



UNIT-6



Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Explain the importance of service quality in the hospitality industry
- ✓ Explore Quality Management Operations
- ✓ Discuss the Role of ISO 9000 in Hospitality Operations

Unit 6

Quality Management

For a successful business in the hotel industry, the quality of service is an important factor. In the hotel industry, hotel companies achieve competitive advantage by following existing trends of comprehensive quality management. So, what does quality mean? **Supplying a standard that you sense is correct for your customers, always.** This definition is easy and useful to contemplate. Simply, it means that you pinpoint the needs of your guests and consistently supply those needs. You cannot do what you wish. You must do what your guests want every time and do it right from the first time onwards. The importance of staff performance and variable arrangement of products and services, along with various guest expectations and assessments of positive service encounters, all add to the difficulties of managing a service industry as compared to the management of a manufacturing industry. For this and various other reasons, many methods of performance monitoring and service quality management have been introduced. Investors in People, ISO 9000, complete quality management, and other schemes were all planned to help central management procedures ensure that quality is provided 'right first time.'

In addition, this procedure permits specific businesses and divisions to communicate with guests and customers. This matter should not be taken lightly since -

- Guests are often uncertain about the quality of experience that they will receive;
- Standard labels make guests feel more secure about the quality of service they will receive;
- Once correctly applied, these schemes can help provide actual assistance in the administration of the quality of service.

Hospitality Retail Service Quality

The elusive components of the service make it hard for guests to find the benefits to be obtained from a service before they purchase it. This can only be managed after experiencing that service. It is difficult to quantify and define the expectations of guests, service workers, and administrators in terms of what the elusive benefits should supply. Effective service delivery is often dependent on the guests experiencing feelings of belonging and luxury that are hard to produce. Another feature that separates quality service from typical manufacturing production is the changeability of services. Delivery of services is often inconsistent and hard to standardise due to the personal nature of the interaction between the guest and the service provider or staff member.

- Staff members will differ in their understanding of guests' needs. Components of human interaction may obstruct performance; some staff members may be more committed to positive service encounters.
- The expectation of the guests concerning satisfactory services varies and can be hard to envisage.
- Production and consumption of services are inseparable; this is the third important feature of services.

- Patrons of the services themselves are contributors to the service delivery, for example, as are patrons in a restaurant or a bar. They intermingle with the service provider, the atmosphere and the other guests. Consumers are part of the service interaction and will help form it – through their own observations of the service atmosphere and the observations of fellow guests.

It is impossible to save up sales and please the customer some other time. Neither can the loss of services provided be supplied at a future date. Most often, the service is time-sensitive; once the opportunity is lost it is gone forever. Therefore, the vacant hotel bed or the meals not sold in a restaurant represent income lost that cannot be regained. Hospitality providers' services cannot be stored up and cannot be made up by working overtime or multi-sourcing services to allow for variation in the demand and supply of services.

Defects in service quality cannot be amended and given back to the customer, as is possible with a manufactured product. Demand for services has to be perfect as and when they are demanded; therefore, it is difficult to plan service delivery to match service demand. Lastly, many retail services in hospitality are provided to guests who do not take up the services as provided; if they find them unacceptable, they cannot take them away or return them.

Due to the features of elusiveness and perishability, guests are often buying the right to a service or an experience. Problems of devotion and recollection are created due to this; unlike the owners of a physical product that is taken home, hospitality merchandising customers rarely have enduring reminders of the merchandises' features or benefits. Continuous patronages will be based on a collection of memories, experiences and expectations. Personal observations and differences become vital concerns -

- Customer hopes of service quality become a paramount decisive feature of service quality when compared to experiences of the service;
- Consumers have a base level of anticipation of the services - the least they expect. They have a standard of expectation about what the service should be compared to what they want;
- Consumers also imagine what the quality will be like;
- Consumers may differ in their outlooks; those customers who have greater experience of a service will have higher expectations than those with less exposure to that service;
- Providers of hospitality have a responsibility to influence expectations; customer expectations are influenced by promotional activities and advertising;
- It is important that those expectations are met by the service provided by your unit.

