5 Moments That Make or Break the Guest Experience

A practical guide to emotional intelligence during real hospitality shifts.

Exceptional service depends on what happens in the moment.

Your team already knows how to care for guests. The challenge is staying connected to that intention when the lobby is full, a guest is upset, or the shift takes an unexpected turn.

Use these five moments to start a conversation with your team. Each includes a question for your next pre-shift huddle.

01 THE FRUSTRATED GUEST

A guest arrives disappointed. The employee feels blamed and wants to defend the property.

Huddle question: What could we notice in ourselves before responding to the guest?

02 THE OVERWHELMED FRONT DESK

The phone is ringing, the line is growing, and every guest needs attention.

Huddle question: What helps us remain attentive to the person in front of us, even when we are moving quickly?

03 THE DIFFICULT COWORKER

A tense exchange between colleagues threatens to carry into the next guest interaction.

Huddle question: How can we recognize our own reaction without passing that tension to someone else?

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The Moments Continue

04 THE EXHAUSTED TEAM MEMBER

A long shift, personal worries, or an unexpected problem has drained someone’s energy.

Huddle question: What is one small way to regain steadiness before the next interaction?

05 THE STRESSED MANAGER

A leader has to correct a problem while the team is already under pressure.

Huddle question: What emotional tone do we want our team to experience when we address a mistake?

TAKE 60™: Sit. Breathe. Think. Feel.™

Sit: Find a moment of steadiness, seated or standing safely where you are.

Breathe: Take a comfortable breath and notice your body.

Think: What is happening? What response would serve this moment?

Feel: Name what you feel without letting it make the decision for you.

TAKE 60™ is a brief, educational practice. It does not replace service training, safety procedures, breaks, or professional care. Adapt it to the realities of each role.

TRY THIS AT YOUR NEXT PRE-SHIFT HUDDLE

Pick one of the five moments. Ask the huddle question. Invite each person to name one response they want to practice on shift. Revisit it tomorrow.

Better human experiences. Better human performance.

Want to explore TAKE 60™ with your team? JOYELY offers a 30-day Service Presence Pilot for hospitality properties. Start with a 15-minute conversation at joyely.com.