PERMAH-Reset Framework for Hospitality

Practical Implementation Guide for UK Operators

Overview

The **PERMAH-Reset Framework** is a structured approach to translating "selling the reset" from marketing language into concrete operational decisions. It is based on the PERMAH wellbeing model (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, Health) and adapted for hospitality operators in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Shropshire.

Purpose: To help independent hospitality businesses systematically evaluate and improve their capacity to support guest mental wellbeing, while guarding against wellness-washing and overclaim.

Scope: Applicable to restaurants, cafés, bars, small hotels, and boutique venues.

Timeline: Monthly review cycle; changes implemented progressively over 3-6 months.

The Six Pillars of PERMAH-Reset

1. POSITIVE EMOTION

Definition: Systematic design of micro-moments that signal safety and relief.

Why it matters: Guests arriving stressed need immediate cues that they can begin to relax. The first 2-3 minutes set the emotional tone for the entire visit.

Implementation checklist:

- ☐ Greeting is warm, unhurried, and not tied to upselling
- ☐ Water or welcome gesture arrives within 2 minutes
- ☐ Seating offers: quiet table, window seat, private corner (where possible)
- ☐ Menu or first interaction is simplified, not overwhelming
- ☐ Music/ambience is consistent with brand promise (if calm is promised, volume must reflect that)
- ☐ Staff pace reflects service style: "slow" venues avoid rushing even during busy periods
- ☐ Visual clutter minimised: clear sightlines, not crowded décor

Measurement:

- Track first-impression feedback in post-visit surveys
- Monitor time to first positive interaction (target: <3 minutes)
- Staff self-report on whether greeting felt rushed

Quick win for Shropshire/rural markets: Offer a simple, unhurried greeting ritual (e.g., "Take a moment to settle; I'll be back in just a minute") that feels genuinely patient, not performative.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Definition: Reduce friction in navigation, ordering, and experience flow so guests can slip into focus rather than fighting the system.

Why it matters: When menus are confusing, payment is slow, or processes are opaque, guests experience cognitive load and frustration—the opposite of reset.

Implementation checklist:

- ☐ Menu design: Clear hierarchy, readable fonts, not overwhelming number of options
- ☐ Peak-time strategy: Reduced menu during busy hours (quality over choice)
- ☐ Ordering process: Simple, not requiring repeated staff explanations
- ☐ Payment: Transparent, easy, not designed to upsell at every step
- ☐ Check-in (hotels): No surprises, clear communicated expectations
- ☐ Bathroom/facility access: Intuitive, clean, well-lit
- ☐ WiFi (if offered): Works reliably and does not distract
- ☐ Timing: Realistic wait estimates communicated upfront

Measurement:

- Track average time from arrival to food/first service
- Monitor complaints related to "confusion" or "slow process"
- Guest satisfaction with ordering clarity

Quick win for Birmingham/urban markets: Introduce a "reset menu"—3-5 core dishes available every service, well-executed, clearly marked as "designed for pace and quality."

3. RELATIONSHIPS

Definition: Train staff to prioritise emotional intelligence and authentic connection over scripted upselling.

Why it matters: Guests feel whether they are valued as people or merely as revenue. Exhausted or script-heavy service undermines the entire reset promise.

Implementation checklist:

- ☐ Staff training: Emotional intelligence and reading guest cues (energy, pace, openness)
- ☐ Empowerment: Staff can say "no" to upselling if they sense guest wants quiet time
- ☐ Breaks: Staff have adequate breaks and are not chronically over-scheduled (burnout is contagious)
- ☐ Listening: Tables are checked thoughtfully, not robotically
- ☐ Consistency: Regulars are genuinely recognised, not just flagged in a system
- ☐ Boundaries: Staff trained to support guests without absorbing their problems
- ☐ Language: Avoid corporate script; encourage natural conversation

Measurement:

- Post-visit feedback specifically on staff warmth and authenticity
- Staff turnover and morale (high turnover signals unsustainable conditions)
- Return rate for regulars

Quick win for Wolverhampton/community-focused markets: Create a "regular recognition" ritual: tea/coffee top-up without asking, remembering a guest's usual order or a detail they shared, a genuine "good to see you again" greeting.

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4. MEANING

Definition: Tie the "reset" story to local context and authentic purpose beyond profit.

Why it matters: Generic "wellness" positioning is easy to ignore; locally rooted meaning creates loyalty and word-of-mouth.

