



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1 · MODULE 3: GUEST RELATIONS · LESSON 15

Owning the Relationship: Anticipate Before You Resolve

*Whoever solves is good.
Whoever anticipates is in another league.*

In five lines

Guest Relations is not the complaints window: it is the position that reads the entire stay and acts before the problem speaks up. In the best hotels in the world, anticipation has one condition: that it goes unnoticed. If the guest mentions in passing that they're getting up early, the wake-up call is offered before they ask for it; if yesterday they asked for strong coffee, today it arrives strong without their asking. The magic lies in making it look like coincidence, not protocol. This lesson trains the muscle of seeing it coming.

The script, step by step

- 1. Listen to what is said in passing.** Real needs are almost never requested: they are mentioned. "What a grueling flight," "I'm up early tomorrow," "my wife has a cold." Every passing remark is an unspoken request — the professional who picks it up crafts anticipation.
- 2. Read the signs of a stay going wrong.** The guest who stops saying hello, the table that no longer comes back to the restaurant, the curt "everything's fine," the room that asks not to be disturbed for three days. Nobody has complained yet — and that "yet" is your golden window.
- 3. Act small and in time.** Anticipation isn't about big gestures: it's the umbrella at the door when rain threatens, the quiet table without being asked, the "I saw you're leaving early: I'll have breakfast ready for you." Small + in time beats big + late, always.
- 4. Without intruding.** Anticipating isn't watching or smothering: if the guest senses they are being observed, the magic turns into discomfort. The measure is simple: act on what they gave you (a sentence, a gesture), never on what you had to chase.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Profile system or CRM	A Guest Relations medium authorized by the hotel — with access limited to those who serve — and five minutes in the briefing are enough: what was heard yesterday — when it is relevant to the service, and only then — becomes a gesture today. Anticipation is team discipline, not software — and its memory lives in the established channel, not in personal notes.
Nothing material to offer	The most valuable anticipation is information and management: warning about the weather, booking before it fills up, handling a formality ahead of time. Anticipating costs nothing: it is acting before the need turns into an incident.

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
Pick up the passing remark, note it and turn it into a gesture — as if it were coincidence.	Turn attention into an interrogation or a constant presence. Show off the gesture (“Have you seen what we’ve prepared for you?”).	Use guest information for anything other than serving them better. Discuss their circumstances with anyone who doesn’t need to know them.

Common mistakes

- ◆ Waiting for the complaint before acting: by the time the guest puts the problem into words, half the solution is already late.
- ◆ Anticipating only for the VIP: the faint signal from the discreet guest is exactly as valuable — and more gratefully received.
- ◆ Picking up the signal and not passing it on: individual anticipation that doesn’t travel to the team dies with your shift.
- ◆ Confusing anticipation with mind reading: you don’t invent what the guest will want; you listen to what they already said.

THE GOLDEN RULE

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Whoever anticipates is in another league.”**

This lesson’s exercise

Write down three early signs of a stay that is going wrong — before anyone has complained — and, for each one, the small, timely gesture you would act with. In the answer that follows, I share mine.