Findings: Major, Minor and the Opportunity That Is Not One

GUIDING QUESTION *Open the last certification audit report and find the section your team read least carefully. It is usually the list of observations or opportunities for improvement at the end. For each one, ask what the hotel decided to do about it, and where that decision is written. If the answer is nothing and nowhere, the auditor told you something for free and the hotel chose not to hear it.*

Property: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

How to use this sheet: work through the five parts with the people who own the process. The text in the left-hand columns comes from the book; the empty columns are for what is true in your property.

1. Verification Pact: what is commonly believed, what actually holds, and your property

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	In our property
«A small delay is not a real nonconformity.»	Any confirmed departure from a requirement or the hotel's own procedure is one. Size affects the class, not the fact.	
«Disabling the accounts closes the finding.»	That is the correction. Without cause and corrective action, the plan will be returned.	
«Opportunities for improvement are optional advice.»	They point to risk. The hotel may decline to act, but must decide and record why.	
«An observation cannot become a major finding.»	The condition it describes can, if left unexamined and it spreads or causes harm.	
«Contesting a finding hard shows the hotel takes it seriously.»	Contesting facts, criteria or grading with evidence does. Contesting labels on belief, by correspondence, does not.	

2. What the standard requires, and what demonstrates it

From Table 4.7.a. The third column of the book (what is method, not requirement) is left out here: write what your property actually holds as evidence.

What is required	What demonstrates it after an audit	In our property
Cause analysed	A cause stated in terms of process, tool or information flow	
Correction and corrective action described	Both, separately, with owners and dates	
Similar nonconformities examined	A note of every other system or department checked, and what was found	
Response within the defined time	Plan submitted within the certifier's period, after facts were checked	
Effectiveness reviewed	Evidence ready for the next audit that the cause has gone	
Risks and opportunities addressed	A recorded decision on each opportunity for improvement	

3. The instrument: Table 4.7.b, Answering a finding

The instrument of this subchapter. The Bogotá response to the minor nonconformity on leavers, as first submitted and as finally accepted.

Part of the response	What the certifier needs	First answer	Accepted answer
Facts	Agreement on what was found	Disputed for two weeks	Three finance accounts active up to two weeks after departure, confirmed

Part of the response	What the certifier needs	First answer	Accepted answer
Correction	What was done about the case	Three accounts disabled	Three accounts disabled; activity reviewed, none found
Extent	Where else the condition exists	Not considered	Same delay in property system, email and locks; eleven accounts found and closed
Cause	Why it happened, in process terms	Not stated	Leavers notified to IT by a monthly list, not on the day
Corrective action	What changes so it does not recur	Not stated	Same-day notice from human resources to IT; checklist of all systems
Evidence and dates	How and when effectiveness will be shown	Not stated	Monthly comparison of leavers with active accounts, from next month
Related observation	A recorded decision	Filed and forgotten	Agency staff: briefing and undertakings required by contract; tablets restricted

The rows above are the book's; the empty rows are for lines your property needs to add.

4. Common mistakes: self-check

Common mistake	Present here? (Yes / Partly / No)	Where we see it
Arguing about the class of a finding instead of checking its facts.		
Escalating a dispute before confirming the facts internally.		
Using the response period for correspondence rather than analysis.		
Submitting a correction as if it were a corrective action.		
Treating opportunities for improvement as optional and recording no decision.		
Correcting the sampled case without looking for the condition elsewhere.		
Accepting findings based on wrong facts to avoid seeming defensive.		

5. Action plan

Step from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline
Check the facts of every finding within a day, with the people and systems concerned.			
Contest facts, criteria or grading with evidence; do not argue about labels on belief.			
Correct the case found at once.			
Look for the same condition in every system and department where it could exist.			

Step from the book / gap found	Action in our property	Owner	Deadline
State the cause in terms of process, not person.			
Submit a plan with correction, extent, cause, corrective action, evidence and dates.			
Record a decision on every opportunity for improvement in the risk register.			
Before the next audit, confirm that each corrective action worked.			

In brief

Certification findings are evidence about a larger population. The hotel checks their facts at once and contests with evidence what is wrong in fact, criterion or grading, corrects the case found, looks for the condition everywhere it could exist, finds the cause in the process, plans a corrective action with evidence and dates, and records a decision on every opportunity for improvement. It prepares for the next audit by confirming that its actions worked.

Source: The Helm and the Lens, Volume 5b: The Lens, subchapter 4.7. This sheet does not reproduce the text of the standard; work with your own copy of ISO/IEC 27001:2022 from an authorised source.