

Talk a Lot

Hotel

What Would You Do?

Read the problems below and decide which group each one belongs in: **facilities**, **guests**, **staff**, or **food and drink**. There are four problems in each group. Then offer some advice to each person. Try to use some of the **discussion words**, **idioms**, **phrasal verbs**, and **slang words and phrases** from this unit in each answer:

1. One of the guests won't pay for their drinks, because they reckon that I promised them a few free pints last night, but I didn't. Or if I did, I can't remember...

5. I booked for two weeks, but unfortunately I can only stay for one. I would like to rearrange the second week for later in the year, but the duty manager says no...

9. Somebody is stealing petty cash from the till in reception. I've got my suspicions that it's Jenny, but she's the owner's niece, so what can I say?

13. We sat down ten minutes ago, and we're still waiting to order. The waiter seems to be ignoring us on purpose...

2. I really like my job, but I need to pass my exams if I want to find a better one in the future. But George won't give me time off to study...

6. Two out of three running machines in the fitness suite are out of order, and guests are starting to complain. But the person who can fix them is on holiday...

10. I ate too much last night, and I'm really paying for it this morning. I've got the worst hangover in the world ever! I was praying to the porcelain god [being sick] for hours!

14. I'm thinking about having my daughter's wedding at this hotel, but I don't like the manager's price for the reception...

3. I signed up for three days of sauna and spa treatments, but it looks like I'm going to be out all day tomorrow, so I'd like to get some of my money back...

7. Last week I found out that Tina is getting more money than me! We do the same job for the same hours - and I've been here two years longer than her!

11. This hotel is appalling! I can't think of anything that's right about it! I'm going to complain to the owner if I don't get a full refund immediately!

15. It's not very clear how much I'll have to pay if I order food and drink from my room. Please could you explain what I have to do?

4. I've accidentally damaged a piece of expensive equipment in the hotel. I don't think anybody knows, although two kids were walking past when I did it...

8. When I arrived my room looked like a bomb had hit it [very untidy]! Of course, I asked for a different one, but since then I've been sitting here in reception for the past half an hour...

12. Donald has got really bad breath and BO [body odour], and some of the guests have started to notice. I don't want to say anything because he's so quiet, and I owe him £25...

16. Some guests have complained about the food in our restaurant. The chef is off sick with food poisoning at the moment, so I've had to oversee all of the cooking myself...

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Discussion Questions

- 1.** Do you like staying in hotels? Why? / Why not? Think about different places that you've stayed in. Tell me about... a) the best, b) the worst, c) the most exotic, d) the dirtiest, e) the poshest, f) the strangest, g) the cheapest. Which would you recommend? Have you been back?
- 2.** What kind of guest are you when you stay in a hotel? How does your behaviour differ from when you are at home? Do you tidy your room before the maid comes to clean it? Do you leave generous tips for hotel staff? Do you steal the towels or little shampoos from the bathroom? Give examples.
- 3.** Would you like to work in a hotel? Why? / Why not? If yes, which job would you like to do? Which job(s) would you never try? Why not?
- 4.** Describe a typical day's work for each of these people: a) a maid, b) a waiter, c) a receptionist, d) a bouncer, e) a duty manager, f) a head chef. Which job do you think is... i) the easiest, ii) the hardest, iii) the most fun? etc.
- 5.** Define hospitality. Are you a hospitable person? Do you enjoy having friends and family to stay at your house? Do you often have dinner parties and/or barbecues? Why? / Why not? Have you ever had to give hospitality to somebody when you didn't want to? What happened? Tell me more.
- 6.** Compare the advantages and disadvantages of having a holiday... a) at a B&B, b) at a four-star hotel, c) at a campsite, d) at self-catering accommodation, e) at home, etc. List the places in order of preference.
- 7.** If you were the manager of a grotty two-star hotel that was in danger of closure, how would you try to boost the morale of your fretful staff team?
- 8.** Do you use the spa and leisure facilities when you stay at a hotel? Have you ever had a massage, or tried alternative therapies? What happened?

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Agree or Disagree?

Do you agree or disagree with these statements? Say why. Find out what your partner thinks, and mark the boxes with ✓ for agree and ✗ for disagree:

	Me:	My Partner:
1. A hotel is a place where I feel I can completely relax and chill out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I like to use the same hotel when I visit a place again.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I believe the saying is true: the customer <i>is</i> always right.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. In general, hotel staff have to work really hard for very low wages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <i>"Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even though you wish they were."</i> – Anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I would rather go self-catering than pay for a hotel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Hotel staff should all have excellent communication skills, and be multi-lingual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I love having guests to stay at my home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. <i>"A hotel isn't like a home, but it's better than being a house guest."</i> – William Feather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Home-cooked food generally tastes much better than hotel food.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I tend to lose my swipe card or key within a few hours of booking in at reception.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. <i>"I've always thought a hotel ought to offer optional small animals. I mean, a cat to sleep on your bed at night, or a dog of some kind to act pleased when you come in. You ever notice how a hotel room feels so lifeless?"</i> – Anne Tyler	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. When I host a dinner party I'm always the life and soul of the party.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Hotel staff should always smile and be polite – even if they don't mean it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. <i>"There's no place like home!"</i> – Dorothy in <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>