Booking vs Kayak

1. Strive for consistency.

Consistent sequences of actions should be required in similar situations; identical terminology should be used in prompts, menus, and help screens; and consistent color, layout, capitalization, fonts, and so on, should be employed throughout. Exceptions, such as required confirmation of the delete command or no echoing of passwords, should be comprehensible and limited in number.

In the case of the booking we see that it is well distributed in the type of letter as well as the colors used in the website, this helps the overall website to be consistent and compact, which makes it easier for the user.
We can also see this in Kayak´s website as well, they use the same font, the menus follow a certain pattern, each one of them, etc. So we can say that both of the pages strive for consistency.

2. Seek universal usability.

Recognize the needs of diverse users and design for plasticity, facilitating transformation of content. Novice to expert differences, age ranges, disabilities, international variations, and technological diversity each enrich the spectrum of requirements that guides design. Adding features for novices, such as explanations, and features for experts, such as shortcuts and faster pacing, enriches the interface design and improves perceived quality.

Both web pages are really similar, I would say that both have almost the same functionalities, but Booking stands out a bit more than Kayak because of how
well designed is its user interface. Booking is more understandable and clear than when searching for information than Kayak. This doesn't mean that Kayak is not intuitive, but I think that for people who don't know how to book a reservation on their own, Booking would be a more “universally” useful option. Also it's worth mentioning that none of the websites have shortcuts, at least they leave some buttons which take you straight up to the different topics of the web, for example, hotels, flights, renting, etc.

3. Offer informative feedback.

For every user action, there should be an interface feedback. For frequent and minor actions, the response can be modest, whereas for infrequent and major actions, the response should be more substantial. Visual presentation of the objects of interest provides a convenient environment for showing changes explicitly (see the discussion of direct manipulation in Chapter 7).

Both of the websites seem to give good feedback, we see this when we are making a reservation and on the top of the website it appears the phases you have been following until the point you are in now, so this is really helpful for the users seeing what steps they have taken. Another example could be that while we are moving our mouse on the buttons, they change their colours meaning that they are interactive and we are able to press them.

4. Design dialogs to yield closure.

Sequences of actions should be organized into groups with a beginning, middle, and end. Informative feedback at the completion of a group of actions gives users the satisfaction of accomplishment, a sense of relief, a signal to drop contingency plans from their minds, and an indicator to prepare for the next group of actions. For example, e-commerce websites move users from selecting products to the checkout, ending with a clear confirmation page that completes the transaction.

Comparing these two websites, I can conclude that both have fulfilled this golden rule by far. When making a reservation or a comment or even signing up, we would always receive a message of the process status and also when the task is completed. Which is important so that users know that they're following the steps in the right way.

5. Prevent errors.

As much as possible, design the interface so that users cannot make serious errors; for example, gray out menu items that are not appropriate and do not allow alphabetic characters in numeric entry fields (Section 3.3.5). If users make an error, the interface should offer simple, constructive, and specific instructions for recovery. For example, users should not have to retype an entire name-address form if they enter an invalid zip code but rather should be guided to repair only the faulty part. Erroneous actions should leave the interface state unchanged, or the interface should give instructions about restoring the state.

As in the golden rule before the websites are so well designed that in case some user makes an error, maybe introducing or selecting data, automatically the website shows a text message which tells the user what they have done wrong and allow them to fix it. This can be seen when the user tries to log in with an incorrect user or password, which is a common mistake, but more specifically related to booking hotels and flights, they don´t let the user make the awful mistake of selecting a check-in date which has already passed or maybe a flight already taken off .

6. Permit easy reversal of actions.

As much as possible, actions should be reversible. This feature relieves anxiety, since users know that errors can be undone, and encourages exploration of unfamiliar options. The units of reversibility may be a single action, a data-entry task, or a complete group of actions, such as entry of a name-address block.

Users usually make mistakes by selecting different dates for their trips and holidays, choosing the incorrect hotel room or buying more flight seats than needed. This is why the websites should always let users take step backs to make sure if they have done something wrong in the process to easily get back with no problem as nothing has happened.
As well as in the other two golden rules before this one is also well implemented in these websites.

7. Keep users in control.

Experienced users strongly desire the sense that they are in charge of the interface and that the interface responds to their actions. They don't want surprises or changes in familiar behavior, and they are annoyed by tedious data-entry sequences, difficulty in obtaining necessary information, and inability to produce their desired result.

It is known that websites are constantly changing and must be updated to keep up with technology, but for users changing their interface and the way to act in the website to which they are used to it's such a pity. That's why the web page should try to maintain the same structure in terms of doing an action instead of inventing a new format, in this case for example to make a reservation, should be guided selecting the options available and introducing the necessary data for it, but nothing else. In that way users will have the sense of having fully control of the interface knowing always the next step to the action.

8. Reduce short-term memory load.

Humans' limited capacity for information processing in short-term memory (the rule of thumb is that people can remember "seven plus or minus two chunks" of information) requires that designers avoid interfaces in which users must remember information from one display and then use that information on another display. It means that cellphones should not require reentry of phone numbers, website locations should remain visible, and lengthy forms should be compacted to fit a single display.
These underlying principles must be interpreted, refined, and extended for each environment. They have their limitations, but they provide a good starting point for mobile, desktop, and web designers. The principles presented in the ensuing sections focus on increasing users' productivity by providing simplified data-entry procedures, comprehensible displays, and rapid informative feedback to increase feelings of competence, mastery, and control over the system.

In the case of Booking and Kayak this is not truly relatable because all the data that you introduce in the website is saved and used by the own website for next actions. So the user does not actually need to remember information from past displays to make the action, for example if you book a hotel in Booking you don't have to use the hotel name or the arrival time in the next steps to keep doing the reservation. Then if we look at it like that, we could agree that both websites follow the golden rule.