

Check-Out Sells Too

My version: I lower my voice a little — the line has no reason to hear this — and I say: “Mr. Fernández, I’m left with the feeling that something wasn’t up to standard. I’m asking you sincerely, because it helps me: what did you like least?” And I stay quiet. The silence after an honest question is where the truth appears; whoever fills it with excuses scares it away.

With his response I do three things in 30 seconds: I thank him for it without getting defensive (“you’re right, and thank you for telling me”), I solve what can be solved right now (a charge, an arrangement) and I commit to the rest with an owner and a deadline — writing it down in front of him. And a fourth afterwards: I take it to the briefing. The truth that dies at the front desk is a public complaint in incubation.

What never to do: let him leave with his fake “all good” for the convenience of the line. That guest doesn’t come back — and what’s more, he writes about it.

And the B-side of the exercise: if the hotel asks for a review, the invitation must be neutral and applied by the same criteria to everyone — “If you feel like sharing how you experienced your stay, your opinion helps us improve, and the whole team reads it.” Once, without asking for a specific score, without incentives and without making anything conditional on it. If there is an incident, it is dealt with first because that is what’s owed; service recovery is never used to filter or steer what the guest wants to say.