The focal point is to ensure that consumer expectations are met in such a way that they appreciate that their expectations have been fulfilled, and that they are sufficiently pleased to warrant a return visit. It is important to view Herzberg's Motivational Model. Herzberg suggested that there are two sets of factors that individuals actually evaluate when viewing positive and negative reaction to service -

1. Cleanliness factors are precisely those features - such as hygiene of the bathrooms. Consumers have certain required standards and will be disgruntled if those standards are not met. However, consumers are not necessarily moved to return even when these standards are met.
2. Motivators are those features of a service that consumers find to be significant- mainly intangibles such as being cherished and made to feel important, and hospitableness which will encourage consumers' loyalty.

Herzberg's Model is important since it advises that there are some features which, if expectations are not met, will result in consumers becoming disappointed. However, meeting consumer expectations in these features does not guarantee consumer loyalty - just a lack of disappointment. Actual consumer motivators are those features of the service that consumers hold significant. You must ensure that you recognise consumer expectations, mainly:

- Cleanliness factors that may cause displeasure.
- The motivators which will ensure that consumers return.

SERVQUAL is used by some hospitality providers to equate consumers' anticipations with their experiences and thereby show the strengths and flaws of the service provided. The routines of different contenders can be associated with the service organisation's individual routine. In particular, it identifies the "five service gaps," where there may be a disparity between the expected level of service and the awareness of the service that is provided. The five dimensions of service that have been recognised and on which the SERVQUAL System of quality assessment is based are listed below.

The Five Dimensions of Service

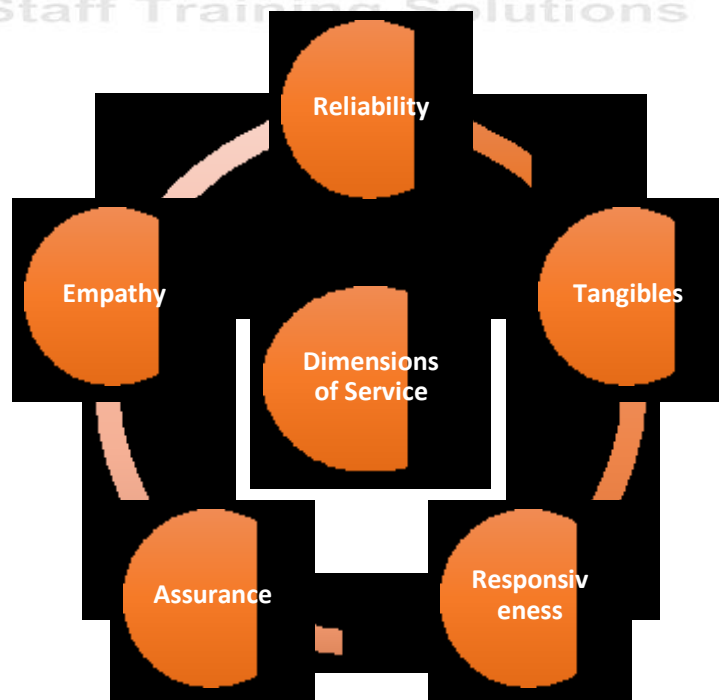


Fig. 6.1

Reliability - The skill to provide the guaranteed service consistently and precisely;

Tangibles – The presence of physical amenities, equipment, staff and communication tools;

Responsiveness – The inclination to help consumers and deliver rapid service;

Assurance - The ability and willingness of staff to deliver with confidence; and

Empathy - Personalised consideration provided to the consumer

Responsiveness, assurance and empathy are fundamentals of this model, highlighting the significance of staff performance in the service encounter.

The failure of the staff to correct the delivery system's failures can be grave, because consumers will probably excuse a service disaster if the disaster is accepted and rapidly corrected. Any problem that is ignored at the time may result in grievances being reported to the head office and, more notably, a lost consumer. Since each consumer makes recommendations to friends and family, the lost consumer can result in a loss in excess of the free drink or exchanged meal.

