



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1 · MODULE 11: SECURITY · LESSON 38

Hotel Security: Firmness With a Smile

The best security is the kind that says hello.

In five lines

The hotel security officer works inside a paradox: their presence must deter whoever comes to do harm and, at the same time, welcome whoever comes to rest — in the same uniform and in the same second. That's why hotel security is unlike any other: its main tool is not force but friendly observation, the greeting that takes note, the presence that reassures some precisely because it makes others uncomfortable. A good hotel security officer is, above all, a host with trained eyes.

The script, step by step

- 1. The greeting that observes.** Every “good morning” of yours does two jobs: hospitality toward the guest and silent verification of observable circumstances — are they registered? Where are they heading? Does their behavior call for help or directions? Courtesy is your best control tool: for the guest it is a welcome; for the intruder, a warning that they have been seen.
- 2. The friendly interception.** When behavior doesn't fit — coming in without registering, a long wait with no apparent purpose, heading toward a restricted area — the first approach is always one of service: “Good afternoon, may I help you? Who are you visiting?” Said with a smile, it resolves 95% of cases without friction: it guides the legitimate visitor and deters the rest — without having accused anyone.
- 3. Discretion as a uniform.** Security matters are handled in a low voice, without an audience and without a show: the hotel sells peace of mind, and nothing breaks it like seeing security in dramatic action. Effective firmness is the kind almost nobody notices.
- 4. A record of everything.** Every incident, check or oddity is entered in the authorized report: time, place, an objective description of the facts and the action taken — with no unnecessary personal data and no judgments about people; it is consulted by whoever needs it and kept according to the hotel's protocol. The security report is the hotel's protective memory — and your professional backing if one day what happened has to be reconstructed.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Technical means (cameras, access control)	Presence and method complement whatever is missing — they never replace the means required by the risk assessment, regulations or protocol: if those are missing, they are requested and the shortfall is corrected. A temporary measure is only acceptable when the risk assessment and the protocol allow the activity to continue without those means; if they are necessary to operate safely, the area or activity is shut down and the corresponding contingency plan is activated. Where the activity is permitted: patrols at irregular times (predictable only to you), well-chosen observation points and coordination with the front desk as a second line of eyes. The hotel's best camera was always an attentive professional — working with the proper means, not in their place.
Team (a solo shift)	The support chain is prepared before you need it: who responds at night, how the alert is raised, what is done and what is not done alone. A lone security officer never handles on their own what requires two: containing and raising the alert are one and the same action.

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
Greet everyone: the greeting is hospitality and verification at the same time. Intercept by asking how you can help. Handle things in a low voice and without an audience.	Look at a guest with visible suspicion because of their appearance: a profile is not a criterion — behavior is. Turn a check into an interrogation.	Touch anyone except when strictly necessary for protection. Humiliate the person you intercept in public: security that shames creates the very conflict it was meant to prevent.

Common mistakes

- ◆ Confusing presence with intimidation: the security officer with crossed arms and a fixed frown makes the guest more uncomfortable than the intruder.
- ◆ Easing off observation during quiet hours: incidents choose precisely the hours when nobody is watching.
- ◆ Trusting the shift's memory to your head: what isn't recorded didn't happen — and what didn't happen protects no one.
- ◆ Acting out of territorial pride: your job isn't to win the situation — it's to make sure the situation never comes to exist.

THE GOLDEN RULE

“The best security is the kind that says hello.”

This lesson's exercise

Someone unidentified crosses the lobby toward the elevators with a determined stride, without looking at anyone. Write your complete interception: how you approach, your exact first sentence, what you do if they respond well — and what you do if they respond badly. In the answer that follows, I share my version.