

Hotel roles and responsibilities



Classification of hotel facilities is not based on rigid standards. On marketplace forces, touchstones, location, mathematical function, and the definitions can change, depending and preference, but the definitions that follow are generally accepted and are the ones intended for these classifications throughout this textual matter, in some cases, personal.

A hotel usually offers guests a full range of accommodations and services, which may include reservations, suites, public dining and banquet facilities, lounge and entertainment areas, room services valet, laundry, hair care, swimming pool, gym, sauna, spa and other recreational activities, gaming/casino operations, ground transportation to and from airport, and concierge services.

Motels:

Motels offer guests a limited range of services, which may include reservations, vending machines, swimming pools, and cable television. The size of these properties averages from 10 to 50 units. Motels are usually in suburban highway and airport locations. Guests typically stay overnight or a few days. Motels may be located near a freestanding restaurant.

All suites:

It may include reservations, living room and separate bedroom, kitchenette, optional public dining room and room service, cable television, videocassette players and recorders, specialty shops, personal services valet and laundry, swimming pool, and ground transportation to and from an airport. The size of the operation can range from 50 to more than 100 units. This type of property is usually found in centre-city, suburban, and airport locations.

Limited-Service Hotels:

The range of accommodations and services may include reservations, minimal public dining and meeting facilities, cable television, personal computers, personal services (valet and laundry), and ground transportation to and from an airport. They are usually located near restaurants for guest convenience. Guest stays can be overnight or long-term. These properties sometimes specialize in catering to the business traveller and offer special business technology centres.

Extended-Stay Hotels:

At Hilton's Homewood Suites, the following room amenities are included: king-size bed or two double beds in the bedroom and foldout sofa in the living room; two remote-controlled colour televisions; fully equipped kitchen with a microwave, refrigerator with ice maker, coffeemaker, twin-burner stove, and kitchen utensils; a spacious, well-lit dining area; and ceiling fans and iron and ironing board. Additional hotel services include a business centre, an exercise room, and a pool.

2 Roles and responsibilities of accommodation and reception staffs

Hotel receptionists are responsible for making guests feel welcome, checking them in and out efficiently, and dealing professionally with enquiries, face to face and by phone, fax or email. They deal with general reservation enquiries, as well as answering guests' questions and dealing with complaints.

Duties will often include:

allocating rooms to guests

taking and passing on messages

preparing bills, taking payment, and handling foreign exchange

Helping guests with special requests – such as storing valuables in the hotel safe or luggage area, ordering taxis or booking theatre tickets.

Figure 1 Medium size full service hotel organisation chart

Their main tasks are:

changing the bed linen and making beds

emptying bins, vacuuming floors, and washing glasses and cups

replenishing stocks of guest supplies, such as tea, coffee and biscuits

Tallying up items consumed from the mini-bar.

2. 1 Identifying responsibilities of reception service staff

Receptionists are usually the first people hotel guests' encounter, particularly in those hotels where hall porters are not employed. They thus occupy a gatekeeper role, frequently bearing the responsibility for guests' first impressions of the hotel. In fact, the responsibilities that receptionists bear for that image of the hotel arguably extend beyond first impressions. E. g. Receptionists of Hilton hotels regularly being involved in book-keeping, letter writing, inventory taking, typing, record keeping, answering queries, filing, taking reservations, dealing with mail and lost property, dealing with

room changes, taking payments of customers' bills, banking monies, holding responsibility for room keys and producing reports and statistics.

3 Legal and statutory requirements for rooms division operations

The following legal and statutory requirements must be met by the Hotels in the UK:

Duty to guests

Employment & Pension

Environment

Food/ Hygiene

Health & Safety

Guest information

Insurance

Intellectual property

Licensing & tourism

Local & national tax

Planning & zoning

Other (Bureau de change)

4. Front of house area effective management

The Front of House Manager will be responsible for providing a high standard of customer service in order to maintain the customer loyalty from the general public and visiting companies, as well as to maximise revenue from Bar, Kiosk and Café, hotels the post holder will report to the Operations Manager, and work closely with the senior management team. He/she will be in the front line of customer liaison.

