



INNOVATIONS IN EVENING SERVICE IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The competition is becoming tougher with the emergence of foreign companies in the Indian market. Providing standardized service with most up to date technology is also a great challenge. However, Industry is very hopeful for a better future growth and expecting a boom in the sector as more number of hotels is being opened on a day to day basis. This study tries to find innovations and new standards followed in the evening service provided in hotels. Shortage of trained personnel is another major challenge in the hotel industry. Untrained personnel can be given only the back of the house jobs and would be difficult in growing up in the ladder. Apart from the aspect of increasing competition, the more difficult task for the hoteliers is to maintain brand loyalty. Evening service, later service, turndown service, Sleep out are various terminologies related to evening service followed in hotels. The study comprises of innovations and latest standards used in hotels during turndown service.

Purpose: *The study attempt to find out modernism followed regarding evening services followed in hotels.*

Methodology: *The study is descriptive in nature. The data's are being collected by referring various Text books, news paper, Hospitality and tourism related magazines and journals and research publications. The information collected is analyzed, processed, rectifying the errors and thus have come out with some probable solutions for the problems.*

Keywords: *Evening Service, Later Service, Turndown Service, Sleep Out.*

Introduction

In the hospitality industry, turndown service refers to the practice of staff entering a guest's room and "turning down" the bed linen of the bed in the room, preparing the bed for sleep. In multiple countries, an item of confectionery such as a chocolate or a mint is sometimes left on top of a pillow in the bed that has been turned down. Some hotels have more elaborate turndown services, such as bed-time stories for children and cocktails served to couples. All the guest in the hotels have to be offered with an evening service or turndown service between 5:30 pm and 10:30 pm. The staff ensures the trolley is ready with all the necessary amenities and supplies like linen, Minibar supplies, chocolates and cookies. This service is a freshen up service provided in standard hotels across the globe. It helps to make the hotel room ready for the guest to sleep by making the room neat and clean. Turndown service is also known as evening service. This service ensures that a personalised service is provided to the guest. The staffs who goes to guest room enquires the guest about the services provided in the hotel like food provided in the restaurants, in room dining services, entertainment services, transportation services and facilities provided in guest room. The staffs at the front end get to know the customer problems and provide them with necessary solutions to ensure that the guest is delighted more than merely becoming happy with the services provided.

The different points considered in making the room ready for turndown service includes the following.

1. Standard Bed making.
2. Turndown fold on the bed for easy entry to the bed.
3. Replenish guest room and bathroom supplies.
4. Ensuring the Minibar supplies are replenished.
5. Ensure rose petals, towel art, cookies , candles , chocolates etc are ready for service.
6. Ascertain the room is fresh without any foul odours.
7. Create an atmosphere to sleep peacefully.
8. Ensure all guest needs are met before the guest retires for sleep.
9. Ensure breakfast knob cards are placed for early breakfast service.
10. Make sure the guest is delighted with the service.



Procedure for evening service or turndown service

1. Misc En Place (Preparing For Turndown Service)

Following points should be taken into consideration while preparing for evening service

1. Get the room assignment sheet for turndown or evening service
2. Collect the supplies like chocolate, cookies, candies or candy mint from housekeeping supervisor.
3. Stock the trolley with required items like linen, other standard guest room amenities, cleaning items and agents.
4. Check any special requirement or notes for any guests.

2. Entering The Guest Room

1. Check the status of room from room assignment sheet.
2. If there is DND sign on the room door knob, take a note of those room and return to them before leaving from the shift.
3. Enter the room by announcing “HOUSEKEEPING” Good morning/afternoon /evening as per the time of the day.
4. Follow the procedure of knocking and entering the room.
5. If there is guest inside the room, ask politely if they would like to get turndown service provided in their room.
6. You can ask in this way Good morning Mr. X, would you like me to give give turndown service to your room now, or is there any other time which would be more convenient for you.
7. If the guest refuses ask for a convenient timing.
8. Take a note & report about refused service rooms to supervisor.
9. If the guest allows or if there is no guest in the room, then follow next procedures.
10. Keep the door open with the support of a door stopper .
11. Keep the trolley in proper position outside the room.
12. Switch the master switch on
13. Switch on all lights and make sure all are working fine.
14. Make a note on turndown assignment sheet for any special requests.

