

Reservations Agent interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for Reservations Agent roles focus on your ability to manage bookings accurately, handle changes calmly, and use reservation systems. Employers look for customer service skills and attention to detail, often testing how you would react when plans shift.

- **Process and systems:** Questions about how you handle bookings, manage availability, and use property management or global distribution systems.
- **Behavioural and customer service:** Questions asking for examples of how you have resolved guest issues or managed changes under pressure.
- **Scenario and problem-solving:** Hypothetical situations such as overbookings, last-minute cancellations or supplier errors.
- **Client-facing and communication:** Questions about how you explain policies, handle frustrated guests, and keep written communication clear.

The interview usually starts with a phone or video screen with a recruiter, then moves to a face-to-face or panel interview with the reservations manager. You may be asked to complete a short practical task, such as processing a mock booking in Opera PMS or Amadeus, or responding to a written guest enquiry. The process typically takes one to two weeks.

1. Walk me through how you handle a new booking from initial enquiry to confirmation.

Why they ask

This shows your familiarity with the end-to-end process and the checks you make to avoid errors.

How to structure your answer

A chronological walk-through: note each step, the systems you use, and how you confirm details with the guest.

Example answer

"I start by greeting the guest and finding out what they need, whether it is a room, a tour or transport. I check availability in Opera PMS or Amadeus, offer suitable options with clear rates and policies, and once they choose, I capture their details, contact information and any special requests. I confirm the booking verbally, send a written confirmation by email, and update the reservation system. I also set a reminder to follow up on any pending details, like a rooming list for a group."

2. Tell me about a time you had to manage a booking change that affected several guests at once.

Why they ask

They want to see how you prioritise, communicate, and keep multiple people informed when plans change.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task you had to complete, the actions you took, and the result for guests and the business.

Example answer

"A flight cancellation meant a group of 20 guests would arrive a day late. I contacted the airline to confirm the new arrival time, then called the hotel to shift their rooms without losing the block. I emailed each guest with updated details and arranged a late check-in. I also informed the tour guide so the itinerary could be adjusted. The group arrived smoothly and no rooms were wasted."

3. A guest arrives and the room type they booked is not available due to an overbooking. How do you handle it?

Why they ask

This tests your judgement under pressure and your ability to find a fair solution while protecting the hotel's reputation.

How to structure your answer

Acknowledge the problem, assess options, communicate clearly, act, and follow up to ensure the guest is satisfied.

Example answer

"I would first apologise sincerely and acknowledge the inconvenience. I would check if another room of the same or better standard is available, and if not, offer a suitable alternative or arrange accommodation at a nearby partner hotel. I would explain the options clearly, cover any additional costs where appropriate, and confirm the new arrangement in writing. I would then follow up the next day to make sure the guest is happy and note the incident for the front office team to review."

4. How do you manage room allocations and availability in a property management system like Opera PMS?

Why they ask

They need to know you can use the system accurately and avoid double bookings or lost inventory.

How to structure your answer

Explain the specific features you use, your daily routine, and how you check for discrepancies.

Example answer

"I check the arrival list and room plan each morning in Opera PMS. I look at the housekeeping status and any out-of-order rooms, then allocate rooms based on guest requests and length of stay. I use the block function for groups and release unused rooms back to inventory at the right time. I also run a daily report to compare reservations against actual availability, and I correct any discrepancies before they affect check-in."

5. How do you handle a frustrated guest whose enquiry was not answered promptly?

Why they ask

They want to see empathy, active listening, and a resolve to fix the problem without escalating tension.

How to structure your answer

Listen without interrupting, acknowledge the feeling, take ownership, offer a clear solution, and confirm follow-up.

Example answer

"I would let the guest explain fully without interrupting, then apologise for the delay and thank them for their patience. I would take ownership by saying I will fix it now, and then check their booking or enquiry immediately. I would give a clear answer or a timeline for when they will hear back, and I would follow up personally once it is resolved. Afterward, I would note the issue so the team can improve response times."

6. What steps do you take to reconcile reservations with front office and suppliers at the end of the day?

Why they ask

This shows your attention to detail and your ability to catch mistakes before they become guest problems.

How to structure your answer

A checklist walk-through: list the reports you run, what you compare, and how you resolve mismatches.

Example answer

"I run a daily reservations report and compare it with the front office arrivals list and the supplier manifest. I check for no-shows, last-minute cancellations, and any bookings that have not been confirmed. If I find a mismatch, I contact the supplier or front office to clarify and update the system immediately. I also flag any rooms that were released late or rate discrepancies for the revenue team. I keep a log of the reconciliation so the next shift knows what was actioned."