

FIVE-STAR PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The below procedures have been compiled following the five-star seminars attended by all colleagues in the week 9th to 13th January 2023. If we all follow them it will help us achieve our goals of making every visitor feel genuinely welcome and to showcase the very best our city has to offer with warmth and personality.

There are general procedures we can all follow all of the time and then some more job specific ones. Please take the time to understand all the procedures, not just the ones that relate directly to your role. This will give us all an understanding of how we are each playing our part and how we can support one another to be the best we can.

GENERAL

Presentation

- 1) Colleagues should report on time.** This does not just apply to the beginning of the day but also during the day. After a break or when a period of availability begins for example.
- 2) Colleagues should correctly wear current issue uniform.** As per the uniform policy, uniform should be kept clean and well maintained. Footwear should be black or brown shoes or boots. Name badges should be worn on the outer layer of clothing so they can be read. Ties and cravats may be removed from 1st May to 15th September where no other outer layer of clothing is worn. When neckwear is removed only the top shirt button may be undone.
- 3) Colleagues should enable a smooth experience.** We should do all we can to create a smooth experience for our guests to enjoy by being clearly available for them to engage with and by creating a free-flowing environment wherever possible. Please move away from the terminal point before starting or after finishing work, also during breaks.
- 4) Terminal point should be kept litter free.** Where possible we can pick up litter to keep our environment presentable. Please dispose of coffee cups or food packaging before arriving on the terminal point.
- 5) Smoking or vaping should be only when and where appropriate.** If needing to smoke or vape please ensure that by doing so you do not negatively impact the five-star criteria either by being seen by customers or by creating a situation where it is reasonable to expect a staff member to be present but there is not.
- 6) Colleagues should be considerate of our neighbours.** Some people who work and live nearby need to interact with us perhaps several times a day. Please behave appropriately. Remember office windows could be open and noisy conversations can be overheard.
- 7) Colleagues should check for updates when signing-on.** Use the diversion notice boards. Waverley also has the white boards and screen. Gatemen and supervisors can update you with the latest changes.

WELCOMING

- 1) **Be available and accessible.** Our guests need to feel we are there for them and not too busy to assist. Please be aware of the image you are projecting when you are speaking to colleagues and always check you are not creating excluding huddles or blockages to doors, gangways and stairs.
- 2) **Offer a warm and friendly welcome.** Whenever we are engaging with our guests, we should initiate any interaction with a warm and friendly greeting.

ENTHUSIASM

- 1) **Colleagues should support one another.** By being aware of these procedures we can each understand how we contribute to a five-star standard. Where we see a colleague in need of help, we should be stepping up to support.
- 2) **Ask for support where you need it.** All colleagues are welcome to ask for help and support where they need it. Please support each other by asking for and offering advice and information. Supervisors and managers are always available if you need them.

ENGAGEMENT

- 1) **Colleagues should personalise our guests' experience.** Whenever possible we should be aiming to add some degree of personalisation to our guests' time with us. We can do this simply with small talk.

FAREWELLS

- 1) **All guests should be offered a farewell at the end of each interaction.** Please keep in mind, the last time you see one of our guests may be the last time any of us see them. All guests need to be thanked and helped on their way if they need it. Guests may leave us at any time of day, even first thing.
- 2) **Offer an appropriate way to leave feedback.** By the time they leave us our guests should know how to leave feedback. Did they have a good experience or one that fell below the standard we expect? Colleagues should direct feedback accordingly.

TICKET SELLERS

PRESENTATION

- 1) **Ticket Sellers should wear a flag.** When available ticket sellers should wear an appropriate backpack type flag advertising one of the EBT tours. They greatly assist our guests in identifying us.
- 2) **Remove litter or clear gangways on buses.** Occasionally you will need to board a bus to issue tickets. As you are moving downstairs or to the doors, please remove any obvious litter. If necessary, request guests to keep gangways clear.
- 3) **Offer the most appropriate ticket.** Our product is designed to accommodate as many different types of visitors to the city as possible. Please ask questions and listen to the answers then offer the most appropriate ticket and explain why you feel it is the best option for that guest. Be aware, you might know what you are talking about but our guests might not. Some things need a little explaining.
- 4) **Know the differences.** There are some obvious differences between our tours. It is important to know the less obvious ones as well.
- 5) **Offer information to take away.** Some people will want to take time to consider. It is vital we allow them to do so. In these circumstances, please ensure these people take a brochure or know how to download the app or access our website.
- 6) **Keep the cabin and police box tidy.** As far as possible these places should be kept clear of litter and superfluous items. The middle door in the cabin should be closed when the front hatch is open.

