

Assigning Rooms Is a Craft

My assignment, applying the hierarchy in order — category and commitments (here, the same for all three reservations), needs expressed and recorded, documented incidents, objective suitability. The family goes to the ground floor: not because they're traveling with a baby, but because they asked for a crib and the ground floor and it's on record — without that request, the right thing would have been to ask before assuming. The repeat guest goes to the objectively quietest room available — their noise complaint is documented and still relevant — and I ALWAYS tell them so: "I've put you in the quietest part of the hotel; I remembered what happened last year." That sentence is worth more than the room.

The couple goes to a sea-view room if one is available: the preference for the view, expressed and recorded by the guest, is the assignment criterion — the anniversary only gives context to the attention (the congratulations, the authorized touch) and does not, by itself, allow you to infer a need or a preference. Without that recorded preference, the reservation would have gone into the neutral protocol like any other. And the one next to the elevator? It stays available, with no predestined owner: the protocol will assign it to the arrival it objectively fits best — whoever has no higher category committed to them and no recorded need that rules it out — and the guest is told so openly, because for more than one traveler being close to the elevator is even an advantage. When the information is missing, you don't assign by stereotype: you ask, you verify or you apply the neutral protocol. And when no option meets what was committed, the last rung of the hierarchy: escalation to the person in charge, transparency, an informed alternative and whatever compensation is appropriate. That — not the labels — is the craft.

Look at the pattern in the three presentation sentences: none of them says "it's what we had." They all say "I thought of you." The assignment is invisible; the presentation is everything.