2180 Stop Negotiating and Contesting Everything

Product Book · https://kb.jeffreysummers.com/docs/2180-stop-negotiating-and-contesting-everything/

A Guest should never have to negotiate to receive your best service or hospitality. They shouldn't have to ask for a clean fork twice. They shouldn't have to flag someone down for a refill. They shouldn't have to wonder if the kitchen will accommodate a simple modification. They don't care that you're short-staffed tonight or that a manager called in sick. Are you open for business? Then act like it. The moment a Guest has to advocate for themselves to receive a basic level of care, you've failed. Your internal problems are your problems. The Guest should never feel their weight.

And the staff contests — highest PPA wins a gift card, most desserts sold gets Saturday off — stop. All of your efforts should be about rewarding behaviors, not just top-performer outcomes. These contests create one winner and a room full of losers. The server who's naturally gifted at upselling walks away with the prize while everyone else feels defeated. Worse, they train your team to push product on Guests rather than read them. You end up with servers reciting specials like auctioneers instead of having genuine conversations about what a Guest might enjoy.

When you reward behaviors — genuine engagement, remembering a Guest's name, anticipating a need before it's expressed — you build a culture of hospitality. When you reward only outcomes like sales numbers, you build a culture of transactions. And we've already established where transactional thinking leads.