

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

In-Basket

### SW Management Group

Your name is Kristi Smith and you have just graduated from a large university with a Bachelor in Hospitality Administration. The interview process was extremely competitive and you got the job because you did well in your marketing and business administration classes. You are now the General Manager of a luxury property in Rochester Minnesota. Your previous experience as front desk manager at Ritz-Carlton has allowed you the opportunity to truly understand guest satisfaction and "going the extra mile" in service leadership and you believe you can bring this property to the next level in guest experience. This property has been struggling with guest complaints, as well as the hotel has not been marketed at all. You have 6 months to turn this property around, or you will lose your job.

You have to attend training for 3 days at SW headquarters in another state. Your plane leaves in 4 hours, so you decide to stop at the property. The date today is October 26, 2004.

You find the attached items in your in-basket. You have only one hour to spend at the office, but decide you would like to get started on some work.

What will you do?

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read through all 10 of the items in your in-basket.
2. Rank the items in order of their importance (i.e., the item that requires the most immediate attention will be listed as "1," the next most pressing a "2," etc.).
3. Select the top 5 items of importance (concern) from your in-basket and enter them in order on the next pages.
4. Indicate why you as the new manager believed these tasks (issues) were most important. BE SPECIFIC and detailed on your explanations.







October 17, 2004

A

Mrs. Kristi Smith  
General Manager  
The Elsworth Hotel  
11 East Avenue Rochester, MN 55901

Re: Theft of sunglasses while staying at The Elsworth Hotel

Dear Mrs. Smith:

I am writing this letter to inform you about the theft of my sunglasses from my vehicle by one of your valets while I was staying at your hotel in order to attend the Minnesota State Bar Association 5 (MSBA) Labor and Employment Law Conference on October 4-6, 2004. The following is a brief recounting of my stay at your hotel:

I arrived at the hotel at approximately 7:30 P.M. on October 3. I had worn my sunglasses on the drive up, and upon my arrival, removed them and put them in the center console of my car as I always do. I got out of the car and gave my car key to the valet.

At around 8:00 P.M. the next evening, I requested my car from the valet parking in order to go out to dinner. Since it was dark outside, I did not use my sunglasses, so I cannot say for certain whether they were in the center console at that time. In any event, I returned the car and gave the key to the valet parking at around 9:45 P.M.

I checked out of the hotel after the conference ended the next morning on Saturday, October 5, at around 1:00 P.M. I requested my car from valet parking, got in my car and drove downtown to have lunch and then do some shopping. Since it was cloudy when I left the hotel, I didn't put my sunglasses on right away, so I didn't notice them missing until later-when I went to retrieve them from my console and realized that they were not there.

At first I thought they might have fallen out of the console onto the car floor (although they had never fallen out previously), so I searched the inside of the car thoroughly. When I determined that they were not in the car, I retraced my steps from when I had last seen them. Because the last time I had seen the glasses was when I checked into the hotel and gave my car to the valet parking- and because no one other than me and the valets had been in my car since then, I determined that one of the valets must have taken them. Whereupon I immediately drove back to your hotel to report the incident to your management staff. Although the manager on duty was courteous and dutifully offered to call the police so that I could report the incident, his attitude toward me revealed how he really felt. It was obvious that he did not believe my "story" that one of his valets had taken my sunglasses. He kept trying to convince me that I must have "misplaced" them or lost them somewhere else. And he couldn't fathom my accusation that one of his staff might have been responsible. It was his rather curt manner in responding to this incident that led me to write this letter to you.

First, let me say' that I am not in the habit of misplacing or losing things. I am very conscientious about my belongings, and I have had these sunglasses for more than a year without incident. Simply put, my sunglasses were in the car when I arrived at your hotel and were gone when I left. They did not get up and walk away or fall out of my car. My car was not broken into. Nothing else was missing except for the glasses. And I am certain they were removed by one of your valets.

