



**SECRETS OF  
SUCCESSFUL GUEST  
COMPLAINT HANDLING  
IN HOTEL & RESTAURANT**  
Practical  
Training Manual

Hotelier Tanji

# **Secrets of Successful Guest Complaint Handling in Hotel & Restaurant**

**Practical Training Manual for Hoteliers &  
Hospitality Management Students**

**Hotelier Tanji**

Owner

[www.hospitality-school.com](http://www.hospitality-school.com)

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## **PREFACE**

***Secrets of Successful Guest Complaint Handling in Hotel & Restaurant, 1<sup>st</sup> edition*** is the exclusive training manual from [hospitality-school.com](http://hospitality-school.com).

Guest complaints are inevitable. It is quite hard to make every guest happy and satisfied. In hotel industry while servicing the guest, problems or issues could be raised intentionally or unintentionally which often makes the guests dissatisfied about the service of the hotel. But the number of complaints can be minimized by taking some steps and prior arrangement.

In this manual we have share all our secret tips and tricks for better and effective guest complaint handling. From theoretical discussion to case studies analysis – we have cover everything that you will need to handle any complaint or criticism by your guest.

Do read this training manual with utmost attention and start deal with guest complaint with more positive energy and confidence.

mouth. Second, complaints show management where the hotels problems are, so the operation can be improved.



**Fig:** Complains and Opportunities for Improvement

### **How Guest Complaints Contribute in the Welfare of the Hotels?**

Why do you feel guest complaints are awful for your property? Try to think in different way. Don't you feel it is helpful for you to find out weaknesses of your property and a chance to resolve that? A valid, logical complaint is the feedback from your guest by handling which you can improve your hotel or restaurant on the other hand ignoring such complaint will result serious loss in future.

## Unit-2: Principles of Handling Complaints

Handling complaints is such an art which needs to be adopted by all hoteliers. There are some basic principles you need to know and use while handling any complaints raised by guests. These are some basic rules for the successful handling of complaints. If you ignore or forget any of these, a simple complaint can turn to be a huge issue. These are all basic but most powerful must follow principles of handling complaints.

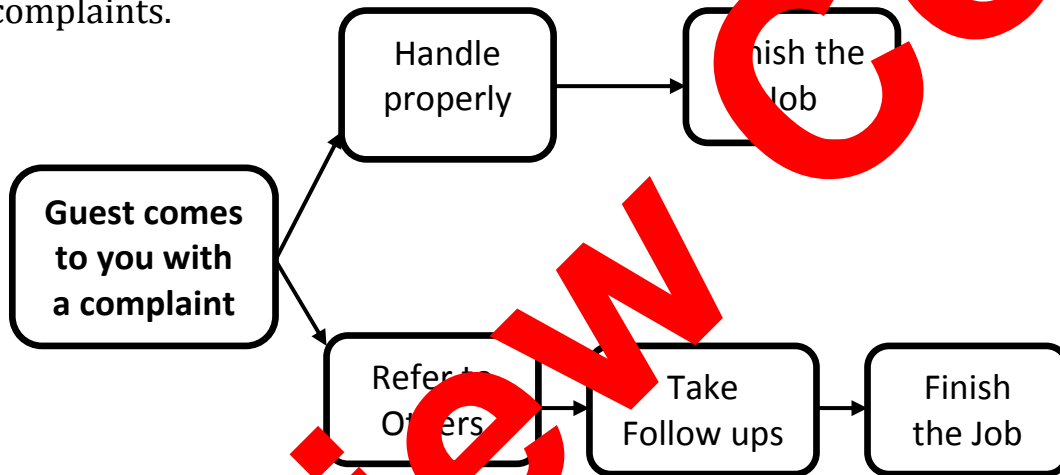


Figure: Complaint Handling Flowchart

In this unit we will learn some major principles of guest handling. Let's know what these are.

