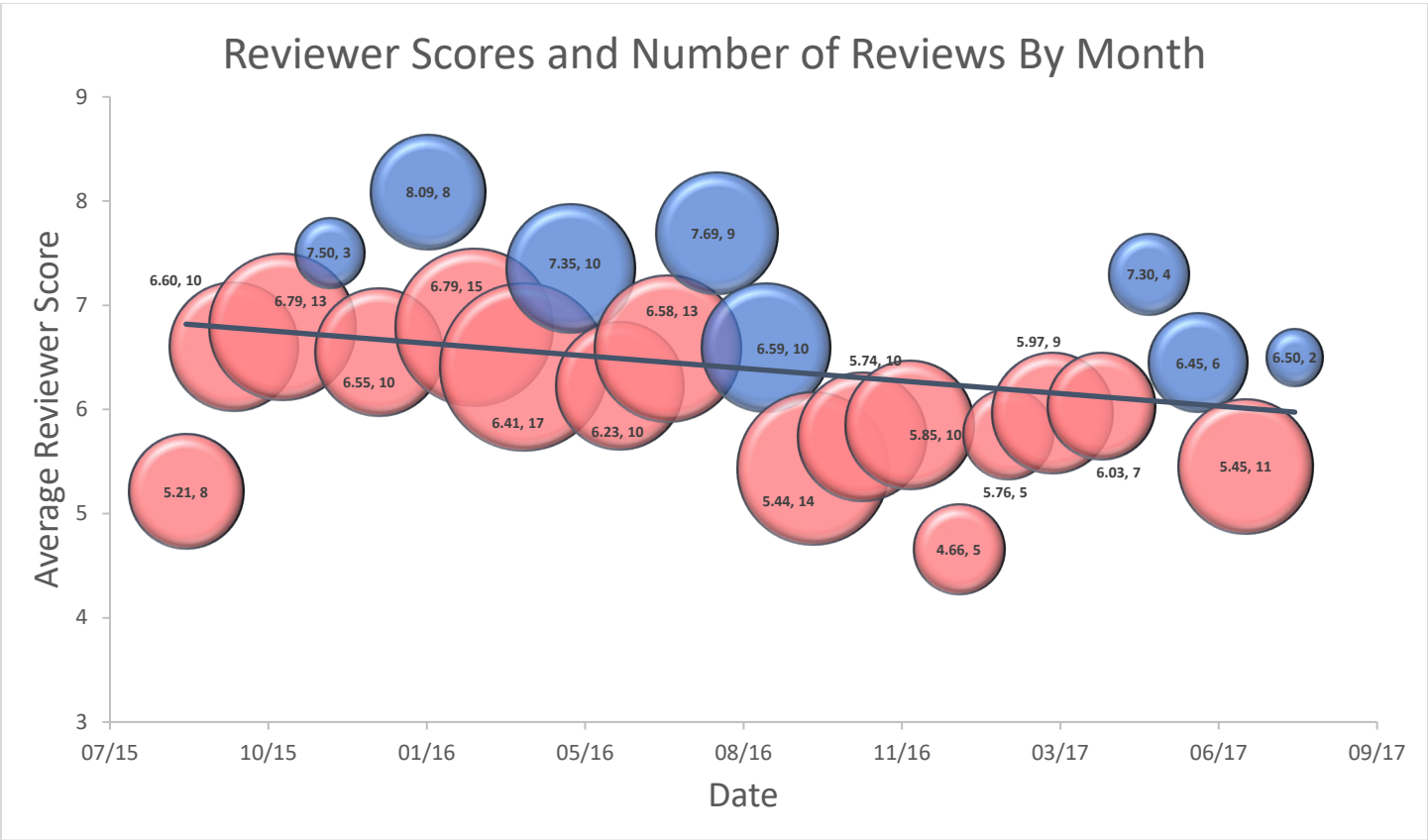