Second, I am not some devious woman who is trying to scam your hotel--or my insurance carrier-in order to get a new pair of sunglasses. These sunglasses are a designer brand valued at approximately \$250.00, an amount less than my insurance deductible, so I cannot even put in a claim to my insurance carrier. Had I wanted to scam either that company or you, I would have told the police officer who took my report that a whole lot more was missing than one pair of sunglasses. Furthermore, having to report the incident and wait for the police to arrive inconvenienced me and delayed my departure time by about an hour, hardly worth the price of the sunglasses.

Third-although you will probably find this hard to believe-this brand of sunglasses is very popular and is frequently targeted by thieves. In fact, I have several friends who have had this identical brand of sunglasses stolen. So it is not too surprising that somebody who was familiar with this brand and recognized it might have taken them if he or she thought that no one would notice.

Finally, as a Labor Relations Specialist for Minnesota State United Teachers (MSUT), I often defend employees who are accused of inappropriate conduct such as this, so I am quite conscious of the damage that a frivolous accusation can



cause. Hence, I would not make these allegations unless I was absolutely certain that one of them was to blame. I am sure that one of them took the sunglasses, counting on the fact that either I wouldn't notice they were missing, or if I did, I wouldn't bother to report it. Or, in the event that I did notice and report them missing, the person could always say that I had lost or misplaced them. Since it is essentially my word against his, there is virtually no way to prove my allegations. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that one of your valets lifted my sunglasses from my car.

It is not the loss of my sunglasses that bothers me, but rather the loss of trust in your hotel's services-at least as far as the valets are concerned. If you cannot safeguard a guest's property while she is staying with you, then she will think twice about staying with you in the first place. And since your valet services are intricately connected with your hotel-there being no other parking alternative within a two-mile radius-a guest who drives to your hotel must use these services. Although I suppose I could avoid having to use the valet parking by flying in and taking a taxi to the hotel (or by driving with another person), both options are inconvenient. Rather, it is more likely that I would simply choose to stay at another hotel, which is unfortunate, because up until this incident everything connected with my stay at your hotel had been excellent.

When one stays at a hotel such as yours, one expects high quality. Not only in the services provided, but in the staff as well. Indeed, it is your hotel's reputation for quality that is the reason your guests chose it in the first place. This is why this matter should concern you. Although I have no control over where the MSBA chooses to have its conferences, I can and do make recommendations about where my organization-Minnesota State United Teachers (MSUT)-holds its events. I know that MSUT has used your hotel on many occasions in the past with excellent results and will, I hope, continue to do so in the future. But this incident has dampened what has heretofore been a mutually beneficial business relationship. I therefore strongly suggest that if you want this relationship to continue, you will investigate this matter thoroughly to ensure that it does not happen to another guest in the future. I would appreciate a response from your hotel regarding this letter and intended follow-up of this incident.

Sincerely,

*Dorothy Dellessa*

Dorothy Dellessa  
Labor Relations Specialist

October 25, 2004

Mrs. Kristi Smith  
General Manager  
The Elsworth Hotel  
11 East Avenue Rochester, MN 55901

Dear Mrs. Smith:

"We are colleagues from Clemons University who were guests in your hotel from September 19 until September 23. Both of us can say, without hesitation or exaggeration, that your staff provided the best service either of us has ever received in a hotel. The attention we received, the assistance we were provided, and the pleasant, helpful demeanor that we encountered at every turn made for a wonderful stay in Minnesota. We would like to commend several of your employees whom we encountered who were especially helpful and tell you about the extraordinary assistance they gave us:

Carl Lamson, the Bell Captain, met us at the door when we arrived late on Saturday night, after we had missed a connecting flight and lost our baggage. He made arrangements for the restaurant to find something for us to eat, long after it had closed, and personally delivered the food to our doors. He insisted that it was complimentary. He also provided personal toiletry articles for us before we even asked. Throughout our stay, whenever we saw Mr. Lamson, he was courteous, helpful, and went out of his way to provide service.

