

**FREE DOWNLOAD**

# The 8 SOS Cards for Hospitality Teams

Eight pocket-sized scripts for the moments that decide a shift — guest complaints, team tension, exhaustion, onboarding, the close. Use them as-is, or adapt to your house.

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## **How to use this guide**

- Read once. Pick the two cards your team needs most this month.
- Print, laminate, or keep in the staff area. Refer to them, don't recite them.
- Want the print-ready deck or a workshop? [hello@hospitality-insideout.com](mailto:hello@hospitality-insideout.com)

**01**

## The 90-Second Reset

*When you feel the heat rise — in your body or the room.*

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1. Step outside the line of sight. 10 seconds.
2. Four slow breaths. Longer out than in.
3. Name what you'll do next, out loud or in your head.
4. Walk back in with one clear action.

**02**

## The Team Check-in

*Two minutes before service. Every shift.*

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1. What's one thing you need from us today?
2. What's one thing the guest will feel from you?
3. Anything we should know — energy, body, mood?

**03**

## Absorbing Complaints

*When a guest is loud, unfair, or wrong.*

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1. Listen fully. Don't defend, don't fix yet.
2. Repeat the core of it back in one sentence.
3. Offer one concrete next step.
4. Debrief with a teammate within 10 minutes.

**04**

## The Shift Close

*The last five minutes matter more than the first.*

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1. One thing that went well — name it.
2. One thing to leave behind at the door.
3. One person to thank before you go.

**05**

## Defusing Tension

*Between two team members, mid-service.*

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1. Separate them physically. One task each.
2. No discussion now. Service first.
3. Five minutes after close: both, together, you in the middle.

**06**

## The New Anchor

*When you onboard someone in week one.*

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1. Pair them with one person, not the rota.
2. Name the unwritten rules — the ones no manual covers.
3. Check in at end of day 1, 3, and 7. Short. Real.

**07**

## The 3-Minute Briefing

*Replace the 20-minute pre-shift meeting.*

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1. One number that matters today (covers, VIPs, 86'd).
2. One thing we're testing or watching.
3. One question from the floor. Answer it now.

**08**

## Exhaustion: Early Warning

*Signs to catch in yourself or a teammate — before burnout.*

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1. Sleep slipping under 6 hours, three nights running.
2. Small things landing big — snapping, tears, withdrawal.
3. Skipping food, water, or breaks 'because there's no time'.
4. Act early: a real day off, a real conversation, real help.