

# The Strategic Value of Sleep for Hospitality Professionals

Sleep deprivation has become a pervasive challenge in modern hotel life. Whether we remain awake to manage guest expectations, advance our professional career, or simply because we cannot forget the previous day's challenges, the morning alarm invariably sounds before we have achieved adequate rest. Even when we do get to sleep at a reasonable hour, numerous factors conspire against quality sleep: unexpected phone calls, family issues, operating at inconvenient hours, etc. These disruptions are all too familiar to anyone seeking restorative rest.



The relentless pace of hospitality often feels like a constant battle against the clock. For us, a good night's rest isn't a luxury; it's a critical tool for peak performance and long-term well-being.

While sleep experts offer plenty of advice—from herbal supplements like valerian and melatonin to tips about exercise and diet—they often miss the unique pressures we face in our industry. So, how can we start to reclaim our sleep and, in doing so, our energy and focus?

The first step to better sleep is to *stop* viewing it as a bonus and start treating it as a non-negotiable part of your professional routine. You wouldn't send a chef to work without their knives, so why would you expect a manager or a front-desk agent to perform at their best when they're running on empty?

Think of sleep as a powerful asset. It's when your brain consolidates memories, solves problems, and recharges for the next day's demands. Prioritizing sleep is a commitment to your health, your career, and the quality of service you provide.

Just as you prepare for a busy shift, you need to prepare for a successful night's sleep. This is about creating a buffer zone between the chaos of work and the tranquility of rest.

- Create a "mental check-out." At the end of your workday, spend 10-15 minutes "mentally" transitioning. This is a broad suggestion but, you could write down any lingering tasks, concerns, or ideas. This gets them out of your head and onto paper, preventing them from swirling around while you're trying to fall asleep.
- The blue light from phones, tablets, and TVs can disrupt your body's natural sleep cycle. Aim to put away all screens at least 30-60 minutes before bed.
- Embrace calming rituals. This is where you can borrow from the wellness tips. A warm bath, a few pages of a book, or a cup of herbal tea can signal to your body and mind that it's time to relax.

Finally, your bedroom should be a sanctuary for sleep. In a world where we're constantly surrounded by noise and light, creating this dedicated sleep space is essential.

- Even a sliver of light from a hallway or a streetlamp can interfere with sleep. Use blackout curtains to create a dark environment or utilise dim orange-yellow lights. These lights are beneficial for sleep because of their warmer and longer wavelengths help to lower energy levels as well as promote melatonin production.
- Studies indicate that a slightly cooler room is generally better for sleep; however, every person is different. Find the temperature that works for you and keep it consistent.
- If you can't control outside noise, consider a white noise machine or a fan to create a consistent, low hum that can mask disruptive sounds. Different "colours" of noise such as white, pink, brown and even green noise focuses on different frequency ranges to provide a soothing background sound.

By consciously making these small changes, you can begin to take back control of your rest. The relentless pace of the hospitality world isn't going away, but your ability to thrive within it depends on your capacity to recharge. Prioritizing sleep isn't a sign of weakness; it's the smartest move you can make for your long-term success.

**What's one small change you could make tonight to improve your sleep?**