Laura Walton, the Manager on Duty, introduced herself to us the first morning as we ate breakfast in the Garden Cafe. She inquired about our luggage and took the pertinent information, which she would give to Madeline Preston, your Director of Guest Services. Ms. Walton assured us that Madeline Preston would locate our luggage and told us to enjoy Spokane and quit worrying; the Elsworth staff would take care of getting it for us. She also provided us with wonderful information later on in our stay about wineries in the area and went to a great deal of trouble to try to arrange a quick vineyard visit for us. Ms. Preston was able to quickly track down our luggage from Omega Airways and personally persisted in contacting the right people to arrange having it sent to the Spokane airport. She was also wonderful about keeping us informed all along in the process, making us feel confident that our luggage would indeed be located. Her sense of humor about airline inefficiencies, as well as her competence in working with the airline to get our bags back to us, made us feel relaxed and confident while we were waiting for our bags. Clara Cunningham, at the Bell Captain's desk, was very helpful as well. She made several trips to the airport in Spokane to try to find our luggage and was very positive and optimistic in her work with us. We understand that she is a student at a local college and, for someone so young, she certainly exhibited professionalism and competence.

Finally, on the morning of our departure, Jeff Simpson and Lina Bush at the Front Desk were a great help. They were pleasant, professional, and went out of their way to provide the service we requested. Also, the young men who drove us to and from various places in Minnesota were enthusiastic and provided us with all the information we needed about various sights around town. In addition to the wonderful personnel at the hotel, we were also impressed with the accommodations. The rooms, restaurant, bar, and public areas were lovely. Our four days with you were of the highest quality, and we commend you and your wonderful staff on managing and maintaining a wonderful hotel. We both hope to visit you again when we are in Rochester.

Sincerely,  
Gwen Roberts and Trish Norton

October 25<sup>th</sup> 2004

Secure-Alarm  
Mr. Dan Jones  
1104 N. Eighteenth Street  
Rochester MN 55902

Dear Secure-ALARM:

This is to confirm our discussion of the problems we encountered with the installation of the new alarm system your company installed. When we placed the order, you assured us that you could do a custom installation for us within the time that we had available and the alarm would be performing properly. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Instead, these problems occurred:

1. The installation date was supposed to be no later than October 12th. The cameras were actually installed on October 19<sup>th</sup>, seven days after the installation agreement.
2. Our purchase order specifically stated that the cameras were to be installed outside for a view of the valet and parking.
3. Your invoice 1234 includes an extra charge for "rush" installation.

We want to pay for services rendered, but we do feel that you should first install the cameras in their proper place and drop the rush charge from our bill.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. We will be expecting your installer here by the end of the week.

Sincerely,

Kristi Smith  
General Manager  
The Elsworth Hotel

Kristi:

This needs to be signed and sent ASAP!

Corporate is worried!

km



## INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: KRISTI SMITH-GENERAL MANAGER  
FROM: BOBBY JONES-SALES MANAGER: SALES DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF ADAMS WEDDING PARTY  
DATE: 10/20/2004  
CC: SW MANAGEMENT GROUP

BJ

Kristi:

This is to inform you that the Adams family has selected another venue for their wedding and reception. They felt that with management changes and the lack of concern for their one and only daughter's wedding, another property would best fit their needs. I have tried to contact both bride and mother of bride and they will not speak to anyone but upper management or corporate. To give a few details, this wedding was bringing to the property approximately \$500,000 in revenue. Half the hotel was booked for rooms (450 total)-both banquet rooms and the large Harvey Conference room. While they did sign a contract, they believe it worth it to pay penalties to NOT have the wedding at The Ellsworth Hotel. Is there anything that can be done or will this be a loss to the hotel?