1. Make set up
2. Using Polite Language
3. Proper Listening



## **Unit-4: 50 Popular Incidents that Make Your Guest Unhappy at Restaurant**

Worldwide there are 50 top incidents that trigger guests to become unhappy with your service provided in restaurant. If you are an F & B Manager or supervisor then you should use this list as a checklist to train your staffs to be careful with these incidents and try to avoid these.

### **50 Incidents behind Guest's Unhappiness are:**

1. When ashtrays have more than 2 butts in them.
2. When salads are at room temperature.
3. When water glasses are not automatically refilled.
4. When hotel food and beverages are served on cold plates or in old cups.
5. When hot food is not hot and when cold food is not cold.
6. When the R/S phone rings more than 5 times before being answered.
7. When a guest is put on hold for more than 30 seconds.
8. When dishes or glasses are chipped.
9. When silver on tables is spotted or tarnished.
10. When glasses are streaked. (Hold them up to the light and you will see).

## 5: Improper Service Quality of F & B Department:

Following are some of the common reasons that often be responsible for guest complaint:

Reasons	How to solve
The Table has cleared and ready after previous guest's departure.	Get the table ready before next arrival and previous departure.
The waiter did not acknowledge the guest or did not come to the table for taking order.	Immediately approach to the guest after the guest is being seated no matter how much are you busy. If you are busy then attend the guest and politely ask the guest to wait for few minutes.
Too long waiting for food to be delivered.	Always inform the guest the approximate preparation time of meal and check with the kitchen to get update and seek apology from the guest for delay.
Wrong place of order.	Listen carefully what the guest is ordering and write down the order properly. If needed repeat the order to the guest.
The waiter did not come to the table for taking any further order after taking first order.	Take follow up and update while the guest is taking food. Always make eye contact with the guest.
The waiter did not ask for another refreshment.	Offer to replenish since it is considered as poor quality of service.
Restaurant customer complains of cold vegetables or under cooked food.	Instantly remove the food and replace with fresh vegetable or properly cooked food.

## Unit-7: Value of Dissatisfied Guest

From a survey, run on some well-established hotels in America, regarding hotel guest complaints, following key points have been found:

### Reasons Behind Guest's Dissatisfactin:

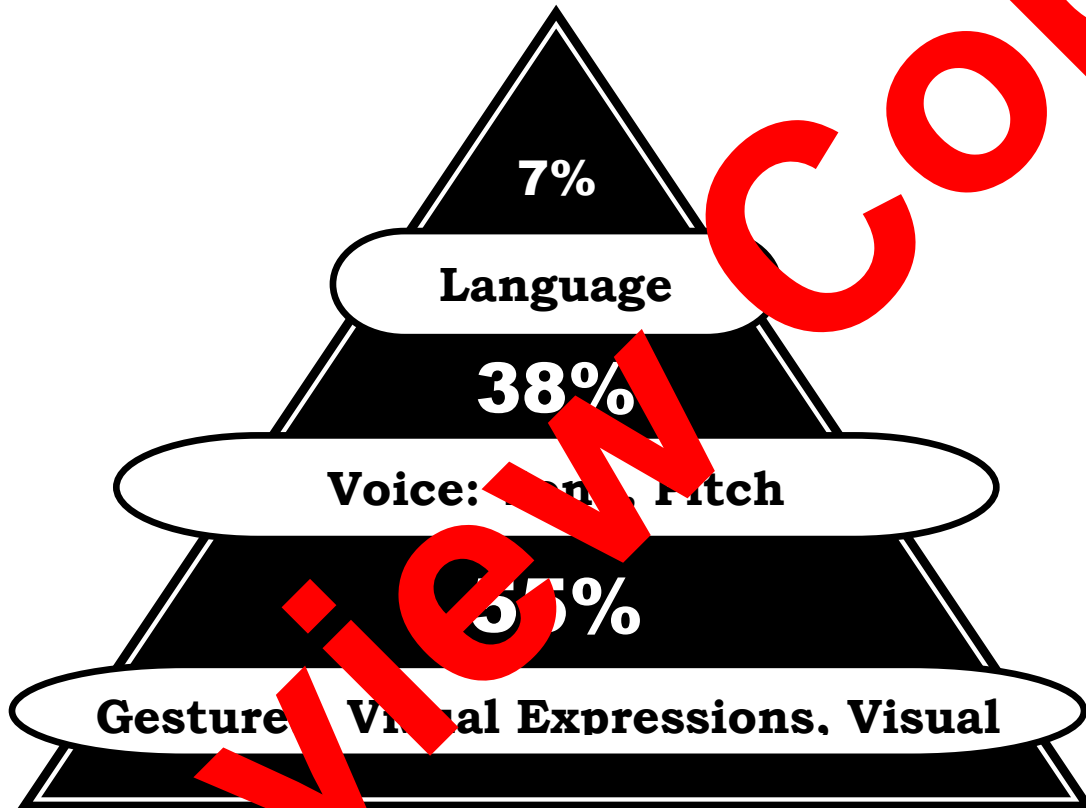
- 68% of lost guests do not return because of poor service by the staffs.
- 32% do not return because of death, relocation, competition and poor products and facilities.

