

The ritz-carlton hotel company essay sample

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Hotel](#)



1. Service and the essence of The Ritz-Carlton experience, and what Ritz-Carlton sells to its customers

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel has always relied on excellent personalized service, or the total quality management (TQM) philosophy of the organization. The nature of their business has been described by their corporate vice president of quality, Patrick Mene, as a guest room and spaces as the most perishable products that the company has.

Service in Ritz-Carlton does not mean being servants to the guests. True, their profession is service, but as emphasized by Horst Schulze, president and chief operating officer, the Ritz-Carlton motto on service is “ We Are Ladies and Gentlemen Serving Ladies and Gentlemen”. Ritz employees are required and motivated to always strive for excellence in doing his or her job. The value that is instilled in the employees is that when they do their job right, then they become as important as their guests. There is a sense for all employees that they will be respected as a lady or gentleman, provided they do their jobs in keeping with the standards of the hotel chain. These standards have been set as benchmarks, but the hotel also encourages its employees to strive for excellence as it enhances not only their professional but personal lives as well.

The Ritz-Carlton sells guest rooms and spaces to two main customer groups: independent travellers and meeting event planners. Independent travellers include guests who come to stay for the Ritz either for pleasure or business. General managers from the different Ritz locations all over the world adapt various ways to make their guests feel welcome, but The Ritz hotels are

bound together by the main purpose of providing excellent personalized services to their guests. For instance, in The Ritz-Carlton in Kuala Lumpur, guests are greeted at the airport with welcome drinks and discount coupons. There is even a mock hotel room created right there in the airport to give the guests a preview of what they will come home to in The Ritz. Business travelers in The Ritz-Carlton in Kuala Lumpur can also avail of a “Technology Butler” which is a team of technicians available 24-hours for computer and other technological problems.

The emphasis in the type of service that The Ritz-Carlton provides has always been on total quality management (TQM). Continuous evaluation and improvement to constantly improve procedures are important components of TQM. Guest recognition also plays a vital role, wherein guests, after a certain number of stays in a Ritz hotels, are personally welcomed by monogrammed pillow cases in their rooms. Aside from its emphasis on TQM, the reason why The Ritz delivers such excellent service is that it also places a high premium on its human resources. As mentioned earlier, the “We Are Ladies and Gentlemen Serving Ladies and Gentlemen” instils in the employees pride in what they do, to motivate them to excellence in their respective tasks. In addition, The Ritz also provides for career advancement and formal and informal training. Employee and division performance is measured against Service Quality Indicators and by the employees themselves. The employees are taught that fixing a mistake or defect should be seen as a challenge and exciting opportunity to improve their performance.

2. How The Ritz-Carlton creates “ Ladies and Gentlemen” in only 7 days

The first day of the Seven Day Countdown for new hires in The Ritz-Carlton involves staff orientation. It kicks off with a pep rally per department, followed by the managers welcoming the new employees. The management team, as well as the trainer, Corporate Steering committee, and the representatives from partner corporations (such as Millennium Partners) are then introduced. The employees are then shown a video describing the company’s history, philosophy and values, and another video to show the hotel’s milestones, awards won, and new hotels opened.

The second day involves departmental vision sessions wherein the new hires are introduced to their own new and respective departments. Group exercises are conducted in order that the department members can get to know each other, and goal setting per department is established.

The third to the seventh day of the Seven Day Countdown involves skill training. Day 3 and 4 covers uniform fittings for the new hires, personal grooming sessions, and introduction to their daily lineup procedure. Employees also attend sessions on anticipation and handling guest requests, “ instant guest pacification” and “ handling guest difficulties” on Day 4. The last three days of the training involves departmental technical training. The details required in performing their jobs to the standards set by the company are taught to the employees in their departments. Trial runs are then conducted as if the new hires were serving real customers, to be observed and evaluated by the Corporate Steering Committee. Additional one-on-one

or division-level training is then provided to new hires if they need it after their trial runs.

3. Is there a need for McBride to consider a total overhaul of the hotel opening process?

James McBride, general manager for new The Ritz-Carlton in Washington, D. C., should not compromise the excellent service that has been the Ritz tradition by cutting short its Seven Day Countdown. Brian Collins, manager of hotels for Millennium Partners, has been calling for an overhaul in The Ritz's hotel opening process by opening at a higher occupancy rate and by extending the pre-opening training program to more than seven days. However, what Collins fails to take important notice of is that this Seven Day Countdown has worked for The Ritz for many years. Its long history of excellent customer service and its standing as one of only two top hotels in luxury service can certainly attest to the effectiveness of their practices. While it is true that a hotel must constantly adjust with the times in order to constantly improve their service, the Seven Day Countdown process is effective precisely because it takes things slow. It allows its new employees to get the hang of their job, to perfect every single detail, before bringing in a barrage of guests.

It should be noted that the Seven Day Countdown is always accompanied with a 50% occupancy rate during the first month of operations. The standards are set for the employees right from the onset, but they are expected to execute their tasks flawlessly before they can do it automatically and speedily. And for this, The Ritz-Carlton firmly believes,

requires allotting some time for the employees to get used to their functions. To immediately bring in an 80% occupancy rate during the first month of operations will bring in quicker profits initially, but the quality of service that The Ritz has long been known for may suffer. Faced with numerous demands from many customers, in addition to getting the hang of their new responsibilities, will open up each employee to error and defects in their performances. Service, which is The Ritz's primary offering, will inevitably suffer.

The risk in experimenting in a service business is that the quality of service is under constantly under scrutiny. It is the only thing that differentiates a service company from another. Providing quality service cannot be rushed. It has to be something that the service providers have mastered. And to master such quality service requires some time and practice. If it is rushed, quality will suffer and drive people away. The Seven Day Countdown is a worldwide best practice that has been very successful in the long history of The Ritz-Carlton. It should not compromise its standards to meet the bottomline.

REFERENCE

Sucher, Sandra J. and Stacy F. McManus. (July 11, 2002). The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company. Harvard Business School.