3. Turndown The Bed

1. Remove the guest items from the bed and place it neatly on the writing table.
2. Remove the bed cover, fold it neatly and place it in the upper cupboard.
3. Give turndown fold on the bed in the form of right angled triangle.
4. Ensure the edges of fold is neat and tucked properly.
5. Fluff the pillows and keep in sleeping position to look fresh and firm.
6. Ensure there are no stains on the bed linen.

4. Place Turndown Amenities In Guest Room

- a. Place the amenities in correct locations.
- b. Amenities vary from hotel to hotel & type of organization.
- c. Following things are placed inside guestroom.
 - i. Breakfast knob card on the turndown fold.
 - ii. Guest comment card on the turndown fold.
 - iii. Bookmarks on the turndown fold.
 - iv. Laundry/dry-cleaning slip & bag in wardrobe.
 - v. Chocolates/ cookies on bedside table .
- d. Place complementary mineral water as per hotel policy.
- e. Place foot mat along with room slippers in front of bed .



5 . Clean the room as per hotel standards

1. Empty the dustbins & wipe it dry.
2. Empty ash tray and check for matchsticks.
3. Clean all used glass ware & china ware.
4. Call room service for clearing trays and trolleys.
5. Fold all loose guest clothes and place it folded on the bed.
6. Stack all the books neatly on writing table.

6 . Clean the bathroom neat & tidy

1. Remove all damp towels and replace with fresh ones.
2. Clean water closet and wipe the floor dry.
3. Replenish bathroom supplies like soap, shampoo, conditioner etc. when required.
4. Wipe and clean shower cubical dry.

7 . Create Pleasant Atmosphere

1. Close the sheer curtain , heavy curtain & blinds to give privacy to guests.
2. Switch of all lights except bedside lamps.
3. Turn on hotel channel as a part of advertisement.
4. Set air conditioner or heating as per the standards or as guest has left.
5. Spray some air freshener if required.
6. Arrange towel art on bed, rose petals on bed & bathtub,sweets etc for honeymoon turndown.

8. Final Look at the Room

1. Have a final look at the room from the entrance to the back door.
2. Look for missing supplies, amenities and dirty dozen .
3. Double check the assignment sheet and check whether you have missed or over looked anything or not.
4. Emphasis should be made on any special request given by the guest like a specific pillow or any request for a guest loan item.
5. Have a final look to check whether any cleaning equipments are left behind.

9. Exit from the Room

1. Lock the door and move out of the room.
2. Double check to ensure door is locked properly.

10 Update the Room Assignment sheet

1. Mark completed on the worksheet.

Challenges in providing Evening service to the Guest

1. **Requirement of special staffing for this service:** A minimum of two staffs is required for providing turndown service to 40 rooms, which is subject to vary from hotel to hotel and room size.
2. **Refused Services Arising As Complaints:**Guest might refuse an evening service and may later on complain that room was not serviced as per the hotel standards and requirement of guest.
3. **Finish The Servicing of Room Before 10pm;** The more the number of rooms in which turndown service needs to be provided and lesser the availability of staff makes it difficult to finish the servicing of rooms before time.
4. **Additional Expenses on Providing Complementary Water Bottles:**Normally one bottle of water for each guest is given complementary, but during turndown service it becomes a requirement to give complementary water in evening also, thereby increasing the cost.
5. **Asking For A Second Service After 10pm:** Guest might ask for cleaning services even after evening services are provided before 10pm.



6. **Servicing Rooms That Has Refused Morning :** In certain rooms guest might refuse morning service provided in rooms. In such rooms it will take almost 45 minutes to one hour to finish servicing the room, which in turn delays the service of other rooms which could have been finished in 10 minutes.

Innovations Adopted by Various Hotels In Turndown Service

The Milestone Hotel

This elegant London boutique hotel overlooking Kensington Gardens has just 56 guest rooms and suites, and personalizes turndown service for each guest and occasion. Mini books of Shakespeare's plays, nightlights, and candies that founder Bea Tollman has discovered in her travels around the world might await you, or even a framed photo of you and your loved ones from your stay. There are special romantic and kid-friendly turndowns available too, and a bath butler and soap basket are offered to guests staying in one of the 12 suites.

Portrait Firenze

At this Ferragamo family-owned all-suite boutique hotel in the heart of Florence, you'll be pampered with your favorite Ferragamo Bianco di Carrara toiletries each night. Choose from an anti-aging face mask, eye cream, face cream, hand cream, or lip balm to refresh yourself each evening as you watch the sun set over the Ponte Vecchio through the floor-to-ceiling windows from one of 36 suites.