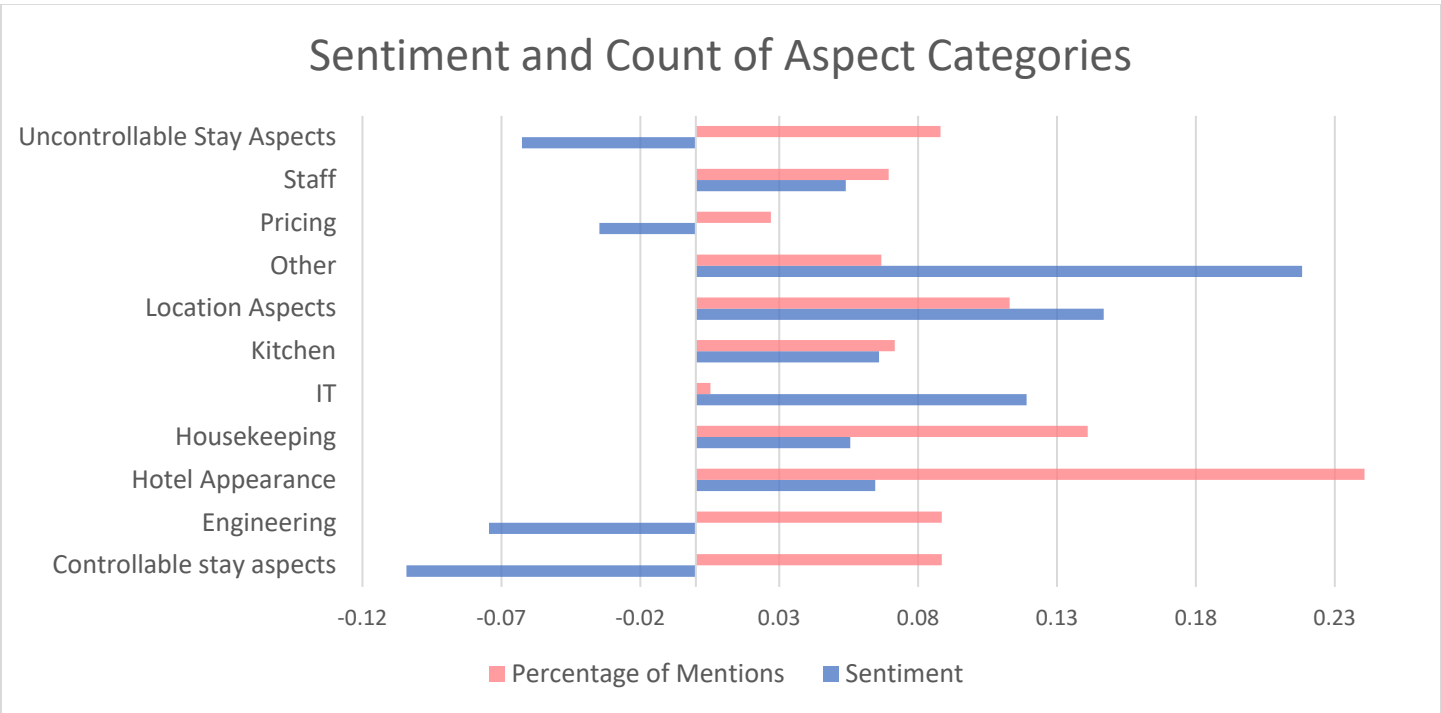