WELCOMING

- 1) **Beware of your position.** Often as a ticket seller you will initiate a conversation with a guest. Please be aware how you and the guests you are interacting with are affecting other guests' experience. Avoid blocking pavements, especially near traffic crossings and doors to buses.

ENTHUSIASM

- 1) **Focus on what we can do, not what we cannot.** Our ticket offerings mean we can accommodate many different requirements. When they cannot please focus on what we can accommodate rather than trying to make a new ticket type.
- 2) **Step in to help when you can.** If you see a colleague tied up with guests you can help them out by moving up to cover their position while they are busy. Maneuver guests further down the terminal point to avoid creating a blockage if necessary.

ENGAGEMENT

- 1) **Personalise when you can.** Although the majority of your day will be spent personalising our product to a guest's itinerary remember to take a moment for a little small talk. Perhaps while tickets are printing or booking castle slots.
- 2) **Show that you remember.** When you see a guest returning who you have previously interacted with, take the time to ask how their experience has been. Personal touches like this are what sets us apart.

FAREWELLS

- 1) **Offer everyone leaving you a farewell.** Once people have their ticket, thank them and ensure they know how to transition to the next stage of their experience. Introducing them to another member of staff, directing them to a queue or onto a bus are some examples of this. Don't leave people to drift.

DRIVERS

PRESENTATION

- 1) **Name badges should be worn and readable.** Remember, if you are taking a coat off when getting in the cab, to ensure your name badge is on and readable. Similar for ties, if you are not wearing a tie you should put one back on if you are putting a jumper or coat back on.
- 2) **Report cleanliness issues to the gateman.** If there are issues with the cleanliness of the bus which you have dealt with such as dirty windows or wet seats, please report these so the issue can be addressed.
- 3) **Check for litter and wet seats between tours.** When possible, take some time between tours to check your bus for litter. Please dispose of anything you can. When the seats have got wet due to a rain shower take the opportunity to dry the seats.
- 4) **Explain upgrading and reference the brochure.** It is not always possible to understand all a boarding guest's requirements in the time available. Mid tour for example. When selling an individual tour ticket please mention upgrading and explain different tours are described in the brochure.
- 5) **Serve all stops numbered on the map.** Often, when first boarding our buses, people do not realise they should indicate their intention to board. By serving every stop we ensure we pick up all intending passengers as soon as possible and guests on the bus will be confident they are not going to miss their stop. Serving a stop means pulling into a stop, stopping and opening the doors, checking for people alighting and intending passengers, closing the doors and moving off.

WELCOMING

- 1) **When not fulfilling another five-star procedure please stay in the cab.** We need to be available and accessible to all our guests as much as possible. The cab of the bus is where guests expect to find someone. By leaving the cab empty we could arguably be making ourselves inaccessible.
- 2) **Keep gangways and doors clear.** Customer flow and ease of access is an important element of a five-star presentation. If you find yourself speaking to people out of the cab move to the wheelchair space, or if off the bus, stand to the side of the doors.
- 3) **Issue tickets that you are able to.** No customer should be sent off the bus to have a ticket sold or validated. Other staff should only be asked onto the bus to issue tickets if you are unable to issue a particular ticket type or your ticket machine is malfunctioning. If you are mid tour and have a ticketing issue carry the guest to the terminal point and seek assistance from a supervisor.
- 4) **Welcome everyone on board.** Please make eye contact, smile and greet all guests as they board.

ENTHUSIASM

- 1) **Consider what you play.** Take every opportunity to refamiliarise yourself with the files available on the commentary system. Can you make the tour better just by adjusting what you play?
- 2) **Work as a team.** Can you help a colleague while you are waiting for your bus to arrive? Please look for opportunities to help colleagues fulfill any of the five-star elements.

ENGAGEMENT

- 1) **Acknowledge returning guests.** During your day you will probably recognise returning guests. Please acknowledge them as returning. Perhaps ask if they have enjoyed whatever they have done while off the bus.

FAREWELLS

- 1) **Aim to bid every guest a friendly farewell.** Remember you might be the last person our guests see, especially if you are not at the terminal point. How they leave you may be their last memory of their entire experience. Try not to sound robotic as guests leave.

GUIDES

PRESENTATION

- 1) **Check upstairs before leaving the bus.** Please help out your driving colleagues when you leave the bus by disposing of any litter you can.
- 2) **Drying the seats.** When taking over a bus or while waiting to depart. Be prepared to dry seats, particularly when there have been showers.
- 3) **Explain the most suitable ticket option.** The most suitable ticket option is not always the one you would do yourself but listening to what our guests would like to do is paramount.

