP 1: Do your homework**
- Find out the age group
- Special food requests?
- Certain classroom/curriculum to integrate?

**Figuring out the Food**

**STEP 2: Once you know the logistics, you can develop the menu**
- Find something healthy and kid-friendly
- Make sure it’s a recipe that you can prepare in advance so you can pass out samples (spring rolls or veggie shish kebabs)
- Or, make sure you can make it in real time (like dips or smoothies) and pass out with veggies

**Tips on Deciding on Menus**

**STEP 3: When deciding recipe(s), pick something interactive so you can:**
- Pass around samples of each vegetable for them to sample and spices you’re using.
- Ask kids to come up to help push buttons, pass out food, cut items with a plastic knife (or metal butter knife).
- Have them taste test the food to decide if it needs any additional spices or ingredients.
- Encourage kids to help pass out samples.

**To Do List – BEFORE DEMO**

**STEP 4: Make the plan!**
- If possible, visit the site and see where you’ll be conducting it
- Collect as much info as possible
  - looking at hand-washing options
  - electrical socket (if using a processor or blender)
  - how many kids can fit
  - tables to set up
  - microphone for really large groups.
Test Your Recipe(s)

- STEP 5: Test your recipe(s) ahead of time to time it
- Make notes to determine which equip you'll need
- Determine how many times you'll need to multiply recipe
- Calculate your budget
- Step 6: Write a detailed timeline for your demo

Day of Demo

- Wash product, chop, and prep ingredients, bring them ready-to-go but leave some whole to show kids
- Save time to taste food and discuss

Managing a Group of Kids

- Make sure you have teachers, parents or other experienced staff to help keep kids under control
- Bring a friend or assistant to help you with food (don't count on site staff)
- Stay on schedule – kids get antsy
- Feed them throughout the demo – don’t wait until the end

Have fun with the kids!

- Ask them questions
- Include them as much as possible
- Have them smell, touch, taste a lot
- Share your excitement about food with them!
Additional Resources

- Food and Culinary Professional Dietetic Practice Group
  Culinary Resource Manual
- Cooking Show and Tell for Dietitians by Sharon B. Salomon, MS, RD and Patty Hart, MS, RD. Email sbsrd@aol.com for more info.
- Video links: www.michelledudash.com/michelle
- La Diva Dietitian http://www.ladivadietitian.com/ladivadietitian/Welcome.html
- Keep the Beat Deliciously Healthy Eating, by NHLBI http://hin.nhbi.nih.gov/healthyeating

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Book: Easy Meals to Cook with Kids by Julie Negrin © 2010
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