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE** TO Mrs. Smith

DATE 10/22 TIME 2:39 PM

WHILE YOU WERE OUT Lt. James North  
OF MN Police Dept

PHONE: 555-201-1248

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL	
CALLED TO SEE YOU	~	WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU	~	URGENT	
RETURNED YOUR CALL			

Needs to speak with you regarding a police report regarding stolen sunglasses from a valet-refer to Report # 4765 when call back

OPERATOR: CM

Mrs. Kristi Smith  
General Manager  
The Elsworth Hotel  
11 East Avenue Rochester, MN 55901  
October 20, 2004

UMSFD  
562 Hasborough Avenue  
Wakegan MI 26351

Dear United Methodist Student Foundation Donors:

First and foremost, we've credited you for the amount of \$995.02 covered by invoice 335922-7. Secondly, thanks for letting us know about the error so quickly.

You're right, of course, that we agreed two months ago to put you on quarterly billing. Your next invoice isn't due for 60 days.

I'm sorry for the confusion this caused. Our accounting department has been reminded of the arrangement, and I can assure you that this won't happen again.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE IF APPROVE

← KM

Kristi Smith  
GM-The Elsworth Hotel

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE** TO *Kristi*

DATE 10/26 TIME 8:30 am

WHILE YOU WERE OUT *Shelly*

OF *Johnson Travel Agency*

PHONE: 555-263-9612

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL	
CALLED TO SEE YOU	~	WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU	~	URGENT	
RETURNED YOUR CALL			

Your flight was cancelled due to weather—Your inteneraty still says you must be in for training by 4:00 PM tonight-please call ASAP

OPERATOR: *BM*

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE** TO KSMITH

DATE 10/17 TIME 2:15

**WHILE you WERE OUT**

Shelly Kirk

Area Code 801-555-3241

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL
CALLED TO SEE YOU	~	WILL CALL AGAIN
WANTS TO SEE YOU	~	URGENT

Guest Complaint regarding bed bugs in room in AUGUST!  
Situation still not handled and guest is discussing filing charges!  
Please handle ASAP and return call!!!!!!

Operator\_FD.

[Recipient Name]  
[Title]  
[Company Name]  
[Street Address]  
[City, ST ZIP Code]

Kristi:  
This is a new idea from Marketing-if you  
Agree with, if not, please correct,  
sign and I will forward To Sales  
Department-



Dear [Recipient Name]:

Frequent travelers like you are really really tough to impress. but wait until you see what we have to offer. We deliver a fre morning papr, complimentary overnight shoeshine, valet services, fax and compute access, private dining and health clubs, luxury suites, and superb conciergesz services. But you may be thinking that other quality (or upscale) hotel chains offer similar services.

Our services are bestest, but we need to get you and your guests here to prove it. So here's a special offer to show how much we want your business: If you can guarantee 100 nights a year in reservations, we'll give you a 120 percent discount on our world-class rooms; 200 nights a year earns you a 300 percent discount; and if you guarantee 3000 or more nights per year, your members and guests will enjoy an incredible 40 percent discount.

Luxury and economy aren't usually mentioned in the same air breath...cept by our customers! Just send the enclosed postage-paid reply card, and I'll rush you complete information about our discount package. Or call me at (612) 555-0189, and we'll arrange to greeet over lunch at our gourmet seafood restaurant. I'd like you to be my guest.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]  
[Title]

Enclosure

P.S. In case your calculator isn't handy, 300 nights @ 40 percent discount means a savings of \$24,000!

J

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR Kristi

DATE 10-25 TIME \_\_\_\_\_ A.M. / P.M.

M. Bob

OF SW Management

PHONE 862 498 3218  
AREA CODE NUMBER EXTENSION

FAX  
 MOBILE  
AREA CODE NUMBER TIME TO CALL

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL	
CAME TO SEE YOU		WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RUSH	
RETURNED YOUR CALL		SPECIAL ATTENTION	

MESSAGE wants to meet with you during training to discuss sales issues - Call with time ASAP

CB

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

# October

2004

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
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<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
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<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b>						

# October

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
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2004