No Time Windows SOP

Guarantee the first call, then have the tech call ahead

THE PLAY (ONE LINE)

Stop promising time windows. Guarantee only the first call of the day, tell the customer to carry on with their day, have the technician call 20 to 30 minutes before arriving, and explain that you do it so you don't waste their time.

Why this matters

Chuck Mobley started Polar Bear Air Conditioning in the Cayman Islands 38 years ago and grew it from himself to about 44 employees. Polar Bear stopped giving customers time windows. His reason:

"When you tell somebody they'll be there between nine and one, they don't hear one o'clock. I promise you, it sounds weird, but they hear nine o'clock."

A window sets a deadline at its earliest minute, and service work runs long. Promise the one time you can keep, call ahead, and explain the benefit. In his words, "otherwise they think we just don't want to give a time." This page turns his system into a script any service business can use.

1	20-30 min	~44	38 years
appointment Polar Bear guarantees: the first call	heads-up call from the technician	employees, grown from Chuck alone	since he started the business

Numbers are Chuck's, from the episode. Treat them as his experience, not benchmarks.

The 7 steps

1 GUARANTEE

Promise only the first call of the day

Chuck: "We no longer give a time window. We can only guarantee the first call, because our work is fluid." A job can take 30 minutes or all day. Promise only the first appointment.

2 KNOW

Remember that customers hear the start of the window

Chuck: "When you tell somebody they'll be there between nine and one, they don't hear one o'clock... they hear nine o'clock." Like a salary range, people hear the number they want. A window sets a deadline you'll miss.

3 SAY

Tell the customer to carry on with their day

Polar Bear's line: "We don't want to waste your time, and so continue about your day as if we don't exist. We're not going to forget about your problem, and our technician will call you twenty to thirty minutes before he arrives."

4 CHECK

Ask if the heads-up gives them enough time

End with Chuck's question: "Will that be enough time that you can leave work or leave what you're doing?" If not, note the longer heads-up on the job so the tech sees it.

5 EXPLAIN

Explain the benefit, or they'll assume the worst

Chuck: "You have to explain the benefit to the customer. Otherwise they think we just don't want to give a time." Set the expectation first, then say it: "we're doing this for you, so we don't waste your time."

6 CALL

Have the technician make the heads-up call

The technician calls 20-30 minutes before arriving. Our suggestion: make it part of closing out each job (finish, check the next address, call, then drive).

7 PUBLISH

Put the policy on your website, not only on the phone

(Jeremy's step.) Don't leave the policy to the phone call. Put it on your booking page, FAQ and confirmation text so customers and AI assistants know how scheduling works.

Your booking script (fill in)

Polar Bear's column is from the episode. Write yours in the right column and keep it by the phone.

Step	Polar Bear's version	Your version
What you guarantee	The first call of the day. No windows.	
Why there's no window	"We don't want to waste your time."	
What the customer does	"Continue about your day as if we don't exist."	
The reassurance	"We're not going to forget about your problem."	
The heads-up	The technician calls 20 to 30 minutes before he arrives.	
The check question	"Will that be enough time that you can leave work or leave what you're doing?"	

Before the next booking call

- ☐ I only promise the first appointment of the day
- ☐ The script says why: so we don't waste your time
- ☐ I ask if the heads-up gives them enough time
- ☐ Technicians call 20-30 minutes before arriving
- ☐ My booking script has no "between X and Y"
- ☐ Customers hear "continue about your day"
- ☐ Longer heads-up needs are noted on the job
- ☐ The policy is on my site, FAQ and confirmation text

Steps 1-6 come from Chuck Mobley on the Unscripted Small Business podcast (step 6's order of tasks is our suggestion). Step 7 is host Jeremy Rivera's. Full episode recap: unscriptedsmallbusiness.com/chuck-mobley-polar-bear-no-time-windows/