Implementation checklist:

- ☐ Local story: Why does your venue exist? Who does it serve?
- ☐ Community visibility: Are you supporting local producers, charities, or causes that matter to your area?
- ☐ Authenticity: Is the meaning story reflected in real decisions, or just marketing?
- ☐ Staff alignment: Do your team understand and believe in the purpose?
- ☐ Signalling: Make meaning visible: local art, transparent sourcing, clear commitments

Examples by region:

- **Birmingham**: "Supporting NHS staff and carers with an accessible place to unwind after shifts"
- **Wolverhampton**: "A third space where regulars feel truly known, not just processed"
- **Shropshire**: "Slowing down together: local ingredients, local knowledge, space to breathe"

Measurement:

- Guest feedback on whether they feel the venue "gets" its community
- Local partnerships and collaborations
- Staff pride in working there

Quick win: Partner with one local mental health charity or support worker; offer quiet seating for people in crisis or transition; make it clear this is part of your brand, not hidden.

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5. ACCOMPLISHMENT

Definition: Give guests small, achievable wellbeing "wins" they can point to during or after the visit.

Why it matters: Guests leave feeling they achieved something (rest, connection, clarity) rather than just consumed a meal or room. This builds perceived value and emotional memory.

Implementation checklist:

- ☐ Offline time: Make it socially acceptable to put phones down; consider "no phones" tables or phone-free zones
- ☐ Movement: If a venue has space, invite short walks, stretching, or outdoor connection (even small terrace)
- ☐ Skill-building: Micro-workshops, tastings, or knowledge that guests can take away
- ☐ Reflection prompts: Simple cards or menu sidebars with grounding exercises or questions
- ☐ Sleep (hotels): Track/communicate improved sleep quality through feedback forms or apps
- ☐ Social: Frame group visits or team bookings as "togetherness time," not just socialising
- ☐ Personal progress: "You chose the lighter option", "You had a device-free evening", "You walked here"

Measurement:

- Post-visit survey: "Did this visit feel like a positive break in your week? (Y/N)"
- Tracking whether guests book return visits ("I want another reset soon")
- Feedback on feeling "better" or "clearer" after the visit

Quick win for Shropshire: Introduce a simple "reset card"—at the end of the visit, guests jot down one thing they feel better about (sleep, mood, time with a friend). Frame this as both feedback and personal validation.

6. HEALTH

Definition: Align food, drink, sleep, and sensory environment decisions with basic health principles.

Why it matters: Reset is undermined if guests leave with headaches, disrupted sleep, or blood sugar crashes. Health is the foundation.

Implementation checklist:

Food & Drink:

- ☐ Lighter options available, not just heavy/fried defaults
- ☐ Clear nutritional information or ability to ask
- ☐ Non-alcoholic options that feel adult, not punitive
- ☐ Water included or readily offered
- ☐ Late-night offerings balanced: late meals should not disrupt sleep

Sleep (hotels):

- ☐ Quality mattresses and pillows (tested, replaced regularly)
- ☐ Blackout curtains or blinds
- ☐ Quiet corridors and soundproofing (realistic for independent venues)
- ☐ Room temperature control
- ☐ No harsh alarm clocks; gentle wake-up support

Sensory Environment:

- ☐ Music volume calibrated to support calm (measurable: aim for conversation-level, ~65dB)
- ☐ Lighting: Soft/warm where possible, not harsh or flickering
- ☐ Scent: Neutral or gently pleasant, not overwhelming perfumes
- ☐ Air quality: Ventilation adequate, temperature comfortable
- ☐ Seat comfort: Not cramped, room to relax posture

Measurement:

- Post-visit: "How did you sleep?" or "Did you feel physically comfortable?"
- Staff observation: Guests lingering comfortably vs. rushing
- Return rate and repeat bookings
- Social media mentions of "comfort," "rest," "well-slept"

Quick win for Birmingham: Introduce a "lighter plates" option at lunch—clearly marked, portion-controlled, with a short explanation: "Designed for focus and energy, not heaviness." Monitor uptake and feedback.