Likewise, staff responses to consumer demands and requests are important in all service situations since there will be times when consumers need something that is not ordinarily sold by the brand, or the staff may make a mistake and need help in amending their error. Consumers are more likely to respond positively if they are treated with flexibility and the staff do their best to meet the consumer's demands.

The segment recommends many key concepts in handling service quality.

1. Hospitality retail operations provide merchandise and service to consumers, and these result in concrete and elusive benefits. Although it is simpler to manage the concrete aspects of the operation, both are significant and need vigilant monitoring.
2. A unit supervisor must understand that consumers utilise the same restaurant and bar on various occasions with varying expectations and aims. You must appreciate these various requirements and expectations in order to better understand and focus on what consumers believe is important.
3. Consumers have various expectations of the service features provided and rank them differently. Several consumers will expect the service provided to be up to the basic standard, although an abundance of this service may not motivate consumers to return. You need to understand motivators - those parts of the service that will help form solid customer loyalty.
4. The performance of the staff in delivering service is the vital component of the consumers' experience. The staff's sensitivity, assurance and responsiveness when serving the customers, and their ability to handle serious incidents, are vital to the encounter. Suitable human resource

management procedures - enlistment and selection, preparation, inspiration, and enablement - are all essential.

Quality Management and Hospitality Retail Operations

The following is a brief summary of various systems and expressions used:

1. **Quality inspection:** tangible output of an item or service is compared to a standard specification. Imperfections are then redone or rejected as waste. Although quality inspection is performed by line supervisors, quality managers and anonymous consumers, the approach is usually limited by the nature of the hospitality goods and services. It is not always possible to amend a defective product or service. It is also difficult at times to identify the source of the problem.
2. **Quality control:** quality is inserted into the comprehensive description in the production of merchandise and services through meticulous standards. Throughout the various stages of the process, quality checks are introduced, between units. The foundation comprises the detection and improvement of faults. This may not improve quality but it will indicate when quality is absent.
3. **Quality assurance:** instead of waiting for errors to occur, quality is inserted into the process in such a way that errors cannot occur. If an error does occur, it is amended as it occurs. The method involves producing a documented and calculated quality system. Quality assurance needs complete organisation, commitment and participation of all staff in the process. A crucial problem is that, while quality assurance may provide continuous flawless products and services, the standard may not meet the demands of the consumer.
4. **Total quality management:** The emphasis is on achieving consumer satisfaction by meeting the customer's needs. The arrangement is completely focused on the consumer's satisfaction and the elimination of any obstacles to consumer satisfaction. Individuals in the organisation are crucial to effectively obtaining consumer satisfaction; staff training, incentives, and empowerment are vital. Once more, there should be total commitment to effective implementation, and this can be hard to achieve since it is often difficult to amend the administration's culture. The tactics noted above are not of themselves mutually exclusive; one method shapes another and, as we will see later, effective quality packages usually include features of all these methods. Hence, organisations that have been founded on complete quality management require the involvement of quality inspection and quality control, although the number of errors and problems should be largely reduced.

Inspections and Quality Assurance

Although the first visit from the quality assurance unit of your tourist authority or evaluation agency can be nerve-racking, it need not be so, since their goal is the same as yours, in that they want you to be as perfect as possible. You might avoid this stress if the quality consultant checks into your hotel under cover.

A new study on restaurants showed that the top two concerns on which customers rate them are cleanliness and friendliness. It is interesting that the notion of visiting the restaurant primarily for its food did not appear in the top two picks on the list.

Quality Advisor's Visit

There are eight distinct areas that quality advisors check and include in their final grading report when they visit a property.