Responsibilities:

To maintain safe and friendly environment for all theatre visitors.

To give strong and effective management

To develop and encourage high standards of customer service.

To control and report on costs (staff and stock control).

To manage the Front of House sales facilities.

5. Planning for managing the front of house area

A little planning on the front office manager's part is required to ensure that the new employee meets the entire staff in the first few days. Saying a few words about the role of each employee during the introductions will not only make new hires feel more comfortable with their co-workers but also make each current staff member feel like a special part of the team. The current staff will also appreciate meeting the new addition to the staff. Very often, this procedure is overlooked, and new employees feel awkward for days or weeks.

6. Operational issues affecting management and business performance

The front office team have the common goal of providing hospitality to the guest. Training, empowerment, and flexibility are necessary to make the team work. Forecasting, scheduling, developing a supervisory style, motivating personnel, balancing staff personalities, delegating tasks, training, and effectively communicating are only a few of the skills a good supervisor must master. It is a lifelong effort developed through continuing education and trial and error.

7. Importance of property interiors and design to effective management

This is important to positioning the front desk to allow front office personnel a view of guests who enter the lobby from the street entrance and elevators. The guest's first impression is enhanced by the ambience, physical appearance, and orderliness of the equipment and personnel. The front office manager must establish a balance between guest service and work processing to allow for efficiency.

Figure 2 Front office layout

8. Aspects of planning and management of the accommodation service

Planning is very important to delivering continuous quality service in hotels, as defined by the guest. Successful extension of hospitality starts with management's commitment to a service management program. Preparing a service strategy statement will focus the planning efforts of the owners, management, and employees. Principles of total quality management

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provide a manager with an opportunity to involve frontline employees in analyzing the components of delivery of service and methods to improve existing services. The development of the service management program requires the involvement of frontline employees, discussion of the guest cycle, moments of truth, employee buy-in concept, screening of potential employees prior to hiring, empowerment, training, evaluation of the service management program, follow-through, and interfacing with other departments in delivering hospitality. A long-term commitment to a successful service management program is necessary.

9. Operational issues affecting the management and performance of the accommodation service

There are some issues affecting this sector such as:

Environmental

Social

Legal

Economical

Technological

Political etc.

10. Yield management techniques

Achieving the best yield involves redefining the use of occupancy percentage and average daily rate. Although these concepts are important to the long-range potential financial picture, they take on a new meaning with yield

management. Optimal occupancy, achieving 100 percent occupancy with room sales, which will yield the highest room rate, and optimal room rate, a room rate that approaches the rack rate, work together to produce the yield.

10. 1 Yield management strategies

E. Orkin offers a simple policy for developing strategies to implement yield management: when demand is high, maximize rates; when demand is low, maximize room sales. These concepts are portrayed in Table 1. Orkin also offers some specifics on developing strategies. He says that when demand is high, “ restrict or close availability of low-rate categories and packages to transients [guests], require minimum length of stays, and commit rooms only to groups willing to pay higher rates. When demand is low, provide reservation agents with special promotional rates to offer transients who balk at standard rates, solicit group business from organizations and segments that are characteristically rate sensitive, and promote limited-availability low-cost packages to local market.” Restricting or closing availability was indeed a challenge because most front office managers were familiar with the “ sell out the house” operating procedure and were unsure if this aggressive marketing tactic would work. Some hoteliers were setting reservation policies that required minimum length of stay during heavy demand periods. The procedure recommended for low demand (special promotional rates and soliciting group and local business) was the strategy used during any demand period. As yield management continues to be tried and tested in hotels, various combinations of maximizing room rates and room sales will continue to challenge hoteliers.

