

Student Name

Professor Name

Course

Date

Memorable Experiences: First Job

The most memorable experiences stereotypically seem to be either the worst or the best moments of a lifetime. The experience that I will describe can be characterized as neither. One of my most prominent memories does not involve a journey to Europe, a sibling's birth, or a grandma's funeral, but merely flipping burgers in a kitchen. A myriad of people would possibly consider working at a fast-food restaurant chain the opposite of a vital life experience – a necessity imposed by financial troubles. Yet, as my first job, it allowed me to undergo situations that were unfathomable to me before.

I did not seek financial gains when I naively sent my CV to a local fast-food restaurant. The reason for which I searched for a job as a kitchen crew member is far from necessitating money to buy a vintage turntable or upgrade my car. The primary cause was loneliness and the desire to spend time with my childhood friend, who needed a summer job to help her parents with a mortgage. The boredom and solitude led me to assemble burgers and change frying oil for almost three sultry months. Unsurprisingly, the job was not what I expected: previously, I envisioned it as monotonous and low-stakes, and, partially, it turned out to be so. Nevertheless, the constant rush and pressure to serve the growing queue contradicted my somehow phlegmatic, somewhat timid, and awkward nature. Preparing high-calorie overpriced food items was treated as a mission of utter importance by the kitchen manager.

I used to perceive the kitchen manager as the story's antagonist; every story should have one. For a minute mistake such as dropping a slice of cheese on countertop, the manager

would become furious, screaming at the guilty crew member to the point of turning red and them starting to cry. I had never feared being slapped or hit before; nevertheless, his seldom but terrifying outrage rendered me tense. I was lucky enough not to experience the manager's outbreak of anger directly. My friend, on the other hand, was unfortunate enough to commit a slight mistake by handing a customer the wrong order. I was never an outspoken person, but at that moment, I had to defend my friend. The next day, I quit my job with a heavy heart.

During those three months, I did not obtain the experience that I craved. My friend mostly worked as a front counter crew member. The kitchen crew and front counter crew appeared to be two different castes, never crossing their paths. Thus, our interactions were limited to greetings and returning home together when our shifts coincided. Furthermore, since the working environment was hostile, I was continuously tense and afraid to be emotionally abused. Although the summer did not prove to be what I expected, I do not view working at the fast-food restaurant as a negative experience, but a memorable one and a significant learning opportunity.

At the time, I was 16, and the job was a significant step from never experiencing paid labor before. Despite the fact that the manager's abusive treatment was not justifiable, it made me more enduring and secure in my abilities. Furthermore, the treatment resulted in one of the most memorable experiences – upholding my beliefs regarding fair and humane treatment by supporting my friend. In this way, flipping hamburgers became one of my most prominent formative experiences.