



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1 · MODULE 3: GUEST RELATIONS · LESSON 17

Follow-Up: The Two-Hour Call

*Solving isn't closing.
It's verifying.*

In five lines

Almost every hotel solves; almost none verifies. And right there, in that gap, it is decided whether a problem leaves a scar or creates an ambassador. The two-hour call — “Mrs. Díaz, is the air conditioning in your room working properly now?” — is the cheapest and least-used tool in the industry: it turns a breakdown into proof that the hotel doesn't let go of the matter until the guest is fine. In the best hotels, the response to a mistake is part of the standard, not an exception: a problem resolved extraordinarily well generates more loyalty than a stay without incidents.

The script, step by step

- 1. Solve with an owner.** Every incident has a named person responsible from minute one — whoever received it, until they formally hand it over to someone else. “It's being handled” without an owner is an orphaned problem.
- 2. Close the loop with whoever suffered it.** Fixing the air conditioning doesn't close the incident: the guest closes it. Two hours later (sooner if it was serious), a brief contact: “Is everything to your liking now?” If the answer is lukewarm, the incident is still open — and you have just found out in time. And the loop doesn't close that day: the guest who had an incident stays on Guest Relations' radar until the end of their stay, and at their farewell it is mentioned and they are thanked. The guest with even the smallest complaint is treated with five-star delicacy: that is exactly where their return is decided.
- 3. Compensate with proportion and judgment.** Not everything deserves compensation; almost everything deserves acknowledgment. The healthy scale: a sincere apology → a small gesture → material compensation only when the harm was real. Over-compensating teaches people to complain; under-acknowledging teaches them to leave.
- 4. Record and learn.** Every closed incident feeds two lists: what failed (for Maintenance, Housekeeping or whoever it concerns) and how we responded (for the briefing). The hotel that records turns its mistakes into free training.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Nothing material to compensate with	The follow-up IS the compensation: the call, the face, the “we haven't let it go.” Most guests don't want gifts: they want to feel important to the hotel.
Time (an overloaded shift)	The follow-up fits into 40 seconds and delegates well: any informed colleague can make the call — the system from lesson 3 in action. What you cannot do is not do it.

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
Give your name when you take the incident and reappear when you verify it: the same face that heard the problem confirms the solution.	Hide behind another department ("that's Maintenance's job") or tell the guest about the internal difficulties of fixing it.	Consider an incident closed without asking the guest. Promise compensation that never arrives: the second disappointment weighs twice as much as the first.

Common mistakes

- ◆ Solving the technical problem and ignoring the emotional one: the air conditioning is cooling again, but the guest is still hot under the collar.
- ◆ The follow-up call with a survey script: two human sentences are worth more than five form questions.
- ◆ Compensating to keep the guest quiet in the review: it shows, it offends and it costs dearly. You compensate to repair, not to buy.
- ◆ Not giving notice of the delay: a problem that takes time, with information, is management; the same problem in silence is abandonment.

THE GOLDEN RULE

**"Solving isn't closing.
It's verifying."**

This lesson's exercise

Write your two-hour call, word for word, for this case: a hot-water breakdown fixed this morning in a family's room. A 60-second script at most: greeting, verification, closing. In the answer that follows, I share mine — and we begin Module 4: Butler and Personalized Service.