

Hospitality Teaser: Guest Recognition - When It's Most Important & How to Show It!

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Perhaps, more than at any other time, guest recognition is most essential when a breakdown in the guest's experience has occurred and their expectations have not been met. At this critical moment, it's the guest emotions that must be recognized.

It's vital to demonstrate respect for the guest and show that their business is valued. Customizing the resolution to the guest's likes and dislikes instead of a cookie cutter response of complimentary breakfast or a fruit plate is one way to show true recognition.

It is a proven fact, guests who experience a problem and have it resolved to their satisfaction are significantly more loyal and likely to return to and recommend your property than those who do not experience an issue at all. This fact is so true that virtually every hotel and hotel company have invested many resources in developing programs and training dedicated to the handling of guest complaints. All are striving to make sure their associates succeed in turning a guest complaint into a satisfied and loyal customer. Why is it that many of these stellar programs don't always generate the desired result? It's because caring for guest opportunities must be a culture not a program. Superior guest recognition and resolution is possible only by cultivating an environment of professional hospitality where this fragile mindset can flourish.

DEVELOP THE CULTURE OF YOUR TEAM

Managers must ask themselves: What is my attitude toward guest opportunities? Do I welcome the opportunity to turn a dissatisfied guest into a loyal customer by wowing them or do I dread 'dealing with a complaining customer because they just want something for free? The manager's attitude and perspective influences that of the associate making all the difference in the team's culture and how team members view and handle guest opportunities.

As leaders and coaches, you have a greater impact on your team members in your day to day activity than training sessions they attend. It's your daily influence and leadership that yields a long-term and lasting culture for your property. Remember, it begins on the 'home field.' Don't just give your team the knowledge, show them how to 'wow.' If your associate feels that you don't recognize or understand their concerns, how will they know how to recognize and show understanding to guest issues and concerns? Unhappy associates cannot make happy guests. Ask yourself, 'how can my associate have confidence to wow a guest if they never experience it personally?' Since actions speak louder than words, it has a profound effect on the ownership team members have for Guest Opportunities and Wows. The interactions your associates have with your guests will reflect their interactions with you. Show them how to 'WOW' by wowing them. Start the pattern and watch your guest and associate satisfaction ratings soar! If you would like to influence your guest satisfaction ratings this month, particularly in the categories of problem resolution and customer loyalty, then take this month's Hospitality Teaser Challenge!

THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGE:

While many guests enjoy great experiences, everyday there are those who experience some breakdown. Your mission is to search them out like a treasure hunt! Look for the opportunities to exercise professional hospitality skills and demonstrate your sincere interest in their personal experience. Focus on identifying and resolving 'little' issues thus preventing the small glitch from snowballing into a big complaint! In hospitality, Guest Opportunities are why we exist! Don't shy away from them, welcome them! Every Guest Opportunity is your opportunity to win a loyal customer and make sure that the guest doesn't want to stay with your competition the next time they are in town.

THE BENEFIT:

Guest recognition, especially when something has gone awry in their experience, is essential in procuring a solid loyal customer base. By involving all of your team members in this month's challenge your guests will enjoy an even better experience and you will win their loyalty to your property! Guest recognition that creates personal and memorable experiences result in the customer repaying you 1000 times over with their loyalty, which means market share and increased revenue for you!

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