



**TOGETHER WE SOAR**

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**FRONT  
OF  
HOUSE**

**SERVICE THAT STICKS**

# FRONT OF HOUSE SCRIPTS

## FOR HIGH-STRESS MOMENTS



Every guest has heard it: “Sorry, we’re short-staffed.” And while it may be true, there are better tools for hosts and hostesses to handle chaos without sounding chaotic.

**Instead of:** “We’re understaffed tonight.”

**Say:** “Thanks so much for your patience; we’re making sure everything’s right before we seat you.”

**Instead of:** “I’m new.”

**Say:** “Let me double-check that for you!”

**Instead of:** “We’re fully booked.”

**Say:** “We’re fully committed for the evening, but if anything opens up, I’d be happy to take your name and number. You’re always welcome to call ahead, too!”

**Instead of:** “There’s nothing I can do, this is what we have.”

**Say:** “Let me check with the floor to see if anything quieter becomes available. I’ll do my best to move you if something opens up.”

**Instead of:** “Do you have a reservation?”

**Say:** “Hi there, welcome! Can I help you with a reservation or walk-in today?”

**Instead of:** “You’re really late, we gave away your table.”

**Say:** “We always try to hold reservations for 15 minutes, but let me check with the floor to see what’s possible now. We’ll do our best to take care of you.”

**Instead of:** “There’s nothing I can do, it’s a long wait tonight.”

**Say:** “I totally understand. If I were in your shoes, I’d be frustrated too. We’re seating as quickly as we can, and I’ll keep you updated personally.”

**Train your team to speak in solutions, not excuses. It’s not about faking perfection, it’s about protecting the guest’s experience, even when the back of house is on fire.**

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# TABLE TOUCHES THAT MATTER: WHEN, HOW, AND WHY THE HOST SHOULD FOLLOW UP

Once a guest is seated, the average host fades into the background. Back to managing the floor, answering phones, and juggling new walk-ins. But what if we told you the *best* hosts do the opposite?

## THE WHY: BEYOND “JUST A HOST”

When a host swings by mid-meal, it tells the guest:

- We’re still thinking about you.
- This team is connected.
- You matter more than your receipt.

It’s also a built-in safety net:

Maybe their steak came out overcooked and they’re too polite to say anything to the server. Maybe their water’s empty. Maybe they’ve been waiting on a drink for 15 minutes. One simple check-in can salvage the experience before it sinks into a bad Yelp review.

## THE WHEN: TIMING IS EVERYTHING

You don’t want the host hovering like a hawk, but you also don’t want them to disappear entirely. Ideal touchpoints are:

- 5–7 minutes after food hits the table (once guests have had a bite).
- Right before dessert/last call, especially for special occasions.
- When flagged by the server (if a table needs love, your team should communicate).

## THE HOW: MAKE IT NATURAL, NOT ROBOTIC

This isn’t a pop quiz, it’s a check-in. Make it warm, brief, and intentional.

- “Hey folks, just checking in, how’s everything tasting so far?”
- “I saw the kitchen bring out that dessert! Looks amazing. Hope you’re enjoying it!”
- “I wanted to thank you again for celebrating your anniversary with us tonight.”

Avoid:

- “Everything good?” (Too vague and easy to fake-smile through).
- Interrupting an obvious conversation or bite mid-chew.

## Bonus Points: Host-to-Server Intel

If the host picks up a concern or compliment, they should relay it to the server or manager. This closes the loop and shows the guest your entire team is dialed in, not just one overworked server doing all the emotional labor.



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# THE ART OF THE GOODBYE:

## WHY THE LAST 15 SECONDS ARE EVERYTHING

Restaurants spend hours obsessing over menus, mood lighting, and curated playlists, but rarely consider the very last thing a guest experiences: the goodbye.



### Why It Matters: Ending on a High Note

Psychologists call it the "peak-end rule". People remember the emotional high points of an experience and how it ends. So if your host is cheerful at the start but distracted, cold, or MIA at the end? That whole memory gets muddled.

*Your guests should leave feeling:*

- Seen
- Appreciated
- Confident they'll be back

### What a Good Goodbye Looks Like

Here's what your front of house team should aim for:

- Eye contact. Not just a mumbled "thank you" into the void.
- Personalized send-off. "Hope you enjoyed the risotto!" or "Thanks again for celebrating with us!"
- Confident tone. Not "Was everything okay?" (which sounds nervous), but "We hope everything was just right."
- Use names when possible.

### Small Gestures, Big Impact

- Open the door for them if you can.
- Offer to call a rideshare if the guest looks unsure or stranded.
- Acknowledge celebrations again on the way out ("Happy birthday, by the way!").

These aren't just niceties—they're business decisions that create loyalty.

### The takeaway:

Guests may not remember every flavor or detail, but they will remember how you made them feel at the end. And when they're choosing where to go next time, that goodbye might just be what brings them back through your door.



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