



First and Last Impressions – Ski Resorts

Many of your customers go through great pains to get to your ski resort. I would think that it is common for guests to travel a few hours, meaning that their day probably started a little earlier than it normally does. They will be getting out of their cars tired, cranky and anxious. If they are traveling with children, they are probably wondering what they were thinking of going skiing with their crazy kids who are awful in the car. You need to quickly snap them into a good mood and get them off skiing as fast as possible.

As many staff as possible should be available to help guests in the morning.

As many staff as possible should be on hand in the morning to help guests transition into their day of skiing. Employees at all levels should be included.

In regards to executives, it may make sense to have them dress a little different so they stand out and have their actual title be on their nametag. They will probably be surprised at the amount of valuable feedback that they get. Ski resorts spend a lot of money trying to figure out what their customers are thinking about. This is a great way to find out first hand. It also will be a way of training employees, as employees will be watching how the executives are interacting with guests. Also, people will be very impressed and be more apt to remember if they noticed that Bill - Vice President of Operations opened the door for them and greeted them instead of Bill from Boston. It also tells customers that management really cares.

Employees should be helping guests park, helping them with equipment, etc. They should be keeping an eye out for customers who need assistance.

I remember a few years back when a family of four was walking to the lodge. The mother was helping their two young children to make sure they did not fall down as it was icy. The father was struggling carrying four sets of skis and a large red bag. He dropped a pair of the skis and when he tried to pick them up, he dropped the other three pairs of skis. Right next to him were three employees having a conversation. There was no way that they could have not seen him, but apparently it was not their job and continued their conversation.

“We keep your customers coming back!”

P.O. Box 72, Danvers, MA 01923 • 978.774.9763 • patronedge@verizon.net



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Give something away to guests.

Guests usually are not in the best mood after they emptied most of their wallet for ski tickets, rentals, lessons, daycare, etc. Have free hot chocolate, cider or coffee in small cups for guests. This should help. Keep the cups small. Hopefully they will want more and purchase more in the cafeteria.

Have all of your employees pockets stuffed with free vouchers for something inexpensive in the cafeteria to give out to customers who look like they need one.

People love free stuff. Make sure you give them to children, not their parents. Children love free stuff even more than their parents do. Plus, the parent usually will accompany the child into the cafeteria. Once in the cafeteria, your guest is more apt to empty his wallet or her purse a little more. And we all know that the ultimate way to tell who had the best day skiing is the one who comes home with the emptiest wallet or purse. Your customers come to your resort to spend money. They just sometimes need a little help to loosen the strings on their purse. This needs to be communicated to your employees. Let me repeat myself.

Your customers come to your resort to spend money.

Your employees need to be able to help employees spend their money.

The end of the day is as important as the beginning of the day regardless of whether your guests had a good time. You need to make sure that their last impression is a good one.

Make sure the lodge area where guests change out of their ski clothes is clean. This will help make sure their final impression is a positive one.

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I still vividly remember several years ago when a mother was helping her cute little daughter about 4 years old change out of her ski clothes. Her daughter was remarkably clean and her mother looked picture perfect. You could tell that appearance meant a lot to her mother. Her daughter helped by taking off her white fuzzy bunny hat and her white mittens. She was a good girl and did not throw them on the floor, but placed them on the table. What she did not realize was that she placed them on a large puddle of hot chocolate that was still on the table from the previous guests. I thought her mother was going to cry when she saw her daughters now brown hat and mittens. Needless to say, her final impression was not a positive one.

Make sure there is plenty of staff on hand at the end of the day to thank guests. Consider having employees walking around asking guests if they need assistance.

Do not have employees wait to be asked for assistance from guests. If they see someone struggling, they should approach the guest. The guest will be impressed.

Have employees stationed by the ski racks to see if guests need assistance. The end of the day is a good time to give out coupons or something to help ensure that they will return.

Make an attempt to thank every guest with a smile for coming.

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