Table 1 Yield Management Strategies

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Demand

Strategy

High

Maximise rates, require minimum stays

Low

Maximise room sales, open all rate categories

The following strategies can be taken to maximise occupancy and room revenue:

Forecasting - room sales, setting strategies to generate revenue

Block-out Periods - high demand periods require to block out certain days

Systems & Procedures - using automated system that will process reservations, track demand, and block out room availability during certain time periods

Feedback - on decisions employed in yield management to set right strategies

11. Sales techniques that can use to promote and maximise revenue

The objective of the sales incentive program for front office employees is to encourage the front office to promote products and services in various areas of the hotel, including the front office, the food and beverage department, the gift shop, and the health facilities. Each promotional area may be

considered, or the front office manager might choose only a few areas, perhaps those that generate the most revenue, as incentive targets. A few examples follow:

Upgrading a reservation during registration

Selling a meal in the hotel's restaurant

Selling room service

11. 1 Creative ideas

When developing a program to increase front office sales activity, the front office manager, in conjunction with other department directors and employees, should identify as specifically as possible the hotel products and services to be promoted.

In this case, the overall purpose of the program would be to maximize sales by the front office staff of front office, food and beverage department, gift shop, and health facilities products and services. The team must decide which area or areas would be most profitable.

12. Purpose of forecasting and statistical data within room division

An important feature of yield management is forecasting room sales. Orkin suggests using a daily-decision orientation rather than a seasonal decision-making scheme in developing a particular strategy. Accurate forecasting of transient demand will assist hoteliers in developing strategies to maximize sales to this group. For example, if a hotel has group business reservations for 95 percent of available rooms, seeking transient business with special

promotional packages during that time period would not be advisable. If the period following the group business is low, then advance knowledge of this information will allow time for marketing and sales to develop special promotional packages aimed at the transient and local markets.

12. 1 Limitations of employing forecasting techniques

Forecasting should be used to generate revenue by forecasting the volume of customers and allocating resources where it fits. Managers need to make sure that they have enough available rooms to control the guests flow. As we know “ more guests brings more revenue”.

13. Performance indicators to measure the success of room sales

A general manager who reviews the report of a recent five-day block-out period, as depicted in Table 2, would find that the period restricted for a five-day minimum length of stay worked well for May 1-3, but 178 room reservations were lost for May 4-5. The director of marketing and sales will have to research the contracts the hotel had with the various groups involved. Also, the front office manager should ask if the front desk clerks, bell staff, or cashiers heard any guest comments on why they checked out earlier than scheduled. The turn away business on May 3-5 might also indicate that the convention events scheduled on these days were more interesting or that the members of this group did not want to commit to a five-day stay and wanted reservations for only the last three days of the convention.

Table 2 Turn away business report

Date

Yield %

No. Rooms Turned away

\$ Lost @ \$95 Rack Rate

May 1

98

35

3, 325

May 2

96

20

1, 900

May 3

93

60

5, 700

May 4

50

90

8, 550

May 5

50

88

8, 360

13. 1 Considerable factors to review the performance of sales manager

Were the anticipated profits outlined in the budget achieved? Use of a VIP Guest Card indicates to the restaurant manager that the guest was referred by the front desk clerk. Similar types of controls will enable management to pinpoint the origins of room reservations, gift shop purchases, and other sales. A recordkeeping system must be established to reflect the amount of money awarded to front office employees as incentives to increase sales in targeted areas and the directors should consider these costs in terms of generating revenues. The details of this recordkeeping system must be worked out with the various department directors and the controller.

13. 2 Present and communicate appropriate findings of the Sales manager

Front office management includes helping to promote the overall profitability of a hotel. Developing a point-of-sale front office involves developing a plan of action, which includes setting goals and objectives, brainstorming areas for promotion, evaluating alternatives, discussing supportive areas for

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consideration such as incentive programs and training programs, projecting anticipated revenues and related expenses in a budget, and preparing feedback mechanisms. This simple framework for planning will allow front office managers the opportunity to gain a larger perspective on the issue rather than pushing forward with desperate efforts to produce sales.