The Art, A Hotel

Guests in all of the 20 suites at this Denver boutique hotel receive a copy of Color Your Own Modern Art Paintings accompanied by coloring pencils at turndown. This adult coloring book features 30 black-and-white line drawings of 20th-century modern art, reflective of the collection at the hotel. It's a gentle and creative nudge to put away your laptops and smartphones and unwind with a meditative art session.

The Allison Inn & Spa

At this comfortably luxurious Oregon wine country retreat, a therapeutic touch from the award-winning 15,000 square-foot spa comes to your room each night. Every evening you'll find a different miniature bath and shower oil from Aromatherapy Associates on the nightstand, along with intention cards inviting you to "take in the essence of the Pacific Northwest" and "create a place of bliss." A grapefruit, rosemary, and juniper oil blend revives your spirit while frankincense and wild chamomile clear your head.

One&Only Palmilla

Miniature ceramic cacti reflecting the different species native to Los Cabos are left on your bed each night here, along with a note explaining the species and its relevance to indigenous communities. During whale-watching season, you might find a ceramic whale on your bed to remind you to keep an eye out for breaching whales from your balcony. Along with handmade ceramics, the resort chocolatier will also leave you jewel-like turndown bonbons in flavors like passion fruit and raspberry. And on the penultimate night of your stay, a fresh floral surprise awaits.

The George

Soft and cuddly George Bear greets guests in the evening at this quaint New Zealand hotel. The stuffed toy reflects the friendly spirit at The George and will make anyone feel like a kid again. "Hello there, I'm George Bear and now I'm in your special care" begins the poem encouraging you to take him on your next adventure and share photos of George Bear around the world on his own Facebook page. One particularly avid guest has even started an Instagram page for his George Bear.

Omni La Mansion Del Rio

Wish your worries away with the colorful worry dolls placed on your pillow at this Spanish Colonial hotel on the River Walk in downtown San Antonio. The peace-loving Yanaguana Indians extended their hospitality to Spanish settlers by presenting them with these handcrafted worry dolls. According to tradition, by telling one worry to each doll before bedtime, then placing the dolls under your pillow, your worries will disappear by dawn.



Meadowood Napa Valley

Pastry sous-chef Elaine Townsend keeps guests guessing with different homemade sweet treats left in a small burlap pouch on the bed each night at this wine country mainstay. You might find lemon olive oil cookies, chocolate pistachio nougat, or shortbread scented with rosemary picked fresh from Meadowood's own garden.

Gateway Canyons Resort

On the first and last nights of their stay, casita guests at this Colorado ranch resort receive DIY s'mores kits with housemade marshmallows to roast over the fire pit on their private deck. Mix and match a medley of vanilla, cocoa, and mint marshmallows with graham crackers and Ghirardelli chocolate squares in dark, milk, sea salt caramel, and chocolate raspberry.

Montage Deer Valley

Montage resort offers a variety of bon bons made exclusively for the resort by executive pastry chef Stephen Jones. Flavors might include caramelized dried black currant and crystallized fennel pollen chocolate or a bittersweet chocolate piece topped with candied violet petals.

Holy Macaroons!

At Capella Washington D.C., a property in the heart of Georgetown along the historic C&O Canal, each room and suite includes a customized evening turndown designed to anticipate a guest's desires. One guest favorite is an in-room macaroon "tree" draped with small bags of delicious macaroons for a sweet night-time treat.

Pillow Empowerment

Every night at Lake Austin Spa Resort, a wellness-infused destination spa in Austin, Texas, is empowering, as a "Power Thought" card is placed on each guest's bed at turndown. Some of the sayings include "I release all criticism," "My love and acceptance of others is mirrored to me in every moment" and "It is safe to look within."

Romantic Gestures

It's no wonder the St. Regis Bora Bora Resort is a top destination for couples celebrating their love. Couples can speak with a Romance Concierge to arrange a romantic flower turndown. For newlyweds, a complimentary flower turndown service is included when couples book honeymoon amenities at the resort.

Dream Team

The JW Marriott Marquis Miami has reinvented the traditional turndown service with the its "Nightly Refresh Program." It's a rotation of complimentary amenities fulfilling guests' passions for culture, culinary delights and well-being. The treats include an organic snack bar, essential oils for a relaxing bath, wine tastings, and luxury chocolates.

