



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1: OPERATIONS · MODULE 2: HOUSEKEEPING · LESSON 11

How to Enter a Room

*That door is the border between your work and their privacy.
You cross it by asking permission, always.*

In five lines

No school devotes an entire class to opening a door, and it is one of the most serious things your craft will have you do: enter, every day, the most intimate space a person has outside their home. The protocol isn't bureaucracy — it is respect turned into method, and it protects you both: the guest, from intrusion; you, from suspicion. This lesson sets it out step by step, including the situation nobody explains to you: what to do when the guest is inside.

The script, step by step

- 1. Knock twice, announcing yourself.** Two firm knocks and a clear voice: "Housekeeping, good morning." Your voice matters as much as your knuckle: whoever is inside has the right to know who is knocking.
- 2. Really wait.** Count to ten, slowly. The rush of your room sheet can't cost anyone a fright. Knock a second time before using the key.
- 3. Open while announcing yourself again, with a pause.** The door is opened slowly, with another "Housekeeping — may I come in?" into the gap. If there is a Do Not Disturb sign, a chain or any sign that someone is there — noise, the shower, the television — the door is closed and you come back later. Always.
- 4. If the guest is inside:** a brief apology, without drama ("Excuse me, I'll come back later"), a calm withdrawal and offer them a time: "Would around noon suit you?" Their comfort comes before your route, no exceptions.
- 5. While you work: the door open and the cart as a flag.** The door wide open and the cart visible at the threshold say two things: work is being done here, and there is nothing to hide here. It is your transparency and your protection.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Service signs / occupancy indicators	The voice protocol is doubled: two rounds of knocking and announcing, a longer pause, and coordination with the Front Office on confirmed departures before entering with the key.
Reliable occupancy information (system down)	Every room not confirmed as a departure is assumed to be occupied. When in doubt, you knock, announce yourself and check with the Front Office. Never go in "because it was next on the list."

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
Announce yourself, ask permission, explain what you've come to do, thank them when you leave. Treat their mess with the same neutrality as their tidiness.	Enter wearing earphones or talking on the phone. Comment on their belongings, not even as a joke. Use their bathroom, their chair or their balcony.	Touch money, jewelry or personal items any more than is essential for cleaning. Stay alone with a minor in the room: if a child is alone, you report it and come back with someone. Tell outside what you saw inside.

Common mistakes

- ◆ The token knock with the key already in the lock: knocking isn't a formality before going in; it is a question whose answer you wait for.
- ◆ Taking silence as permission the first time: the person asleep, the one in the shower and the one wearing earphones are silent too.
- ◆ Closing the door "to work in peace": a closed door with you inside leaves you as unprotected as it makes the guest uncomfortable.
- ◆ Giving in to "come in, come in" without judgment: the guest's kindness doesn't replace your protocol (we work on it in the exercise).

THE GOLDEN RULE

**"That door is the border between your work and their privacy.
You cross it by asking permission, always."**

This lesson's exercise

You knock, the door opens and the guest, in a bathrobe, tells you, "Come in, come in, just do your thing." What exactly do you do and what do you say? Think before you answer: there is a kind option, a comfortable option and a professional option — and only one of the three protects both you and them. In the answer that follows, I share mine.