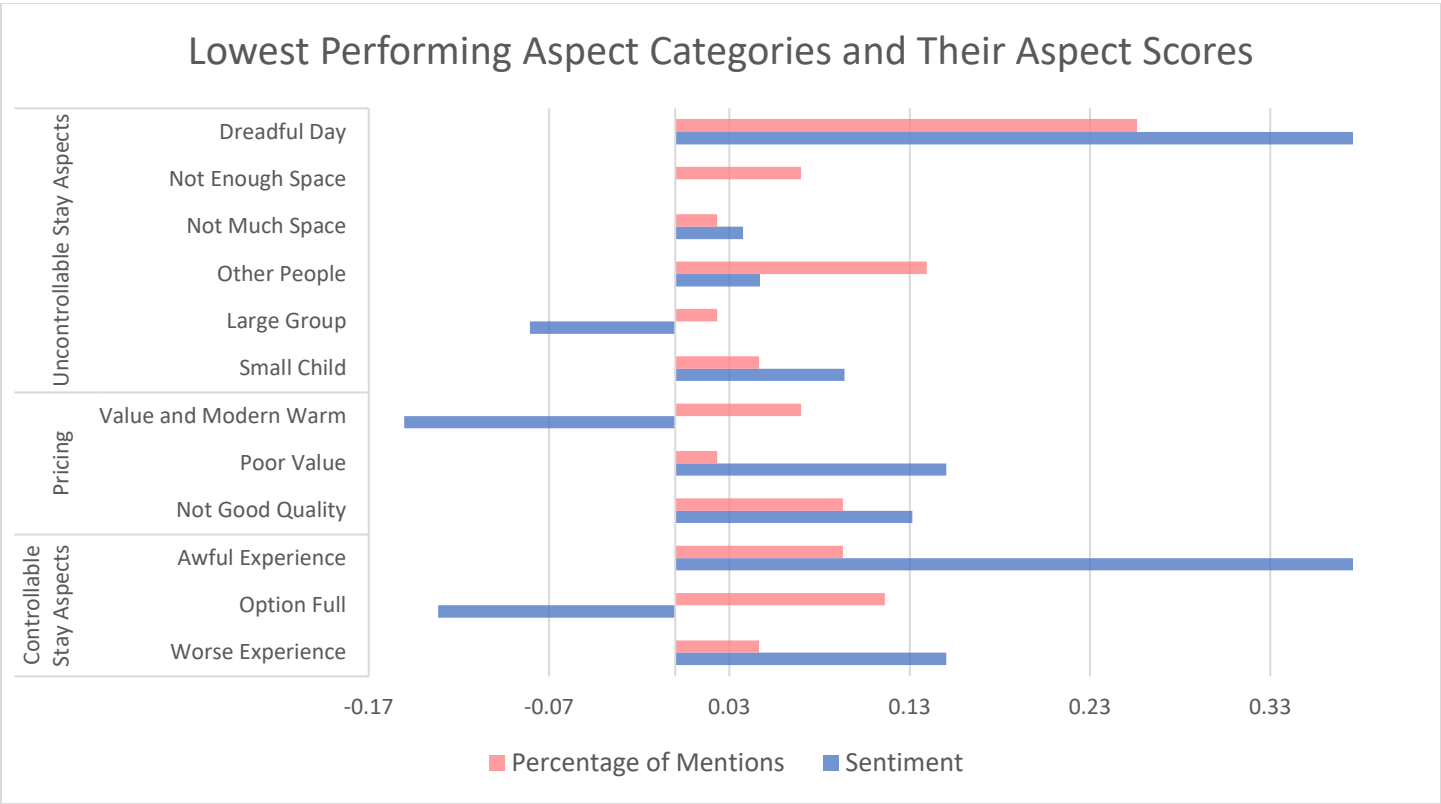
The Maitrise Hotel Edgware Road is consistently the worst-performing hotel of the eight best westerns in the UK that I have looked into. The Maitrise Hotel Edgware Road had the lowest average review score of all the hotels for 16 out of 25 months, and never had the highest average review score. Not only that, but the average score per month has been on a consistent downward path. Where are they going wrong, and what can they do to improve their ratings?