WELCOMING

- 1) **Stay upstairs during the tour and between tours.** Welcoming guests as they arrive on the upper deck is an important element of the five-star standard. Guiding should be done from the guide seat on the upper deck. Please permit our guests to sit on any of the seats other than the guide seat.
- 2) **Welcomes should happen throughout the tour.** As people join the tour, please welcome them as personally as possible, even if it is just a friendly wave as people make their way upstairs.

ENTHUSIASM

- 1) **Share what we do with your guests.** Can we enhance our guests' experience further? Are you sharing all we do throughout the tour? Some people may have boarded without having a thorough explanation of what we do.

ENGAGEMENT

- 1) **Talk between tours.** Please take every opportunity to engage with guests. Between tours introduce some small talk to those that are staying on. While waiting for your bus engaging with guests who will be travelling with you is an easy way to fulfill a five-star element.

FAREWELLS

- 1) **Wherever possible try to make a farewell personal.** A personal farewell is always going to be better than a generic farewell to "all those leaving". Where possible offer a farewell to individual guests. Also, remember to say farewell to those guests staying on the bus when you are leaving.

SPARE DRIVER/GUIDE

PRESENTATION

- 1) **Be prepared to dry seats.** It is hugely important our guests can fully access our service. Being able to take a seat without getting soaked is a huge part of enabling this.
- 2) **If you need to be on a bus check for, and dispose of any litter as you leave.** Keeping our vehicles and environment clean and tidy through the day maintains our five-star standard.
- 3) **When we are busy organize our guests.** It may be that we are operating a queue system that you can control. Remember to check our guests in queues have had vouchers exchanged before the bus arrives.
- 4) **Match our guests to the most suitable ticket option.** Where you are advising guests about ticket types bear in mind, what might be the best for you may not be the best for our guests. Ask questions.

WELCOMING

- 1) **Actively approach guests with a friendly greeting.** While spare it is important you continue to greet and welcome guests and direct them how best to access our service.
- 2) **Beware of how you appear from a distance.** Inevitably, you will need to speak to colleagues throughout the day. Consider if a potential guest may be put off from asking for help if you need to talk to colleagues.

ENTHUSIASM

- 1) **Share what we do.** Take the opportunity when checking which service guests are waiting for to mention other services we offer. Make them aware we can upgrade later on.
- 2) **Keep an eye on your colleagues.** As a spare member of staff, you are a valuable asset. By understanding how each of your colleagues play their part in delivering a five-star service you can step in and help where you see pressure building.
- 3) **Look for the positives.** Occasionally you will find people approach you with difficulty or problem that needs resolving. Keeping a positive outlook goes a long way to ensuring our guests continue to enjoy a five-star experience even when things seem to have gone wrong.

ENGAGEMENT

- 1) **Add the personal touch.** When spare you are ideally placed to engage with our guests. Offer a little small talk and be available to add to our guests' experience.

FAREWELLS

- 1) **Offer everyone a friendly farewell.** The likelihood of you being our guests' final experience of Edinburgh Bus Tours is greatly increased when you are spare. Their experience must be concluded with a friendly farewell. After every interaction with a guest and as guests are departing arriving buses, please offer a five-star farewell.

SUPERVISORS

As a supervising member of Edinburgh Bus Tours, you are expected to be continuously achieving a five-star standard. Please lead from the front in all elements of the five-star criteria. Use the support and tools you have available to you to support and enable all members of staff to achieve the very best standards they can. Try to foster a co-operative attitude amongst all staff and offer guidance where necessary.

- 1) **Be a visual presence.** A supervisor should aim to be at the terminal point prior to the first tour departing, until the last tour of the day departs.
- 2) **Demonstrate an understanding of the five-star standard.** Be the inspiration for others to achieve the best they can. Lead by example.
- 3) **Offer guidance and advice where needed.** Adopt a supportive attitude and use the tools made available to you to inform your colleagues of areas you feel we need to focus on.
- 4) **Be open to hearing the views of your colleagues.** It may be that your colleagues feel you could be helping them achieve a five-star standard by doing something in particular or adopting different behaviors. Try to understand the views of your colleagues and, where you feel you can, embrace their comments.

FINALLY

If you have any questions or concerns regarding how we are continuing to delivering our five-star service please speak to any supervisor or manager.

Thank-you for all you do to make our guests' experience a five-star one. We know that sometimes it is hard work. We hope you feel that achieving this standard is rewarding and a source of pride for you all.