One of the units is “Bedrooms” and within this unit are four subsections:

- Decorations;
- Furniture and fittings;
- Floor coverings;
- Beds and bed coverings

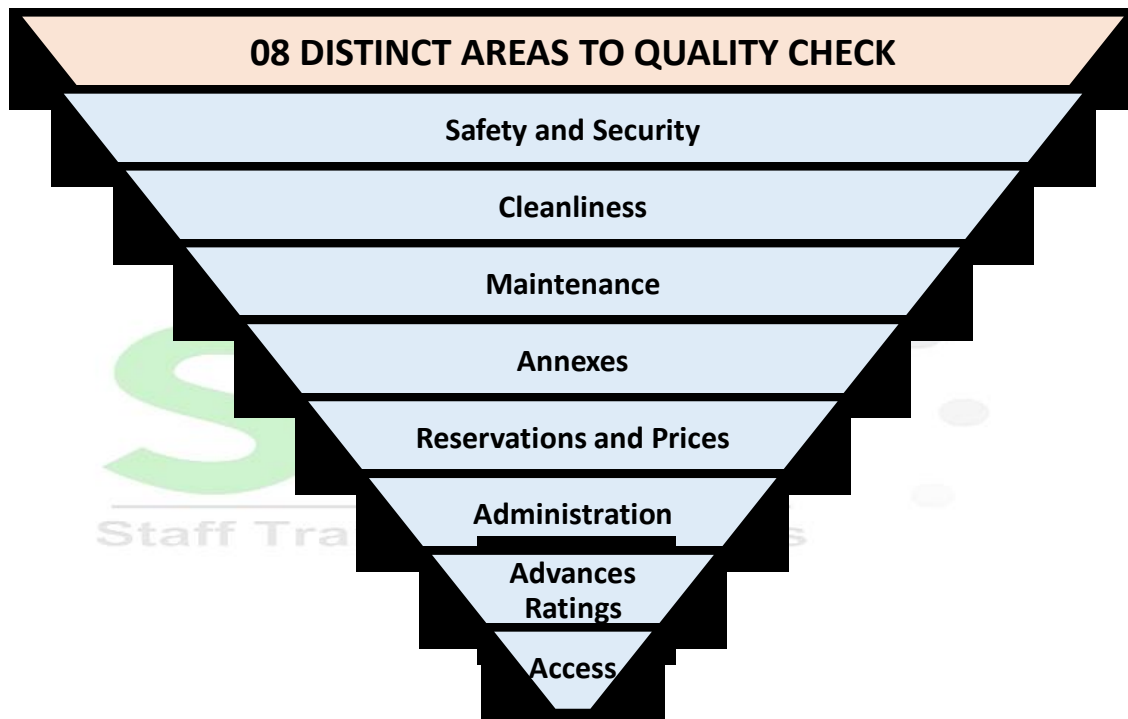


Fig. 6.2

1. **Safety and security:** The main entrance should be visibly identified. Preferably, the doorway should be well-illuminated. There should be a great amount of overall safety and security measures put in place, including knowledge on procedures in the case of an emergency. There should also be written details on how to call for assistance in case of an emergency at night. Acceptable action should be taken for the safety of the lodgers and the property. There should be a way of locking bedroom doors from the inside and out, allowing entry into the room with a key. Guests should be able to leave the bedroom easily without the need of a key.
Sufficient lighting should be available for safety and security in all public areas, with ample light on stairways and landings at night.

Meticulous attention should be paid to the security and comfort of guests, especially those inhabiting the ground-floor rooms.

2. Cleanliness: A high standard of sanitation should be sustained throughout the property; specific attention should be paid to the bathrooms, showers and toilets.
3. Maintenance: Structures, their fittings and fixtures, the furniture and décor inside and outside have to be well maintained in a sound, sparkling condition and must be safe for the purposes intended. All electrical apparatus must be well maintained in excellent working order.
4. Annexes: Where an annexe is part of the establishment, the amenities supplied in it will be included in the assessment of the establishment. Pathways and halls leading to the annexe must be in excellent condition, well lit and with even surfaces.

Guests must be informed at the time of booking or later, in the event of a change, if the lodgings offered are a separate annexe, or have individual external access. The location of these lodgings should also be specified.

5. Reservations and prices: The style of the accommodation should provide a suitable welcome and well organised service. All questions, requirements, reservations, communications and grievances from guests should be attended to quickly and courteously. It should be specified to the guests precisely what is included in the price quoted for the room, meals and refreshments, together with the service charge and any other surcharges, e.g., credit card use.

A pamphlet or brochure should be accessible.