Sleep Tight

Le Quartier Francais in Franschoek, Cape Winelands, South Africa has a sweet way of wishing guests pleasant dreams. Once the housekeeping team has turned down the bed, they attach a brightly-colored note with a handwritten message to the bathroom mirror. The messages say things like "Sweet dreams," "Sleep tight," "Slumber well" and "Good night." Next to the note: a single bloom vase with a freshly handpicked flower from the property's garden.

Knock, Knock

At RiverPlace hotel in Portland, Oregon, a "Bedtime Butler" delivers a bevy of goodies that include tea, fresh towels, cookies, books for the kiddos, and more. The catch is – you can't request or order it. You never know if or when the Bedtime Butler will pay a visit.



Poetry in Motion

The items taken most often from the guest rooms at Mohonk Mountain House, a historic resort in New Paltz, New York, are not the plush towels or luscious bathroom amenities. It's the nightly poems placed on guests' beds at turndown. All poems are original works written by Frieda Feldman, the official Poet Laureate of Key Largo (and a fan of the Mohonk Mountain House). Quirky, small, and elegant, each poem serves as an invitation to relax and enjoy.

Sweet Dreams

Near the sands of Carmel Beach in California, La Playa Carmel features Ghirardelli chocolate chip cookies and milk for a delicious turndown. The amenity has a historical connection to the newly restored landmark hotel: The property was originally a luxurious mansion built in 1905 by an artist as a gift to his wife, a member of the Ghirardelli family.

Personal Touch

At The Peninsula Beverly Hills, turndown service is highly personalized. Those staying in suites are greeted with pillowcases monogrammed with their initials. Pillowcases are stitched in-house, and they're even done in the characters of the guests' native language.

Elegant Ending

At The Farrington House Inn, an elegant country retreat on a historic dairy farm just outside of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, guests find a carafe of port and truffles at turndown.

Copper-charged water: Guests at The Park Hyderabad are served water that's been stored in a copper vessel. Copper is said to have beneficial properties, so this water helps balance body and mind.

A sleep kit: The ITC Gardenia in Bengaluru provides guests with what they call the SLEEEP Ensemble. This kit contains a pillow mist, stress reliever spray and a flash drive with music to enhance sleep. Based on its own research on the science of slumber, the hotel also has a special sleep menu that lists dishes which, it claims, will 'help you sleep like a baby'. Pick from options such as a turkey pastrami and Monterey Jack sandwich, popped lotus seeds (instead of cereal) with milk or a glass of gulkand-flavoured milk.

Pick a pillow: The firmness of the bed and the fluffiness of the pillow play a key role in getting a good amount of shut-eye, especially if you have back or neck ailments. The Pullman New Delhi Aerocity offers a pillow menu that allows guests to pick exactly the neck support they need during their stay.

Ayurvedic nougat: Chocolate may have known health benefits (dark chocolate is said to help lower the risk of heart disease); almonds, jaggery and amaranth, even more so. Ayurveda recommends jaggery as a cardio tonic and blood purifier, to reduce stiffness in the joints and aid digestion. Amaranth acts to control cholesterol and increase red blood cells. And almonds provide a shot of energy. Ananda in the Himalayas combines the three into a health nougat that sure beats a slab of plain chocolate.

The sleep companion: When you frequently travel on your own, especially on business, you learn to appreciate the value of company. Some people leave the TV on, while others play music to create a semblance of company. During their stay at the Shangri-la Hotel, Bengaluru, single female travellers have the companionship of a goldfish (called FiFi) who swims by their bedside in a little glass bowl.

Bedtime story: In case you're checked into the InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort chances are you will visit the UNESCO World Heritage monuments close by. Read up on what you're going to see with Bed Time Story Cards, which contain nuggets of information on Tamil culture and heritage; they may just enrich your experience. The cards are part of the hotel's turn down service and are meant to give guests the opportunity for a bit of light reading before bed.



Conclusion

The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sectors in India. Tourism in India is an employment producer and an important source of generating foreign exchange reserve for the country, apart from being an economic activity that helps local and host communities. The sector also faces lot of challenges, to name a few employee retention, customer satisfaction, legal and technical compliances. Turndown service has changed its concept from merely giving a turndown fold on bed to providing bed side stories, Ayurvedic chocolate , power thoughts and many more. The scope for turndown service is on a higher end as it delight the customer rather than just happy.

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