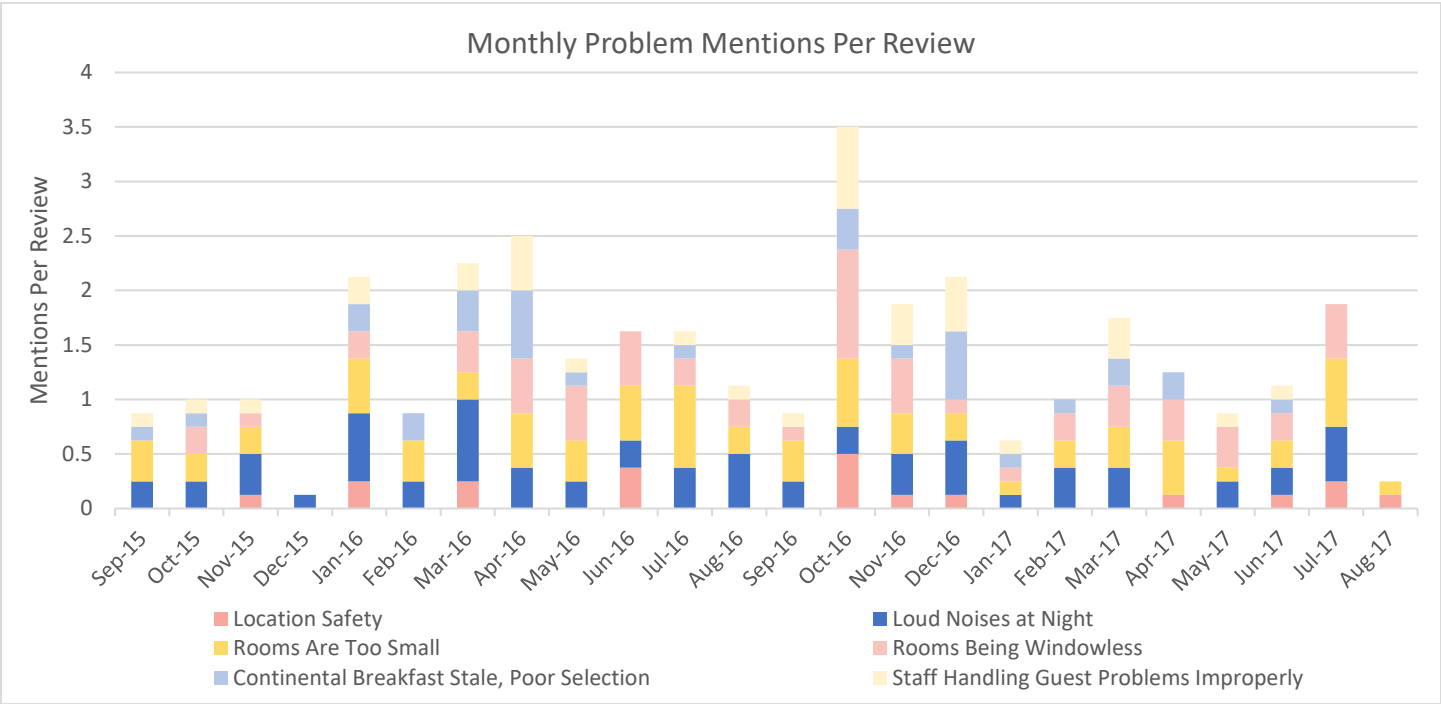
I used aspect-based sentiment analysis to try to pinpoint what the reviewers had an issue with. I created categories that each aspect fell into, then calculated the overall sentiment of each category and how often aspects within that category were mentioned in the reviews.



The overall lowest reviewed aspects are controllable stay aspects, uncontrollable stay aspects, and pricing. Controllable stay aspects includes aspects which the hotel has control over, such as guest experience and the options available to guests. Uncontrollable stay aspects includes anything relating to other guests. Pricing includes any aspects relating to the money they spent or the value for the money they spent.



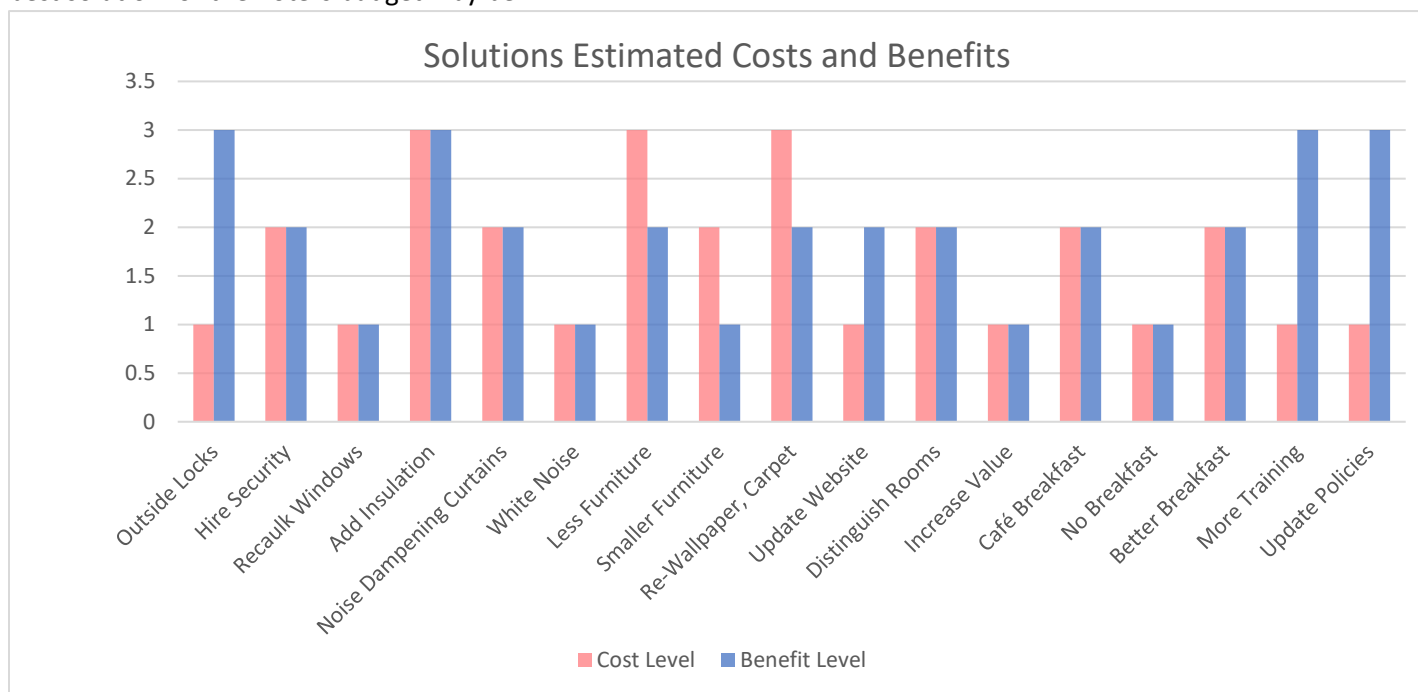
Many of these issues are not something the hotel can control, and those aspects that the hotel can control are somewhat vague. I used them as search terms to find relevant reviews and found several glaring issues. Those issues are location safety, loud noise at night, rooms being too small, rooms being windowless, dissatisfaction with continental breakfast, and staff handling guest problems improperly. This is the breakdown of how often each of these issues were mentioned each month, taking the number of reviews into account.



These are all of the major issues, as well as potential solutions, the estimated costs of the solutions, and the estimated benefits of the solutions. Low cost and high benefit are green.



Viewed another way, we can see the estimated costs and benefits of each solution to determine more easily what the best solution for the hotel's budget may be.



As broken down above, there are several different kinds of costs, so if some costs are more easily affordable than others, those can be considered. Hopefully over time, the hotel can implement as many of these solutions as are necessary to fix the issues, or draw inspiration from these potential solutions to think of other solutions to these major problems.

