

Hospitality Professional interview checklist

Hotel and restaurant hiring usually has an HR round, an interview with the department head such as the front office or F&B manager, often a guest role-play or service trial, and a final round with the general manager for senior roles.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. Walk me through a smooth hotel check-in, from the moment the guest arrives at the front desk.

What it checks: Whether you know the standard check-in sequence, including ID and payment steps, and still make the guest feel personally welcomed.

2. Tell me about a time you turned an unhappy guest into a satisfied one.

What it checks: Real service recovery experience with specific actions and outcomes, not a general statement about loving guests.

3. Hotels run all week, including festivals. Are you comfortable with split shifts, nights and working on holidays?

What it checks: Realistic understanding of hospitality working hours, and whether you can commit to them over months and years rather than weeks.

4. A guest complains at the front desk that their room is not clean. How do you handle it?

What it checks: Service recovery skills: listening, apologising, fixing quickly and following up, rather than blaming housekeeping in front of the guest.

5. Describe a time you had to manage a very busy shift, such as a full house or a large group arrival.

What it checks: Planning, teamwork and calm under pressure, and whether you prepare in advance instead of reacting at the last minute.

6. What salary do you expect, and are you aware that service charge and meals are part of the package in many hotels?

What it checks: Whether your salary expectations are realistic for hospitality, and whether you understand how hotel compensation is usually structured.

7. What do housekeeping room status codes like VC, VD, OC and OOO mean, and why does the front desk depend on them?

What it checks: Basic hotel operations knowledge and understanding of how front office and housekeeping coordinate room availability.

8. Tell me about a time a colleague from another department let you down during service.

What it checks: Teamwork across departments and whether you resolve issues professionally without blaming colleagues in front of guests.

9. Why do you want to build your career with our hotel group?

What it checks: Research on the hotel brand and its service style, and whether your goals match the career paths it offers.

10. The hotel is overbooked and a confirmed guest arrives late at night. What do you do?

What it checks: Handling one of the hardest front office situations: walking a guest professionally, with honesty and arrangements made before they arrive.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Dress and groom to hotel standards for the interview, since your appearance and posture are part of what front office and F&B managers assess.
- Practise two guest role-plays out loud, a complaint and an upsell, using a calm tone and the guest's name.
- Revise the basics of the PMS you have used, room status codes, check-in and checkout steps, and the sequence of restaurant service.
- Prepare stories from your industrial training or previous property with specific guests, problems and outcomes rather than general statements.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave