

HOSPITALITY CONFLICT RESOLUTION CHECKLIST

We are back! Yes, with many COVID restrictions lifted, people are getting out more. They are excited to dine out, travel, hit the spa and “get back to normal.” The hospitality industry though, is working under a “new normal”. Changes in the hospitality industry and guest experience can be challenging and difficult for all to understand and accept. Have no fear...some preparation and training will help you and your team better prepare for guest conflict.



What Can You Expect?

1. Not everyone will be happy about the changes.
2. Guests will question policies and procedures, especially as it impacts their visit.
3. Some people will be especially upset about changes to their experience.

What Do You Do?

OFFENSE IS THE BEST DEFENSE

- ✓ Provide information to guests in advance of their visit. (You can use your website, social media, reservation confirmations and email campaigns.)
- ✓ Keep those messages informational and positive.
- ✓ Post proper signage that is visible in all key areas.
- ✓ Make sure the information provided is consistent from what they read to what they're told.

BE PREPARED

- ✓ Anticipate questions and concerns and be ready to offer ideas and solutions.
- ✓ Prepare/practice with your staff how to answer questions and address concerns.
- ✓ Build a toolbox of ideas and solutions you can offer guests who are struggling with changes.
- ✓ Evaluate those tools and look to continue to improve how you address situations.

BE ON THE LOOK-OUT

- ✓ Be observant and watch for...
 - NONVERBAL signs that people are becoming upset:
 - Clenched fist or jaw
 - Puffed out chest
 - Increased physical motion
 - Heightened animation
 - Red face & increased sweating
 - VERBAL indicators include:
 - Raised voice
 - Foul language
 - Loss of words to describe how they feel

HOW TO ADDRESS A CONFLICT PROFESSIONALLY AND CONSISTENTLY

- ✓ De-escalate the situation
 - Introduce yourself and clearly state your role in the organization.
 - Stay calm.
 - Change location of discussion to give person time to calm down, then sit in a comfortable place where they can relax.
 - Offer them a beverage.
- ✓ Listen
 - Listen to your guest and understand their problem. (Be visibly focused. Do not multi-task and minimize your body movements.)
 - Allow the guest as much time as they need to explain their concerns.
 - Once it's your turn to speak, restate the issue to be sure you understand their problem.
 - Let them know you respect their perspective and will work to find a solution that's acceptable to all.
- ✓ Set the example
 - Always be professional. Don't lower your interactions to that of the frustrated guest.
 - Stay cool, calm and collected.
 - Do not argue with the guest or quiz them on their knowledge of the rules/regulations.
 - Stay focused on the effort to solve the problem.
 - Smile, maintain eye contact and reassure your guest that you're going to work with them to find a resolution.
- ✓ Offer solutions
 - Explain the thought behind the change(s).
 - Be sure they understand that changes are designed to provide a safe and enjoyable experience.
 - Offer alternative solutions that will provide them the opportunity for a safe and positive experience.
- ✓ Be familiar with your company's video policy should the guest want to record your conversation
- ✓ Learn from your experiences

What if the issue is between guests?

- ✓ Monitor the situation and intervene if you feel they will not solve the situation on their own.
- ✓ Stay neutral.
- ✓ Remember all the steps above when intervening.