

THE HOSPITALITY DUDE

25 NON-NEGOTIABLE STANDARDS

The essential standards every independent hospitality business
should follow.

FREE OPERATOR PLAYBOOK

**Great hospitality is not created by luck. It is created by
standards.**

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

Do not try to fix everything at once.

Score every standard Red, Amber or Green. Choose the three weakest standards. Give each one an owner, a deadline and a simple measure. Review progress at the same time every week.

RED	AMBER	GREEN
Missing or regularly ignored	In place but inconsistent	Written, trained and checked

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

01 Standards are written, visible and trained R A G

If a standard only exists in the owner's head, it is not a standard. Document the expected way, demonstrate it and revisit it.

02 Leaders model the standard R A G

Managers cannot demand punctuality, preparation, respect or attention to detail while ignoring those behaviours themselves.

03 Every shift starts with a briefing R A G

Five focused minutes aligns the team on bookings, shortages, allergens, targets, responsibilities and the experience you intend to deliver.

04 Problems are addressed early R A G

Small issues become culture when they are tolerated. Correct privately, clearly and consistently before poor habits become normal.

05 Praise is specific and correction is fair R A G

Recognise the exact behaviour you want repeated. When standards slip, focus on the action, the impact and what good looks like next time.

PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE

06 Every role has a clear owner R A G

Opening, closing, cleaning, ordering, checks and guest recovery must belong to named roles - not to 'everyone'.

07 Training is demonstrated, practised and checked R A G

Telling is not training. Show the task, let the person perform it, then verify that they can repeat it under pressure.

08 Schedules respect the forecast and the team R A G

Build rotas from expected demand, skill mix and legal rest - not habit. Publish them early enough for people to plan their lives.

09 Performance conversations are routine R A G

Short, regular conversations prevent surprises. Agree expectations, recognise progress and set one clear next action.

10 The team knows today's commercial goal R A G

Translate the budget into something useful: covers, average spend, labour target, bookings to convert or products to recommend.

GUEST EXPERIENCE

- | | | |
|---|---|-------|
| 11 | Every guest is acknowledged immediately | R A G |
| Even when busy, eye contact and a genuine acknowledgement tells the guest they have been seen and help is coming. | | |
| 12 | The first and last five minutes are designed | R A G |
| Arrival and farewell shape memory. Define the welcome, the handover, the payment moment and the final thank-you. | | |
| 13 | The team can confidently explain the offer | R A G |
| Everyone serving guests should know key ingredients, allergens, preparation, recommendations, availability and suitable alternatives. | | |
| 14 | Complaints are owned until resolved | R A G |
| The person who receives a problem owns the next step. Listen, acknowledge, solve within authority and confirm the guest is satisfied. | | |
| 15 | Cleanliness is continuous, not a closing job | R A G |
| Entrances, toilets, tables, menus, glassware and touchpoints communicate standards all day. Check them at set intervals. | | |

PRODUCT & CONSISTENCY

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 16 | Every core product has a specification | R A G |
| Recipes, weights, presentation, glassware, temperature and acceptable substitutions must be clear enough to reproduce consistently. | | |
| 17 | Quality is checked before service | R A G |
| Taste, inspect and verify the products that matter before guests become the quality-control department. | | |
| 18 | Allergen controls are never improvised | R A G |
| Use current written information, prevent cross-contact and involve the responsible trained person. Guessing is never acceptable. | | |
| 19 | Stock is dated, rotated and counted | R A G |
| Apply first-in, first-out, record waste honestly and count critical lines frequently enough to expose variance before month-end. | | |
| 20 | Equipment faults are logged and escalated | R A G |
| Record the fault, risk, temporary control, owner and deadline. Repeated verbal reminders are not a maintenance system. | | |

PROFIT & GROWTH

21 **Prices come from current costs** R A G

Know the real ingredient, packaging and delivery cost of every important item.
Review margins whenever supplier prices move.

22 **Labour is managed in real time** R A G

Compare sales and labour during the week - not after payroll. Adjust responsibly while protecting service and safety.

23 **Waste is measured at the point it happens** R A G

Record spoilage, errors, overproduction, returns and complimentary items by reason. What is not measured cannot be fixed.

24 **Marketing has one audience and one action** R A G

Every campaign should say who it is for, why it matters and what to do next. Track bookings, visits, enquiries or sales - not likes alone.

25 **One improvement is completed every week** R A G

Choose a visible operational improvement, assign an owner and finish it. Consistent small gains beat occasional reinvention.

RAISE THE STANDARD.

Choose three standards. Assign three owners. Set three deadlines.
Then come back next week and move the score.

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