

KITCHEN DESIGN *Cont. from page 8*

rest of the kitchen crowded. This is where main dishes are finished, so here you will have ranges, ovens, exhaust hoods, fryers, griddles, and other cooking equipment. Like the food preparation area, the meal cooking area can be broken down into smaller sections like a baking station, grilling station and frying station. Because meals are finished here, the meal cooking area should be near the front of the kitchen closest to the service area.

Service

The service area is the final section of a commercial kitchen. If you have a serving staff, this is where they will pick up finished dishes to take to customers. If you have a self-serve or buffet-style restaurant, this is where foods will be displayed in warmers for customers to assemble their plates. This area needs to be located at the very front of the kitchen, just after the meal cooking area, to shorten the time and distance between completed meals and customers.

As you can see so far, the most

important factor is the efficiency of the space and the speed of cooking and service. How do we design the layout? There are several options, with no perfect formula for commercial kitchen layout.

Every foodservice establishment is unique and will operate differently than others, so you have to decide what will help you best meet your kitchen goals. That said, there are several basic kitchen design layouts to consider that succeed in blending solid kitchen design principles and kitchen components effectively.

Island-Style Layout

The island-style layout places the ovens, ranges, fryers, grills, and other principle cooking equipment together in one module at the center of the kitchen, while other sections of the kitchen are placed on the perimeter walls in the proper order to preserve a circular flow (any section can be the "island" depending on what best suits your needs). This layout is open and promotes communication and supervision while leaving plenty of open floor space for easy cleaning.

This layout works best in a large kitchen that is square in shape but can certainly be modified to fit other shapes and sizes.

Zone-Style Layout

The zone-style layout has the kitchen set up in blocks with the major equipment located along the walls. Again, the sections follow the proper order for increased flow, giving you a dishwashing block, a storage block, a food prep block, etc. This layout can likely be used in all spaces, large or small (with the size of your kitchen and equipment a big factor). Communication and supervision are not difficult in this layout because the center of the space is completely open.

Assembly Line Layout

The assembly line configuration is ideal for kitchens that need to serve large numbers of people quickly, such as cafeterias or hospital facilities. This layout may work better for establishments with a limited menu that serve large quantities of the same foods, such as a sandwich or pizza shop, but

it is viable for any type of kitchen. In this layout, kitchen equipment is organized in a line with the food preparation area at one end and the service area at the other, allowing cooks to quickly send food down the line. The cleaning/washing and storage/receiving areas can be located behind the assembly line to keep them out of the way. This configuration allows for supreme efficiency, and keeps the kitchen open for excellent communication and flow. Often, kitchen equipment can be linked together, further eliminating wasted space.

Finally, there are two details that could potentially make or break the kitchen: ergonomic design and health codes.

Ergonomic Design

Adhering to an ergonomic kitchen design layout means carefully placing every piece of the kitchen with comfort and effectiveness in mind. In other words, how do you make your kitchen the most user-friendly? The basic principle of ergonomic design calls for

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