

HOW MANY STAFF DO I NEED FOR MY EVENT?

Too few people and service stalls. Too many and you pay for people standing still. These are the ratios we use as a starting point, with the reasons behind them, so you can sense-check any quote, including ours.

Plated dinner	1 per 10 to 12
Bar at peak	1 per 50 to 75
Canapés	1 per 20 to 30
Team lead	1 per 10 to 15 staff

Salt Social People · salt-social.co.uk · hello@salt-social.co.uk · 07414 494637 ·
Written quote within 60 minutes, 8am to 8pm.

— SEATED DINNERS

Plated, silver service and sharing.

Plated service: one waiting staff member for every 10 to 12 guests, so each person clears and serves one or two tables on the call. **Silver service:** one for every 8 to 10, because each plate is served at the table. **Fine dining with wine service:** one for every 6 to 8. **Sharing or family style:** one for every 15 to 20, because the food goes down on the table in one trip.

Add a Lead for every 10 to 15 waiting staff. They take the calls from the kitchen, keep the courses moving and deal with the table that needs something unusual.

— RECEPTIONS AND CANAPÉS

Standing events need movement, not numbers.

For canapés, allow one person for every 20 to 30 guests, and more if the room is long or on two levels. For a bowl food reception, one for every 25 to 40. Somebody should be on glass collection and nothing else once the room is full, or the bar runs out of glasses before it runs out of wine.

— BARS

Speed at peak decides the size of the bar team.

A beer, wine and spirits bar needs one bartender for every 50 to 75 guests at peak. A cocktail menu drops that to one for every 40 to 60, because each drink takes longer. A reception with drinks carried on trays can run one bartender for every 75 to 100 guests, as long as there are floor staff doing the carrying. Every bar with tills needs someone on payment at peak, and every bar team benefits from a Lead who owns the stock and the cash-up.

— CONFERENCES

Registration, breaks and rooms.

Registration desks need one host for every 75 to 100 delegates arriving in the first half hour. Coffee breaks and lunches run at one person for every 30 to 50 delegates.

Plenary rooms need at least one person on the doors and on the roving microphone, and breakout rooms need someone to reset them between sessions.

— THE SENSE CHECK

Three good people, not six.

Ratios are a starting point. Briefed, experienced people who know the room and the menu before they arrive do more than a bigger team seeing it for the first time. That is why we brief everyone twice, once in writing 48 hours before and once by phone on the day, and why we will tell you if we think a quote, including ours, has too many people on it.

Use the [cost guide](#) to turn your team size into a budget, or send us the brief and we will size it for you within 60 minutes.

— QUESTIONS

Straight answers.

How many waiting staff do I need for 100 guests?



How many bartenders do I need for 200 guests?



Do I need a supervisor?



Should I book set-up and clear-down time?



Are these ratios a rule?



— RELATED

Plan the rest of the event.

See the [whole rate card](#) and the instant estimate, or start a [full quote](#). Looking for shifts yourself? [Work with us](#).
