

M *Master Level - Head/Executive Chef - Adam Timothy Woods*

I *Intermediate Level - Sous Chef - Mark Colman*

B₁ *Beginner Level - Apprentice Chef - Sage Bowman-Kean*

B₂ *Beginner Level - Apprentice Chef - Djuma Dawes*



B₂ My name is Djuma Dawes, I am an Apprentice Chef at Wharf One, Food and Wine. I am on the grill section which means I look after all the proteins for the kitchen, I look after steaks, look after pork belly, prawns, fish. I learn a lot from all the chefs in the team, particularly I learn the most from the Head Chef because he writes the menu, it's his dishes, he knows how to do everything right.

B₁ My name is Sage, I am an Apprentice Chef at Nitmiluk Tours. The thing that mostly prepared me for being an Apprentice Chef was I use to work at the front of house at the same restaurant I am working in now and it really prepared me because I knew what was coming and the standard that everything had to be.

My responsibilities every day at the kitchen are food preparation, health and safety, following orders from the Head and Sous Chef.

My supervisor is my Sous Chef, so I have to answer to him for any jobs that need to be done that day, above that is my Head Chef so I go to him for more important things, like if there was something wrong in the workplace or if I needed to know numbers for a function coming up or if I needed something ordered.

I My name is Mark Colman. I am currently the Sous Chef at Nitmiluk Tours which basically means I am second in charge to the Head Chef. The staff that a Sous Chef supervises is basically everybody below the head chef. So that's apprentices, kitchen hands, wait staff. The Sous Chef has to make sure that everything is running correctly as the head chef wants it.

M My name is Adam Timothy Woods, I am the Executive Chef of Nitmiluk Tours. We currently have a 5 star lodging, we have a poolside, we also have a dinner cruise, a café that we operate here and also we have functions. My role at Nitmiluk Tours is to ensure the hygiene and quality control of all food outlets.





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My average working day varies from about 8-10 hours.

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I do not work the same days each week, we have a rotating roster that changes all the time, which makes it hard for planning ahead.

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As a Sous Chef the average working day would be, I would say 8-10 hours. Normally the days off I would have would be when there is nothing major occurring, if it's just a standard day, the Head Chef normally gives me that day.

M

I would say during a day on a 10 hour day, I could say 2-3 hours you spend cooking. That could be just experimenting because my job is to oversee and ensure that all the quality is met. I have a Sous Chef that does the day to day operations when I am not around. The days that he is allocated to be there, is generally when I am doing paperwork.

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We speak early in the morning, we plan our attack for the day and during the day if he needs to go somewhere or do something, he will let me know, we have to interact to make it work.

M

After the morning having the quick briefing, I am actually doing a lot of ordering, decisions of menus, development.

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Say for instance we have a function, the Head Chef will write menu, I'll discuss the menu with him and then I implement what he wants to the other staff.

M

In season my day can actually be from 6 in the morning it can be till 10 at night, but it's not 16 hour days physically exhausting yourself, it's 16 hours a day ensuring the quality is always there.

Being in my position of Executive Chef, it is to oversee and just ensure that staff knows that you are actually there for them. So if they want to know how to do a certain task when they are on service you just can give them assistance. There might be a different way of doing something, I just give them little tips and that, to ensure they are developing and the plate that's going out is quality controlled.

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A typical working day for me is long and demanding but we also learn something new every day.

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Generally, I like to work between Tuesday and Sunday, that allows for the quiet days I have off so I am not putting too much pressure on staff and they know that I am there when it's busy.





As a Sous Chef it's quite hard to keep my staff motivated because we do a lot of long hours. We add games, like racing, or see who can make it better. We try to compete against each other, to bring all of our standards up.



A good work ethic in team is when you are watching staff. It might be a hot day but they are giving all they got, everything is being done professionally and precisely. You just know they need a break but they are still going on, they are on their feet all day, but you need to have that work ethic from that start.



The first thing that I would tell a young chef or a new chef or if I get a new apprentice is enjoy it and try to learn everything you can, all the time. Maybe that will incorporate doing some hours for free. I certainly know I did, just to learn something, it's the best way to get ahead and you learn from different chefs, there is different ideas, different approaches, but we are all after the same goal and that is to provide a good product.



Being late for work is considered a very serious offence in the kitchen because you are letting the team down.



I come to work say half an hour to an hour earlier, to check what we have going on for the day, make sure that all the prep is ready, that my staff are there.



The preparation we do each day is salad prep for all the salads and burgers that come in each day. Proteins so making burger patties, cooking off chicken, cutting steaks for the sandwiches and also making sauces so any dressings or dipping sauces or sauces that go with the burgers each day.



Roughly I get to work about half an hour to an hour before anyone rocks up to the establishment. That gives me time to actually have a look around, to make sure everything is tidy for the people coming through, to see if anything has gone wrong, have a good stock. Obviously gonna check your emails that's really important, so you know what your plan of the day is. When all the staff come in sort of give them a run down on what the day is going to be like.



I know what jobs I need to do each day because when I come to work there is always a rundown of what happened the day before and a prelist for what I have to do for the coming day.