Explanations of issues and potential solutions:

### Location Safety

Given the polarity about the location, it seems like people are either used to different levels of safety, or they're seeing very negative or very positive reviews about the location and want to say something because they feel it's wrong. It could be both. Regardless, unless they move the hotel to a different building in a different area, they can't do much about the safety of the city around the hotel. What they can do is put more security measures in place. There were reviews mentioning that the stairs and door to the hotel were accessible to café patrons who were not guests of the hotel. This can be easily fixed by requiring a key card to enter the stairwell, a key card to enter each floor, and a key card to operate the elevator. While they should not lock the door to the lobby, any method of leaving the lobby to go into the rest of the hotel should be locked. This is an increasingly common security measure to protect hotel guests and staff members while inside the hotel, much like keeping the door to your house locked. This is a relatively low-cost, easy process that will help the guests feel and be much safer.

They can also hire security guards to protect the hotel and provide a sense of safety for the guests. This could be two security guards who, between the two of them, work every night of the week. Daytime security guards could be hired if they are frequently experiencing issues during the day, but if they are not experiencing issues during the daytime, this is not likely to make a huge difference in how safe guests feel or how safe they are, and the money could probably be better spent elsewhere. No matter how safe or dangerous the area around a hotel feels, locked doors and security guards during more dangerous hours will definitely help guests feel safer.

### Loud noises at night

The noise from the road was very loud and it was hard to sleep at night. Increasing insulation in the walls would be a difficult, time-consuming, and costly process, but if they were doing renovations anyway, it could be done at the same time. Walls are also less likely to let noise in than windows. There are some options that they could consider for soundproofing windows, and if it is in the budget, or just installed in the noisiest rooms, they may opt for multiple options to improve soundproofing. One very easy way is to plug air gaps, but this is likely not the cause of the noise in every room. They could apply acoustic caulk, install interior soundproof windows, which would not require the entire window to be replaced, just an inside window added, install entirely new, triple-paned, laminated glass windows, install noise-reducing curtains, or opt for another solution. What may be best is to try a couple of things out in different rooms that have relatively similar noise levels, to see what works best for the price. If they chose not to soundproof, or as part of several soundproofing additions to help with the noise, they could have white noise machines, box fans, or other steady noise makers available upon request.

### Rooms are too small, rooms being windowless

This really impacts how much money people feel the stay was worth, especially if they didn't expect the rooms to look like this. Specifically, people had issues with how small they were and that some rooms were windowless. Some reviewers expressed that the rooms did not look like the pictures on the website. Obviously, increasing room size would be very difficult, and perhaps impossible, depending on the structure of the building, but there are still ways to mitigate these problems. The first thing I would recommend is to have a picture of every room type that is accurate, not the best-looking room of that room type, or altered in some way. Generally, you want to advertise the best quality your product can be to get more people to book the rooms, but the quality gap shouldn't be so large as to make the guests feel cheated when they see their actual room.

It appears that the windowless standard double rooms are not a different room type than the non-windowless standard double rooms. There are other Best Western properties in this dataset that have windowless rooms as a separate room type. While this would require separating the standard double room category everywhere it is listed, this would ultimately lead to customers setting appropriate expectations, and thus not feeling cheated and like the stay wasn't worth the money. They may also choose to charge slightly less for windowless rooms. This would put them out some money, so it would need to be a very intentional decision, but even a \$10 difference would make people feel like

they were getting more of a deal and would keep people from feeling cheated out of a better room. This would very likely lead to better scoring reviews and may mean that more people patronize their hotel because they have higher review scores or a room that is priced low enough to be in their budget. Their average review score is 6.6/10, which is okay, but not great. One relatively easy way to bump that score up is just to make sure that as many guests as possible know what they're in for. Some guests won't do their due diligence, but those who do won't have this complaint and provide a low score for this, because they booked with the knowledge that the room would be like this.

