



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1: OPERATIONS · MODULE 2: HOUSEKEEPING · LESSON 14

Housekeeping, Front Office and Maintenance: One Single Truth

*Your floor ends where someone else's promise begins.
Giving notice is serving.*

In five lines

Lesson 3 taught you that the hotel is a system; this one teaches you to speak its language from Housekeeping. Room statuses are that language: when you say “clean,” you are authorizing the Front Office to make a promise, and when you keep quiet about a breakdown, you are signing a complaint in someone else's handwriting. Coordination isn't a meeting: it is five daily habits — the truthful status, the understood priority, the well-written work order, negotiation without drama and the informed close-out — that turn three departments into a single hotel.

The script, step by step

- 1. The room status is a promise.** “Clean” means a guest can walk in NOW. Marking it early to make your sheet add up is manufacturing the worst possible first impression, with your signature on it.
- 2. Understand the priority, not just the list.** Today's arrivals come first, and within them, those with a confirmed early time. If the Front Office knows the family arrives at 2:00 p.m., your cleaning order is half of its promise.
- 3. The well-written work order.** What is failing, exactly where, since when, how urgent — and whether it affects a guest in the room or an arrival. A vague work order gets handled late; a precise one gets handled first.
- 4. When the Front Office asks for it “now.”** No drama and no heroics: tell the truth about your times (“214 in 20 minutes, I'm halfway through 218”), propose the possible order and let whoever has the full information decide. Negotiating the order is professional; promising the impossible is not.
- 5. The floor close-out informs.** When you finish: what was done, what is pending and why, which breakdowns are still open. Your floor is finished when the next shift and the Front Office know exactly what they are inheriting.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Radios or internal phones	Fixed coordination points and times with the Front Office (for example, at half past every hour) and a single physical channel for urgent matters. Coordination that is poor in resources must be rich in discipline.
The status system (down)	A whiteboard or a single shared sheet, with only one person authorized to update it per shift. Two different lists are worse than none: they are two truths.

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
If a guest asks you about their room in the corridor, contact the Front Office YOURSELF and give them an answer with a time — walk them there if you can.	Answer “that’s a Front Office thing” and carry on with your cart: for them, your uniform is the whole hotel.	Promise times or rooms you don’t control. The promise you can’t keep is paid for by a colleague — and the relationship is paid for by the hotel.

Common mistakes

- ◆ Marking a room clean when it’s “almost done”: that almost is the exact distance between your report and the guest’s face as they walk in.
- ◆ Keeping the small breakdown to yourself “because it’s no big deal”: in a hotel, silence is a breakdown (lesson 3) — and today’s leak is Friday’s flood.
- ◆ Fighting the Front Office’s “now” as if it were an insult: they aren’t ordering you around; they are handing you the visible part of a promise.
- ◆ Closing the floor without a handover: what isn’t reported doesn’t exist, and what doesn’t exist blows up on someone else’s shift.

THE GOLDEN RULE

**“Your floor ends where someone else’s promise begins.
Giving notice is serving.”**

This lesson’s exercise

The Front Office asks you “now” for a room you have just started, and you have another one half done with an arrival at 4:00 p.m. Write your exact answer to the Front Office (the truth about your times and your proposed order), what you reorganize and what you report when you close out. In the answer that follows, I share my version — and with it, we close Module 2.