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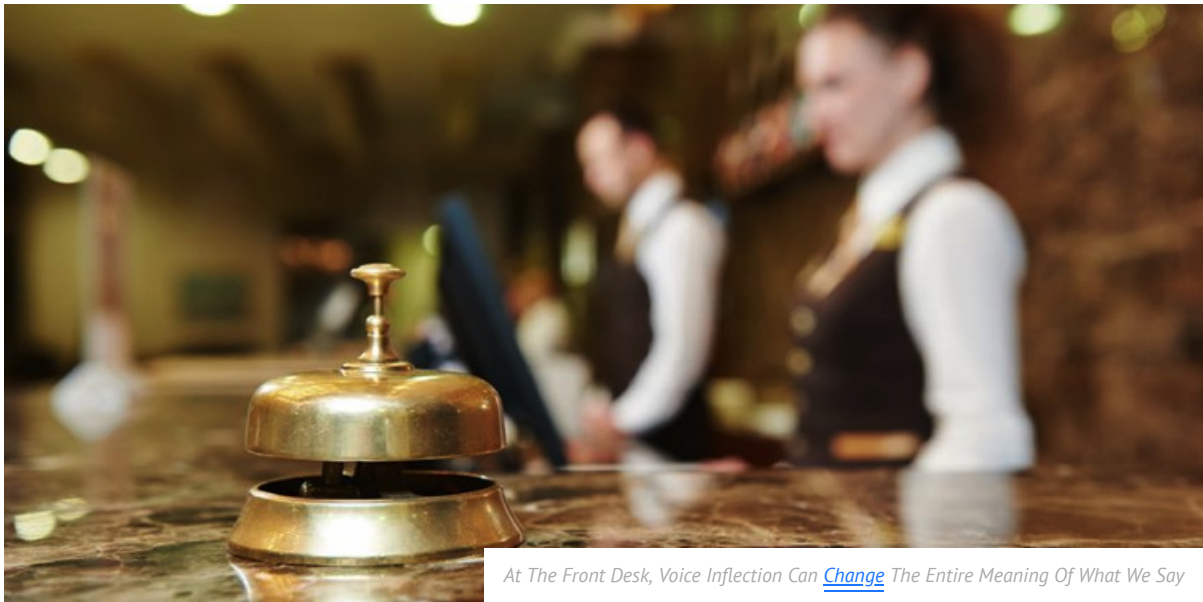
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FRONT DESK TRAINING

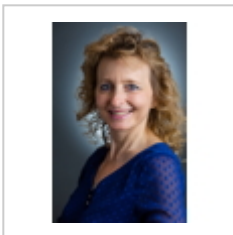
AT THE FRONT DESK, VOICE INFLECTION CAN CHANGE THE ENTIRE MEANING OF WHAT WE SAY - BY CATHY COOK

🕒 October, 12 2018 ✍️ Doug Kennedy

It has often been said that as much as 80% of communication takes place non-verbally. It is certainly true that facial expressions such as what we show with our eyebrows, our smiles (or lack thereof), and body language, which is what we show with our posture and gestures, all are essential for communicating.

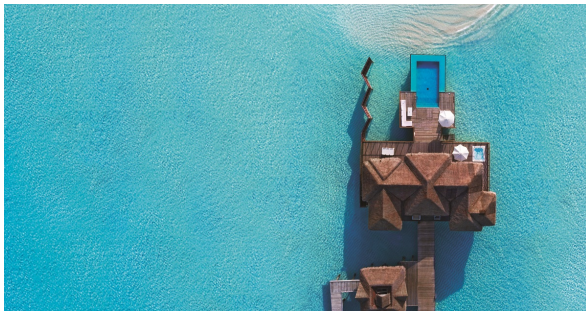


At The Front Desk, Voice Inflection Can [Change](#) The Entire Meaning Of What We Say



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While communication is an important topic for all guest services departments, it is especially essential at the front desk because more often than not, they are the main point of contact for all guest requests.



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Although non-verbal communication is certainly essential, it is also important to focus on the subtleties of verbal communication such as inflection, tone and the emphasis on certain words in a sentence.

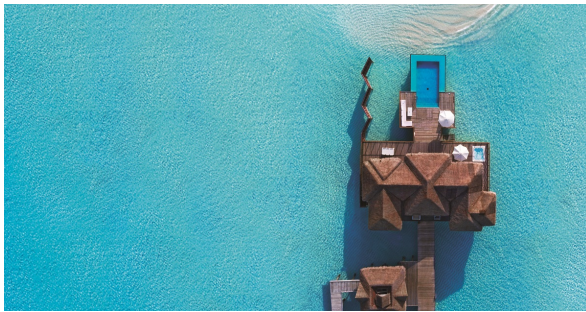
The following is an example of how we can change the entire meaning of a sentence often spoken at the front desk, just by emphasizing one word. (Note: this article can be used as a training exercise at your next pre-shift line-up or monthly departmental meeting. Just ask colleagues to each take turns reading the statement and placing emphasis on the highlighted word.)

First, imagine speaking the sample sentence without emphasizing any word in particular: *I do see your request for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for you.*

This statement indicates that you are simply stating that you will see what can be done to remedy the situation.

Now, when a particular word is stressed the guest will see that you are indeed frustrated with them or the situation.

*I do see your request for a **king size** bed and I will see what I can do for you.* This sounds as if you are indicating that the guest thinks you are blind to the request that they have made for a king size bed!



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*I do **see** your request for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for you.* This sounds as if you see the request for a king size bed but don't plan on providing the guest with one!

*I do see your **request** for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for you.* This sounds as if you are recognizing this as only a request, not a guarantee!

*I do see your request for a **king** size bed and I will see what I can do for you.* This sounds as if you are noting the request for a king size bed, but you don't have any and you are going to provide the guest with something other than a king size bed!

I do see your request for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for you. This sounds as if you are putting down your fellow-associate that did not put the guest in a room with a king sized bed in the firstst place!

*I do see your request for a king size bed and I **will** see what I can do for you.* This sounds as if you are annoyed with the guest for bringing this issue to your attention and you are annoyingly assuring the guest that you will accommodate their request!

I do see your request for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for you. This again sounds as if you are putting down your fellow-associate that did not put the guest in a room with a king-sized bed in the 1st place!

*I do see your request for a king size bed and I will see what I can do for **you**.* This sounds as if you are annoyed with the guest and you are indicating that you will do this for the guest as an exception!

By focusing your front desk team's attention on the subtleties of both non-verbal and verbal communication, you will help ensure they are creating positive impressions for every guest they encounter and fulfilling their important role as ambassadors of the hotel.

Cathy Cook

M. Cathy Cook is the Executive Director of Training & Development for the Kennedy Training Network, Inc., a leading provider of hotel sales, guest service, reservations, and front desk training programs and telephone mystery shopping services for the lodging and hospitality industry. She also conducts operational and systems consulting for KTN's clients. www.KennedyTrainingNetwork.com Email her directly at: cathy@kennedytrainingnetwork.com