As for the size of the rooms, all of their best options are also going to be expensive and time-consuming, but not so bad as restructuring the whole building. The first is to put smaller and/or less furniture into the rooms. If possible, removing furniture would be the least expensive option. If they choose to do that, they should keep furniture to a minimum, maybe just the bed, the credenza, and one bedside table if there is room. If those are too big for removing furniture to make a real difference, they may decide to replace the bed, the credenza, or the bedside table with a smaller version. People will feel like the room is bigger than it is because they won't be bumping into everything. They can also employ optical illusions, such as putting up lighter colors of wallpaper. Neither of these things will make the rooms any bigger, but they'll feel just a little bigger. Another pretty inexpensive option would be to update the photos on their website to be more accurate to what the size of the room actually is. People will still complain about a small room, and some people might not book with them, but people who do stay will likely know what they're getting into, so the hotel wouldn't get so many bad reviews based on the room size alone.

#### Continental breakfast stale, poor selection

Overall, the continental breakfast has been reviewed very poorly. It sounds like they're having trouble keeping the food fresh. It may be beneficial to make an agreement with the café to charge half price or a discounted price for the food, and not offer a continental breakfast at all. Guests will complain about having to pay for breakfast, but a lot of guests were paying for another breakfast option anyway. This may put too much strain on the café if too many people want breakfast, so this might not be feasible, or the price per meal that the café wants is too expensive for the hotel to consider, even with the savings of removing the continental breakfast. In terms of cost, quality of service, and guest expectations, even if no café agreement can be put in place, it may be best to cut the continental breakfast altogether. The breakfast costs the hotel money, and the guests are paying this price per night expecting a half-decent continental breakfast selection and are not receiving it, thus decreasing the quality of their experience, and making them feel like they are not getting their money's worth. If a continental breakfast is explicitly excluded, people may be mildly annoyed that they don't get a free breakfast, but nowhere near as annoyed as they seem to be now, and their expectations will be appropriately set.

#### Staff handling guest problems improperly

It also seems that many staff members don't know how to properly explain tough hotel behaviors to guests, or even how to handle the tough hotel behaviors properly. The staff are mentioned quite a lot in the positive reviews as well, and it seems like most people are happy with the way they are treated, but no one thought they treated the tough behaviors well. It is very possible that if certain tough hotel behaviors were explained properly, people would see no reason to complain anymore, and thus wouldn't say anything in the reviews, and if they weren't, people would be very unhappy. This is a potential source of bias in the reviewers that could be impacting my idea of how relevant this problem actually is. While this could be the case, these things should always be explained and handled properly, as the way the staff handles it can make or break someone's opinion of the hotel. It may be that there were some new staff members who didn't know how to handle these situations. In that case, they should have someone there who is more experienced in how to handle these situations and there should be clear instructions about these situations before they are on their own to handle these situations.

Two common, but tough, hotel behaviors are overbooking and taking deposits. Hotels routinely overbook, because they assume some cancellations will take place, and they still want to be sold out for the night. However, there is a right way and several wrong ways to deal with turning away guests who have made a reservation. The right way to handle having to turn guests who made a reservation away is to find another hotel for them to stay at for the night,

potentially provide transportation to that hotel, and potentially pay for the stay at the other hotel. It depends on the situation, but the bare minimum should be calling every hotel within an ever-expanding radius of yours until someone can house the guests for the night. Of course, you start out with hotels as close to you as possible, but if you need to call until you find a hotel on the other side of the city for the guests to stay in, you do that. Overbooking is a common industry practice, but guests don't know that, and it should be handled in a way that doesn't leave someone wondering where they can sleep for the night. There are reviews that say that it was handled correctly and reviews that say it was handled incorrectly, but this is something so potentially terrifying for a guest, and that was terrifying for the guests who commented about it, that it should not have ever been handled incorrectly.

Another hotel behavior that is generally less difficult to explain, but still does need explaining to people who haven't stayed at many hotels in the past is taking deposits. Deposits are taken from every guest at the beginning of their stay so that if they charge something to the room or cause significant damage to the room, the hotel will be able to charge them for that by taking it out of that money instead of trying to charge their card. It's like a small security deposit that almost everyone gets back. From the reviews I read, I don't think the hotel staff are actually explaining it, and it sounds like they are not nice when asked about it. Some guests are always going to have an issue with this, no matter how it is explained, but most guests are very understanding when the deposits are properly explained to them.