The price quoted at the time of booking should not be exceeded and all quotes must include VAT. All accommodation providers, regardless of the size of the organisation, should show the following in the entrance or reception area. This information should also be displayed outside the premises:

Staff Training Solutions

- Existing prices of the cheapest and most costly single room
- Existing prices of the cheapest and most costly twin or double room
- Existing prices of the cheapest and most costly family room
- Prices should be quoted either by 'per person' or 'per room'.
- Prices quoted must include VAT.

The hotel's cancellation policy should be clearly explained to all guests when they book their room, as well as details of charges for any additional services or amenities available and their full details. This comprises all communications (telephone, fax, and email), as well as brochures. The conveniences, services and facilities provided by the hotel should be clearly and fairly described to all guests and prospective visitors through advertisements, brochures, or verbally. Information regarding any in-house policies such as a ban on smoking should be made clear at the time of booking. Guests should be able to inspect the rooms and establishment, if they wish to do so, before booking. Potential guests should be informed of any seasonal closures or any major renovations taking place at the time of their visit. Potential guests should be assured that their booking has been recorded properly and correctly.

6. Administration: Each guest should be presented with a bill that is clearly written and well laid out. The bill should provide the details of payments due and a receipt, as required.

Statutory Obligations

All legal responsibilities and modifications, which pertain to you, must be met including, but not limited to:

- i. The Trade Descriptions Act of 1928.**
This Act makes it a crime to carelessly or knowingly make ‘false statements’ about any amenities or facilities offered by the organisation.
- ii. The Fire Precautions Act of 1971**
This Act states that any facility which has accommodations for more than six lodgers and/or employees, or provides such lodging above the first floor or in the basement (below ground floor), will require a certificate issued by the appropriate Fire Authority.
- iii. The Food Safety Act of 1990**
This Act must be observed in those establishments that provide their lodgers with food or drinks. This also pertains to the sale of drinks.
- iv. The Hotel Proprietors Act of 1963**
In cases where this applies to your establishment, a notice must be displayed which limits your establishment’s liability to £50.00 for any object, with a maximum limit of £100.00 per lodger, unless, of course, the item has been deposited in a safe for safekeeping.
- v. The Health and Safety Act of 1974**
This Act sets out the regulations for health and safety guidelines in the work environment and places accountability and responsibilities on all individuals in that work environment, including the owners and the staff, as well as those who are self-employed.
- vi. The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995**
Two aspects of running an establishment are covered in this Act: staff employment and access to amenities, and services for the handicapped.
- vii. The Consumer Protection Act of 1995**
This Act makes it illegal for hoteliers or lodge providers to give consumers false information about the prices charged for room rentals and any associated facilities, goods and services. Owners are also required to have Public Liability Insurance. The person representing the inspection team will require evidence that the requirements are being met.
- viii. Access**
Once a lodger has checked in, he/she must be given unrestricted access to the institution and bedrooms. The owner and/or workers must be accessible during the day.

ix. Advances Ratings

For an establishment to achieve a higher award, i.e., four- or five-star status, additional requirements must be met.

Grading bands and conditions

The following pages provide information on different quality ranking levels.

Five Stars**93 – 100%**

Housekeeping must score 10

10

No item to score less than 8

8

All service elements to score excellent (9 – 10)

(9 – 10)

Four Stars**84– 92%**

Housekeeping not less than 9

9

No item to score less than 7

7

50% of total scores to be excellent (9 – 10)

(9 – 10)

and 25% of total scores to be very good (8)

(8)

At least 50% of service elements to score excellent (9 – 10)

(9 – 10)

Three Stars**77 – 83%**

Housekeeping not less than 8

8

No more than two items to score 6

6

And no more than one of these in any one section

NO acceptable or poor items (less than 6)

Heating and hospitality sections must not score less than 7

7

At least 25% of service elements to score excellent (9 – 10)

(9 – 10)

Two Stars**71-76%**

Housekeeping not less than 7

7

No poor items less than 3)

less than 3)

Not more than one unacceptable item (less than 6) and this

(less than 6) and this

must not be in the hospitality section

One Star**60 – 70%**

Housekeeping not less than 6

6

No poor items (less than 3)

(less than 3)

Fail – less than 60%

Below: minimum standards

The marks earned equate to the following:

- 10 Exceptional
- 9 Outstanding
- 8 Excellent
- 7 Good
- 6 Respectable
- 5 Average
- 4 Acceptable
- 3 Barely acceptable
- 2 Below acceptable
- 1 Poor
- 0 Not suitable



Quality Standard Awards in Hospitality Operations - ISO 9000 Series Many schemes of service quality management and performance monitoring have been presented. Investors in People, ISO 9000, Total Quality Management and other systems were all developed so that in-house administration practices would guarantee quality that was 'right first time.' In addition, these methods certify specific businesses and units as an indicator to external consumers and guests. This matter should not be taken lightly because -

- Guests are usually uncertain about the quality of experience they will receive;
- Standard brands help guests feel secure about the service they will experience;
- When these systems are used practically, they can help deliver real benefits in administering service quality.

This method sets a standard with which an organisation can document an operational system that establishes the company's commitment to quality and the method that ensures that quality is conveyed. Once the company has developed and documented a method, it is evaluated by one of many independent assessor agencies. Registration is normally for three years, but the organisation is subject to examination to ensure that the methods are still being observed.

There are many variations in the ISO 9000 series, and ISO 9002 is believed to be the better suited for hospitality firms.

Investors in People

The system offers twenty-four indicators for evaluating organisations' commitment to investing in their staff. Each indicator has guidance notes that define what each indicator should determine. The standard is not rigid and organisations can construe the indicators in their own way.

The process consists of four main stages – commitment, planning, action and evaluation. Once an organisation has developed these stages, it is evaluated by the local Training and Enterprise Council. Evaluation consists in examining all documents and, essentially, making site visits to meet with staff and supervisors – those that have received the training.

Total Quality Unit Management

Complete quality systems are essential for hospitality retail organisations; they should be sufficiently inclusive to encompass the characteristics of services and the various observations of the guests.

Complete quality management seems to offer service organisations the required method. Although there are many forms of total quality management, the subsequent list of principles contains many general qualities that are found in many descriptions of this initiative:

- The proposal indicates a responsibility to quality services as a central organisational matter. The dedication of senior administration is important and the approach has to infiltrate every part of the business.
- The proposal is very appealing to hospitality retail organisations because its goal is to produce a culture.

Quality Advisors' Sample Assessment Sheet

Factors to take into account:

Façade:

1. Look of the structure
2. Gardens and lands

Bedroom

1. Décor of the bedrooms
2. Furniture
3. Floor coverings
4. Linens and bedcovers
5. Lighting and fixtures
6. Heating accessories
7. Roomy/airy / overall impression

Bathrooms

1. Decoration and floor coverings
2. Fixtures
3. Bath linens
4. Lighting and heating
5. Fittings
6. Roominess/freshness

Public Areas

1. Design/scheme
2. Furniture and fixtures
3. Floor covering
4. Lights and proper illumination
5. Ambiance

Dining room

1. Interior decoration
2. Furnishing and furniture
3. Floor covering
4. Lighting and heating
5. Menu
6. Table selection
7. Ambiance

Food

1. Dinner-arrangement
2. Dinner -Quality
3. Breakfast –arrangement
4. Breakfast –Quality

Hospitality and service

1. Reception –welcome, friendliness, attitude
2. Reception- efficiency
3. Bedrooms-housekeeping/cleanliness
4. Public areas- housekeeping/sanitation
5. Dining room dinner service
6. Dining room- breakfast service
7. Check- out competence

Other

1. Tourist information/tours/guides

Further Reading:

- ✓ Connie Mok, Beverley Sparks, Jay Kadampully (2011), *Service Quality Management in Hospitality Tourism and Leisure*
- ✓ Robert A. Riedel (1995), *Hotel Air Quality Management*
- ✓ Jessica Salver (2005), *Brand Management in the Hotel Industry and Its Potential for Achieving Customer Loyalty*