### Percentage of Lost Guests:

- Less than 5% dissatisfied guests speak out which means 95% of them remain silent and out of 20 dissatisfied guests you can only know about 1.
- Half of those 95% silent dissatisfied guest do not return. They didn't speak and that's why their problem remain unsolved.
- Majority of guests in this 95% group share their dissatisfaction with their friends and others and among them 10% to 15% just come to know the matter and keep it among themselves but the worst thing happens when other 5% to 10% of his friends and relatives share that story with another 20 person. In hospitality industry 1-11-5 rule is practiced which suggests that 1 unhappy guest will share his dissatisfaction with at least 11 person and each of those 11 person will again share the story with 5 more.

## Unit-11: Basic Guest Complaint Handling Methods

Inappropriate words can hurt or incite anger in another. However, it is not the most powerful form of communication. According to the experts the breakdown is as follows:



There are some basic methods to be followed by every hotelier specially by the complaint handling staffs to handle guest complaints in an efficient and professional way so that in spite of having complaints, guests will not be dissatisfied with the service procedures of the hotel.

## Unit-12: Step by Step Guest Complaint Handling (SOP)

### Step-1:

When a guest with a complaint or request approaches you, follow the basic steps of Making It Right:

- **Listen:** Listen intently making mental notes, with the right body language- put on a serious face, nod your head. Remember: take notes if the information is very detailed and specific.
- **Apologize with Empathy:** Apologize and put yourself in the guests' situation. No matter how insignificant the matter is to you, it must be dealt with seriously.
- **Find a Solution:** All problems have a solution - that's the approach to use. Try and find the simplest and clearest solution. If you are unable to do inform a supervisor or manager.
- **Follow Through:** After a problem has been resolved, go back to the guest to ensure he is satisfied. Even if the problem is being solved by someone else, you were the one who the problem was brought to- follow through accordingly. Take personal responsibility of the issue.

### Step

The guest, who is complaining, should be informed of the action(s) being taken every step of the way. If you are unaware of what to do,

## Unit-21: Relevant Expressions Used while Handling Guest Complaint

### Possible problems or complaints

- There are not enough towels in my room.
- The sink is leaking in the bathroom.
- This tread mill isn't working properly.
- How did my child get so dirty?
- I seem to have misplaced my tennis racket.
- Has one been turned in?
- I specifically requested an ocean view, but the room I was given has a view of the pool.
- This soup is not warm enough.
- This fish tastes like soap.
- Why is our order taking so long?
- We have no ketchup at this table.

### Responses to problems or complaints:

- I'll see to that right away ma'am.
- I'll correct the situation immediately, sir.
- I'm so sorry sir; that should never have happened.
- I'll take care of that right away sir.
- I'll see to it immediately.

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