-  Normally, most Sous Chefs are Work, Health and Safety officers too. The responsibilities of a Sous Chef for safety in the kitchen is to make sure that all staff are dressed properly in their uniform, the workplace is safe.
-  The 3 most important rules to follow in the kitchen is, always holding your knife or sharp object downwards, so you don't stab anyone and everything is safe when you are walking. And always wear the correct, closed in shoes so you don't get burned or if you drop something heavy on your foot it won't hurt as much. Always wash your hands so everything is hygienic and no bacteria is passed on to any food.
-  The cleaning tasks of a Sous Chef is to make sure that all staff know what has to be cleaned. Basically that's my responsibility, the Head Chef will take me around and make sure that everything is clean in the area.
-  Cleaning tasks we are required to do each day in the kitchen is cleaning the floor with the correct floor cleaner. Wash and sanitise benches with the correct chemical. Clean the oven with chemical called *Predator*, so it's very dangerous if it gets onto skin, so you have to wear protective gear.
-  Each 3 months, we have, a company that we deal with, with the chemicals. They actually do a check of all our benches to ensure that our area is sanitary.
-  I recommend that if you are going to be a chef that you get every qualification that you can, it's essential, just for the legal aspect of it, because we don't want anyone cooking food and harming people as it can happen. Skills I use every day in my job all goes back to my training.
-  I remember when I went to TAFE, I think we did 2 weeks on knife skills. Knife skills are challenging because it very easy to cut yourself if you don't hold the knife properly. They are also very important because they make you work faster, your prep gets done faster.
-  On a daily basis the most important equipment I use would be my knives. So that's going from a boning knife, a pairing knife, a bread knife to my chef knife, which can be used for almost anything.
-  The most skills that I would say that I use be my knife and my knowledge of cooking. It's something that when you are taught you don't forget and it's an integral part of your job.





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I think my strong point within the kitchen is communication and eye for detail. You need to use communication because we all work as a team in the kitchen so if we don't communicate then nothing will get done or nothing will get done to the standard you want at. And eye for detail is really good because everything needs to be to a certain standard that your head chef wants it to be or the company wants it to be.

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My main strength as a Sous Chef in the kitchen would be my speed. I need to be very fast because we get 100-150 orders and it needs to get out fast but at the same time keeping the standards of the Head Chef.

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In year 11 I did school based training so I used to work in a pub. I did that for 2 years and then I went full time in the pub and then I moved over to the restaurant scene to more define my career. Working in the pub industry as well was quite fast paced and kind of gave me some speed and a few variety of things is quite good for this career as well.

If you were to go into the industry as a simple cook or unqualified person working in a kitchen, you find that you don't have the stamina to keep up because the training of your apprenticeship moulds a person into what they are going to become. It sets you into the mainframe to be disciplined. It's really important for this trade to not stick in one area for the whole time of your apprenticeship, to get some different skills along the way.

To grow is to move and develop your own skills, because when you do qualify you are classed as a commis.

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Throughout my apprenticeship the thing I learned that's beneficial to me is something my Head Chef taught me and it was height, colour, contrast and balance.

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Contrast is like the look, balance is if it is salty or is it sweet, you want to make sure that it's not overpowering.

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The 3 things that a Sous Chef is directly responsible for in kitchen is to make sure that staff know what they are doing, to implement everything that head chef requires & wants. Basically on my side would be the meals, to make sure they go out correctly, look good, taste good.

The most challenging aspect of my job, would be organizing all the staff. If say the staff they are not trained properly, can become very challenging that way.

M

Obviously in the kitchen, really important that we use correct colours. And we have got brown for cooking, green for vegetables, yellow for poultry, we have got our white boards for our breads and cheeses.

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There is a lot of shortcuts, some people like to take them and that is my biggest challenge, is to stop that, to make sure everything is done by the book. The Head Chef's book.

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If anything goes wrong with any kind of food you are preparing or cooking, tell the Head Chef or the Sous Chef straight away so it can be fixed.



M Obviously we are seasonal work here so just to assist with the other chefs that come through, we have a series of cards in the kitchen, so if they want to know the items of what actually goes into food, the sauces, the salads, it also guarantees the quality of every single item that goes out, is going to be the same product.

I As a Sous Chef and a Head Chef, we are always looking for cheaper products without compromising the quality of the food and that determines what specials we put on, because we are a business and we are trying to make money.

M The biggest challenge in my job is to make sure obviously our revenue is coming into account, so to meet expectations. What's required of me besides cooking is to make sure that all the food is organized, purchases are done in season, once a week. So it's actually quite a technical thing when in operation, we got so many outlets, different food, different venues.



I Next likely job role for me would be Head Chef, that is the progression – I am Sous Chef now but to be a Head Chef I need to learn all aspects of ordering not just for the kitchen but for front of house, it's a whole new level again.

B₁ At the moment I don't plan on continuing on any further study for my career. Maybe in the future I could look into doing my Cert IV in Commercial Cookery which is more the business side of everything. I would like to work in different kitchens with different cuisines, get more experience and knowledge and then slowly work my way up to being a Head or Executive Chef.

B₂ After I finish my apprenticeship, I'd like to work and travel overseas, and see what it's like cooking in another country to expand my knowledgebase.

M I had a good saying from college teacher. He said to me *"The world is your oyster now."* In this career you need to like jump back up and down, we actually move around and we just go from our positions and I might change to something like a Sous Chef and that way you actually can grasp what that Head Chef is achieving.

B₁ The thing that motivates me most within my job is the love for my job, me always wanting to do better and better at the things I do and getting good feedback from customers which also motivates me in making better food. I think my family is very proud of me, because I am finishing my apprenticeship at such a young age so I have a career ahead of me.