Implementation Roadmap: 3-6 Month Roll-Out

Month 1: Assessment & Planning

- ☐ Run a baseline PERMAH-Reset audit: Score each pillar (1-5) based on current state
- ☐ Gather staff input: Ask team where improvements would be easiest and most impactful
- ☐ Identify quick wins: One small change per pillar that can be done immediately
- ☐ Communicate: Share the framework with staff and explain why each pillar matters

Output: PERMAH-Reset baseline scorecard + 6 quick wins identified

Months 2-3: Quick Wins & Staff Alignment

- ☐ Roll out 6 quick wins (one per pillar)
- ☐ Train staff on emotional intelligence and the reset narrative
- ☐ Introduce first feedback mechanism (simple post-visit survey or comment box)
- ☐ Monitor and adjust based on staff experience

Output: Staff trained, quick wins embedded, early feedback collected

Months 4-6: Deeper Changes & Measurement

- ☐ Implement more structured changes: menu redesign, seating reconfiguration, health options
- ☐ Review and adjust based on guest feedback
- ☐ Re-assess PERMAH-Reset scorecard: target improvement of +1 point per pillar
- ☐ Plan next phase based on what worked

Output: PERMAH-Reset scorecard v2, data on guest satisfaction, readiness for phase 2 (months 7-12)

Guardrails: What NOT to Do

⬚ Don't Wellness-Wash

- Avoid language like "healing," "therapeutic," or "transformative" unless backed by specific mechanisms
- Be honest about limits: "A calmer space for rest" beats "Your anxiety will disappear here"

⬚ Don't Overclaim Health Benefits

- If you mention sleep or mental health, ensure conditions actually support it (proper beds, quiet, etc.)
- Never position hospitality as a substitute for therapy, counselling, or medical care

⬚ Don't Burnout Staff to Serve "Reset"

- If staff are exhausted, guests will feel it—no amount of marketing covers that gap
- Ensure staffing levels, breaks, and pay reflect the value you're asking staff to deliver

⬚ Don't Implement Half-Heartedly

- PERMAH-Reset requires consistency across many small decisions
- If leadership does not genuinely believe in the framework, staff will sense inauthenticity

⬚ Don't Ignore Tough Feedback

- If guests say "nice marketing, but actually it's crowded and loud," that feedback is real data
- Use it to decide: Do we scale back marketing claims, or invest in actual changes?

Measurement Framework: Simple Metrics by Pillar

Pillar	Key Metric	How to Measure	Target
Positive Emotion	First impression satisfaction	Post-visit survey: "Felt welcome immediately?" (%)	>80% "Yes"
Engagement	Friction-free experience	Complaints/queries about process; avg. time to service	<5% complaints; <10 min to first interaction
Relationships	Authentic connection	Staff retention; repeat guest rate; "felt valued" feedback	>70% repeat rate; turnover <30% annually
Meaning	Local relevance	Guest feedback: "This place gets our community"; partnerships established	>60% mention local focus; 1+ active partnership
Accomplishment	Perceived wellbeing gain	Post-visit: "Did this visit feel restorative?" (%)	>70% "Yes"
Health	Physical comfort & durability	Sleep quality (hotels); comfort feedback; return visits	>75% "comfortable"; +10% repeat bookings

Common Objections & Responses

"This sounds expensive. I'm a small venue."

PERMAH-Reset is low-cost if you focus on operational consistency over capital investment. Training, communication clarity, and staff empowerment cost little. High-touch small venues often outperform larger, slicker competitors on relationship and meaning.

"Won't 'slow service' lose me customers?"

PERMAH-Reset is not slow service; it's *intentional* pace. Guests want efficiency paired with genuine attention, not rushed transactionality. Venues that get this balance right build loyalty and premium positioning.

"How do I know if this is working?"

Start with baseline scores on each pillar (1-5 self-assessment). Re-assess monthly. Track guest feedback and return rate. Even small improvements (moving from 2 to 3 on a pillar) signal progress. After 3-6 months, look for: higher guest satisfaction, staff pride, word-of-mouth, and repeat bookings.

"Doesn't this compete with alcohol and late-night party culture?"

No. PERMAH-Reset does not eliminate fun or energy; it creates *choice*. Some guests want a reset; others want to celebrate. Offering both—through time slots, zones,

or different service styles—maximises inclusivity.

Conclusion

The PERMAH-Reset Framework translates "selling the reset" into a systematic, measurable, and sustainable practice. It guards against wellness-washing while building a genuine competitive advantage: guests leave knowing they were seen, cared for, and supported in feeling better. In a market where mental wellbeing is increasingly a buying factor, this is not a soft extra—it is hardnosed business strategy grounded in human psychology.

Start small. Pick one pillar. Measure. Adjust. Then add the next. Over 6 months, you will have built a framework that differentiates your venue, builds staff pride, and creates lasting guest loyalty.