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Briefing No. 4

Standard of Courtesy

1. ***Announce the Topic***

This briefing is about presenting or handing items to guests

2. ***Why this is Important***

A lot of our work is delivering, handing, serving or presenting things to guests. We present baggage, keys, food, laundry, or whatever.

When we present things courteously and professionally, the guest is happy - we have given good service

We present things so that the guest will believe we are sincerely interested in taking care of them.

Whenever we present something we must enter the guest's personal space, and we must do this courteously, without causing any disturbance. We must respect the guest's personal space.


3. ***Our Standard of Courtesy***

Introduce the correct way of presenting by first demonstrating one or two wrong ways. Pick one staff and announce that he is the guest. Then give an example relevant to your staff like this:

“Suppose Nguyen is the guest. She has just ordered an orange juice and I’m going to present it. I’ll show you how to do it.” Then walk over to Nguyen and do it wrong: bang the glass on the table, or say “You want orange juice” or just put the drink down and walk away without saying a word.

Then ask the staff “Was the correct way of presenting”. “No!” “Of course not”. “What is the correct way?”

Get staff to tell you the courteous actions and correct language to use. Get them to tell you as much as possible and explain the points they don't know. Then display the flip chart with the standard written down and repeat the points.

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Our Standard of Courtesy

Courteous Actions

- * Approach the guest in such a way that he can see you coming
- * Stop about a metre from the guest and look in his eyes
- * Speak clearly (“Your COFFEE, sir”) and then present or serve it
- * If the guest does not notice you or if he is occupied, always get his attention by excusing yourself (“ExcUSE me”) Make sure you have his attention before presenting.

- * Be careful not to startle the guest by speaking to him from behind

- * Note: If you are presenting something to a guest you have not dealt with earlier (i.e. he gave his order to someone else and you are just delivering it) then remember to greet him before presenting
e.g. “Good Morning, sir. Your Coffee.”

Courteous English


- * “Your COFFEE, sir”
- * “Your TELEX, Mr. Ha”
- * “Your TOWELS, Mrs Cheung”
- * If the guest is occupied or does not notice you, say: “Excuse me”
e.g. “Excuse me, sir. Your coffee.”

4. **Questions**

Any questions?

5. **Common Mistakes and Discourtesies**

(Discuss the common mistakes and discourtesies. Get the staff to tell you as many points as possible - ask :”What are the mistakes people make when presenting or serving things to guests?” Make sure you cover the points below)

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Common Mistakes and Discourtesies

Wrong Actions

- * Handing or presenting items without saying anything
- * Being afraid to present something to a guest because he appears occupied
- * Approaching the guest from behind, and then surprising him because he can't see you coming
- * Trying to get the guest's attention by Making noise, coughing or touching him.

Wrong English

- * Just saying the name of the item you present, e.g. saying "Beer", "Coffee", "Laundry", etc.
- * Saying: "This is your coffee"
"Your Beer, please"
"Your towels, thank you"
- * When not sure who ordered which items, saying;
"Who is medium rare steak?"
"Are you chicken?"
"You want beer?"
"Your ordered more towels?"
"You like tea"
- * Saying: "Excuse me, please"
"Please" is unnecessary when you say "Excuse me"
Better to say: "Excuse me, madam"
- * Saying "Sorry" when you mean "Excuse me"
e.g. "Sorry, your coffee"

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6. **Language Points**

Note that the expression “This is you” should be used only when you are presenting something which the recipient does not recognise or does not expect. So this is rarely needed by the staff. It is so much better to simply say: “Your , sir”

You can also say “Here Is your key, Mr. Smith” but “Here is” is not necessary. It sounds much better when you say “Your key, Mr. Smith.”

If you wish to present something but are not sure it belongs to that person (e.g. a book or magazine left behind in the restaurant) then say “Excuse me, is this your ?”

It is much better to say “Excuse me, sir. Your coffee.” than to say “Excuse me. Your Coffee, sir.” but both are correct.

When presenting something, the correct procedure is this:
 First speak, then present

7. **Questions**

Any questions?

8. **Drill the language**

The language of this briefing is so simple that you do not need to spend much time drilling.

The way to practice this language is very simple: you call out items, one by one, and your group adds the words “your”

e.g.

- Trainer: : “Coffee”
- Staff : “Your COFFEE, sir”
- Trainer : “Scrambled eggs”
- Staff : “Your SCRAMBLED EGGS, sir”

You will need to have prepared a list of about 7 items which your staff normally present to guests.

After running through your list of items, then repeat with “Excuse me”

e.g.

- Trainer: : “Telex”
- Staff : “Excuse me, sir, Your TELEX”

You do not need to spend much time on this - about three minutes is sufficient. However even though it is very simple, it is necessary to practise

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Make sure that the staff speak with the correct stress:
e.g. “Your TOWELS, Mr. Brown”

Also make sure the staff pronounce the word “excuse correctly.

9. **Activity: The Q**

Get all the staff to stand in a semi-circle. Give each person a card with one typical item written on each card.

(e.g. Housekeeping cards should be : “Towels”, “Stationary”, “Hairdryer”, “Bathrobe”, “Laundry”, etc.) You need one card per participant, although it is alright to have two copies of each card.

Explain that you play the part of the guest: and staff take turns in walking up to you and present their cards.

Sit or stand in front of the group. Staff take turns to step forward and present their cards, using the courteous English and courteous body language. You should remind staff what the courteous body language is before beginning the exercise.

Example: If the card says “Bill”, the staff says: “Your BILL, sir” and presents the card to you. You keep this card

After everyone has done this, shuffle the cards, hand them out again and repeat exercise, but this time do it with “Excuse me, sir”.

To do this you should pretend that as guest you do not notice staff approaching. Pretend to read or look away until staff says “Excuse me” and then allow him to present his card.

Make sure that staff pause between the “excuse me, sir” and “your . . . “

Two rounds of this activity will be sufficient if your staff do it correctly. If not continue to practice until you and they are confident.

During the Q, stop from time to time and stand up to focus on one of the key points. e.g. stand and say: Did you notice that Ms. Fee paused between “excuse me sir; and “your Carlsberg”. That’s important. We don’t want our guest to feel rushed, and we want to give them time to react, So we say “excuse me sir” and then we pause and wait until we have his attention and then we say “your Carlsberg” and present it.

Your interruption should not be long and lengthy, keep the exercise going for good impact.

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10. **Questions?**

Any questions?

11. **Summary**

Make sure you have the attention of the guest before presenting. If the guest is occupied, say excuse me, sir”. When presenting something, use words. Say “your Beer, sir”, “you telex sir, or whatever.

Silent service is not good enough. Serve guests with courteous words as well as courteous actions.