



IN FRONT OF THE GUEST · SEASON 1 · MODULE 13: THE TEAM, THE SHIFT AND QUALITY · LESSON 44

The Briefing and the Handover: Information Is Service

*You look after a colleague
the way you look after a guest.*

In five lines

There are two moments in the day when a hotel decides whether it will work as a team or as a sum of individuals: the briefing that opens the shift and the handover that closes it — both planned and organized within working hours, because they are work. Ten minutes well used in the first put the whole day in order; four minutes well spent in the second keep the next shift from inheriting mines without a map. Both share the same principle, which is the thesis of this module: you look after a colleague the way you look after a guest — with complete information, on time and without them having to chase it. Internal service is the invisible scaffolding of external service.

The script, step by step

- 1. The useful briefing, in 10 minutes.** Four points and not one more: the snapshot of the day (occupancy, key arrivals and departures), the spotlights (VIPs, occasions, guests in recovery from lessons 41-42), the live issues (what is broken, what is missing, what was promised) and the message of the day (one priority, not seven). A briefing that drags on dies; one that gets skipped kills the day.
- 2. Listening to a briefing is a craft too.** You arrive on time, note what concerns you in the authorized shift log (the VIP's name, the room that is out of order; an allergy or any other sensitive data is looked up in — and lives in — the authorized system, not in personal notes) and ask about whatever wasn't clear — the doubt you keep quiet in the briefing reappears at five in the afternoon in front of a guest.
- 3. The handover that loses nothing.** Four minutes with a fixed structure: what's open (tasks half done, with an owner and a status), what was promised (to whom, what, by when), what's odd (the weak signal, the oddity of the day) and what's pending verification (the lesson 17 follow-ups that fall due on the incoming shift). The critical items in writing: spoken memory expires in the parking lot.
- 4. Receiving a handover means accepting it.** The incoming shift asks questions until it understands: from the "OK" on, following up on what you inherited is yours — its ownership, its deadlines, its promises. Whatever wasn't communicated to you remains the responsibility of whoever failed to communicate it, and an impossible promise is not inherited: it is renegotiated with the guest and recorded. "Nobody told me" is never said to the guest: you guarantee continuity and, through the internal channel, the incomplete handover is corrected.

With limited resources: how to hold the standard

If you don't have...	How to hold the standard
Time for a formal briefing	It is compressed, not eliminated: three minutes standing in the service pantry covering the four points deliver 90% of the value. And if one day even that isn't possible, the briefing travels in writing — read and confirmed, not just sent.
Handover tools (logbook, system)	A single shift log — whichever one the hotel authorizes — with the four fixed sections. What matters isn't the format: it's that there is only one authorized place where the truth of the shift lives — two logs are two truths, and you already know from lesson 14 that that is worse than none. Sensitive data (health, allergies, minors) doesn't travel in it: it lives in the appropriate system.

In front of the guest

DO	DON'T	NEVER
Convey perfect continuity to the guest: “yes, my colleague passed it on to me — it's under way for five o'clock.”	Make them notice the shift change (“that was the morning shift,” “I have no record of that”): for the guest, the hotel doesn't have shifts — it either has a memory or it doesn't.	Blame the previous shift in front of the guest: it's the internal version of the sin from lesson 3, and it defines teams that sink.

Common mistakes

- ◆ The monologue briefing: with no questions and no focus, it's a weather report nobody remembers by eleven.
- ◆ The corridor handover (“all quiet, see you”): that ‘all quiet’ is where the next shift's bombs lie sleeping.
- ◆ Hoarding information as power (“I'm handling that, end of story”): in a hotel, withheld information doesn't make you important — it makes you a bottleneck.
- ◆ Not closing the handover loop: the note in the authorized system, within your shift (“214 sorted, thanks for leaving it all tied up”), builds the culture that later saves you. You don't message a colleague who is already resting — unless they are on call, there is an emergency or availability has been formally established: their disconnection is also part of a handover done well.

THE GOLDEN RULE

**“You look after a colleague
the way you look after a guest.”**

This lesson's exercise

Write two pieces: the 10-minute briefing for a complicated day (hotel at 95%, a group checking in, a hotel-wide breakdown and two absences on the team) with its four points, and the perfect 4-minute handover to the afternoon shift that same day. In the answer that follows, I share my version.