Guest Farewell

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Introduction

The beginning and the end of a guest's experience are the two most memorable parts of a guest journey. We know already that an excellent first impression is key to a great start; with this SOP we want to make sure that the importance of an equally great goodbye and fond farewell is not underestimated or forgotten.

Some would go as far as to say that a fond farewell is actually even more important than the welcome. This theory is supported by research, suggesting that the last interaction is remembered more often than the welcome.

The goodbye is your last and one of your most notable chances to bond with the guest. It will also add an important final chapter to the overall service experience.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- Highlight the importance of a memorable farewell
- Promote personalized service and professionalism
- Ensure everyone follows the same high standards
- Serve as a training guide

Scope

All (insert company name here) employees.

Locations

All UK (insert company name here) locations
Core Principal

Guest goodbyes should never be rushed or skipped altogether.

At (insert company name here), we want every guest to be recognised as an individual and leave knowing that their visit has been valued. Not acknowledging someone upon their departure can often spoil their overall experience and leave them feeling disappointed, especially when the welcome was exceptionally warm, genuine and friendly.

Make sure your goodbye is just as good as your hello.
1. Why is a good farewell so important?

You most likely would have experienced the importance of a fond farewell at one point or another yourself but if not; imagine this - you had a great meal in your favourite restaurant, the host was lovely and welcoming, the food was exceptional and your waiter/waitress could have not been more accommodating and enthusiastic. However, on your way out everyone is busy and nobody notices you leaving. How would that make you feel? How would this end the initially wonderful experience?

Alternatively, if you had friends over for dinner at your house - would you allow them to leave without extending a warm and memorable goodbye at the end? Why not? Why would it be important to you to finish the evening on a high note? The answer is simple – you know that the experience would not be complete without it.

Another example of great goodbyes can be seen when taking a flight. All good and reputable airlines have made it a standard for the crew to stand by the door, upon arriving at your destination, to extend a warm goodbye to all passengers. It shows that the farewell is important even when the journey has come to an end.

Although guest experiences in our environment may be different and more formal, the feeling we convey at any point of the interaction, and especially upon departure, should be the same.
2. Personalise the farewell

There is nothing more powerful than a personalised farewell. The best way to achieve this is by using the guest name.

We understand you may have hundreds of visitors each day but why not set yourself an achievable target? Aim to remember 10 names a day. Example: When Ms Julie Gold checks in make a conscious effort to remember her name. When she approaches the desk on her way out say “Ms Gold, how was your meeting?”. Ms Gold will be well impressed and by using her name you will make her feel special. Just think, how you would feel if someone used your last name, especially in a busy environment where you would expect it the least?

Referring to something they said on check-in also adds to the personalisation. The reason for their visit is often a good reference point. Just ensure not to come across nosy or intrusive. If you know they attended an interview ask “How did the interview go?” or if they were here for a meeting say “I hope your meeting went well”.

If handled properly, this type of farewell will be personal, resonant and long lasting.
3. Office Concierge Services

As a high end office provider, we must strive to provide exceptional service wherever possible and the farewell offers us another great opportunity to do so. The position of Office Receptionist is often also referred to as Office Concierge. This is because the services provided at the reception are often very similar to what people experience in hotels when speaking to the concierge.

So think of yourself not only as a receptionist but a concierge. The next time you interact with a guest why not check if they need any further assistance? Be prepared to not only give directions to the nearest tube station but also make sure you can help with the following:

- Arranging transport such as taxis and car services
- Know your local area and local businesses such as hairdresser, shops, restaurants etc.
- Be able to make bookings for lunch, a spa treatment, a local attraction etc.
- Have lifestyle and cultural offerings at hand
- Be aware of interesting facts and places to see nearby
- Know opening and closing times as well as how to get there

Providing concierge services will elevate you from good to outstanding. Guests and hosts are likely to make you their preferred point of contact.
4. Stopping by reception on way out

We would expect most of our guests to stop by reception to return their visitor badge. Although, this interaction may only last a few seconds, do ensure you give it your full attention.

Here is what you should remember:

- Stand up
- Apply the 5-10 rule
- Pay full attention to the approaching guest and stop whatever else you are doing
- Greet the returning guest first and with a warm and sincere smile
- Make eye contact and use their name if known
- Include a reference to their visit e.g. “How was your meeting?” etc.
- If there was a queue, acknowledge the waiting guest say/mouth “I will be with you shortly”
- If guest was previously waiting, say “Thank you for your patience”
- Request the visitor pass back. You can do so by saying “I am glad your meeting went well. May I kindly ask for your visitor pass?”
- Take a discreet look at the visitor pass and use the guest name from now on if you could not remember their name earlier
- Ask "Ms Gold, is there anything else I can assist with?"
- Offer help “Are you okay to find your way back to the underground or would you like me to point you into the right direction?”
- Make sure to include services as outlined in section 3 of this SOP
- Say “Have a lovely day” or “Have a pleasant journey”
- Maintain eye contact and a genuine smile throughout
- Maintain a good posture throughout
- Only sit down once the guest has left the building
5. Passing by reception on way out

There isn’t always the need for a guest to stop by the reception on their way out and some sites have drop off boxes for visitor passes by the exit door. However, just because the guest is not approaching the desk does not mean we shouldn’t provide a friendly farewell or acknowledge their departure.

Always remember: check your surrounding regularly. The Lighthouse method (also see SOP X Meet & Greet) should be applied frequently. This way you won’t miss any guest on their way out.

If a guest does not look at you, whilst leaving the site, no need to shout out or force a farewell. However, be prepared and the moment they do look up/make eye contact be ready to smile back at them and say goodbye. This requires you to be observant at all times and to anticipate guests’ behaviour.
6. What if you are busy?

Being busy is not an excuse to not acknowledge guests on departure. You must be able to multi-task. You should be able to handle a phone call or deal with a visitor in front of you whilst you still recognise departing guests.

You do not have to stop what you are doing but do look up, smile and mouth “goodbye”.
7. Exceptions

There are no exceptions.

Declaration

The aforementioned procedures are to be followed at all times with the utmost strictness. Not following the procedures has the potential to damage company reputation. Any team member found not to be following aforementioned procedure will face disciplinary action.

This standard operating procedure is in accordance to the organization's mission statement and has been reviewed and approved as outlined at the beginning of this document.
Training Record Log

I understand the Standard Operating Procedures for “Guest Farewell” and will comply with it at all times:

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