



Hotel Management (Short Course)

Introduction to Hotel Management

What is Hospitality?

There is no one single and simple definition to explain the term of hospitality. Many people have tried to describe the hospitality industry in different ways. Some tried to summarize the scope of the industry and its characteristics of involving both tangible and intangible features in the service delivery process. Others attempted to describe the industry by exploring the stakeholders involved, mutual benefits generated and the industry's impacts to the society and economy.

Broadly speaking, Hospitality is the act of kindness in welcoming and looking after the basic needs of customers or strangers, mainly in relation to food, drink and accommodation. A contemporary explanation of Hospitality refers to the relationship process between a customer and a host. When we talk about the "Hospitality Industry", we are referring to the companies or organisations which provide food and/or drink and/or accommodation to people who are "away from home". However, this definition of the "Hospitality Industry" only satisfies most situations.

Characteristics of the Hospitality Industry

Different from other sectors, the hospitality industry is unique in its nature which tends to be service-oriented and has a strong emphasis on human exchange in the service delivery processes. A summary of key characteristics relating to the hospitality industry are listed in Figure 1 as below:

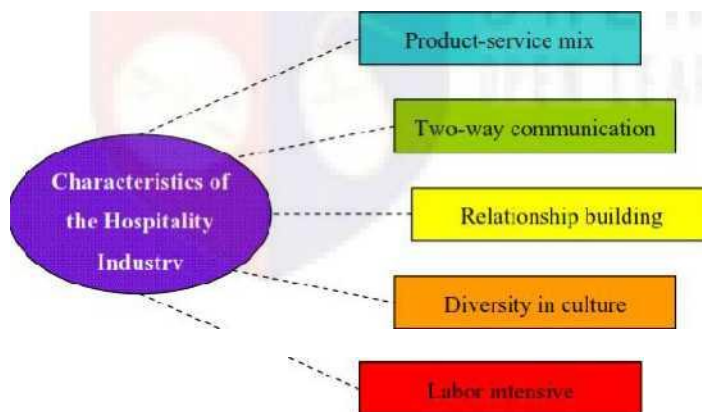


Figure 1.1- Characteristics of the Hospitality Industry

1) Product-Service Mix

In the hospitality industry, customers rarely consume pure products but a mixture of products and services. For example, one who dines in a restaurant will not only pay for the food and drinks but the services provided by the servers. The bill has covered both tangible and intangible experience.

Tangible features- for example, a steak as the main course, a glass of house wine, well groomed service staff and decoration of the restaurant. Intangible features- for example, a comfortable dining atmosphere or the friendly attitude of staff.

A successful hospitality business does not only count on its products and services, but also how they are delivered. The qualities of staff and the way they deliver the service are often more important than the tangible products in making a hospitality experience satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Hence, the two features can contribute to the total experience in the service delivery process.

As products and other tangible features can be easily imitated by competitors, hospitality operations which aimed for high-ended customers and 'superior' quality gradually spend more and

more resources in enhancing the service standard as a strategy of differentiation.

2) Two-way Communication

In order to achieve service excellences in the hospitality industry, two-way communication is one critical factor which requires the involvement and participation of both customers and service staff

in the service delivery process. Through interactions with customers, important messages about their needs and expectations can be received by service staff for their immediate actions to create customer satisfaction. Interactions between internal staff or inter-departments is also critical since

total experiences of customers in using any lodging or food and beverage services usually involve team work and exchange of information within the organization.

3) Relationship Building

The hospitality industry highly depends on repeated customers for survival. Building long term relationship with customers can benefit the organizations for generating stable revenues regardless of the instability of seasons and at the same time, developing brand reputations through positive word-of-mouth of the repeated customers. In order to develop brand loyalty, different methods are currently applied by the lodging and food service sectors, such as membership programmes which give privileges and incentives to frequent customers. However, top management of organizations do believe that the informal ways of building "friendship" between front-line staff and customers through high degree of personal attention and customization can win the loyalty of customers in long run.

4) Diversity in Culture

As hospitality are closely related to tourism industry, it is not surprising that people involved in this sector, no matter customers or staff are experiencing a diversity in culture through interacting with others. Staff who work in a hospitality organization always have interactions with customers from different regions, or to work and corporate with other colleagues who may have different backgrounds or cultures. Due to their differences in religious beliefs and values,

From customers' perspective, some of them abstain from meat due to their religious beliefs or habit. Therefore, restaurants should provide vegetarian food as an option in order to satisfy their needs.

From staff's perspective, eating pork or any food products with pork as ingredient should be avoided if some colleagues are Muslims in order to show respect to their religious belief.

Such a cultural diversity implicates that local staff should generally understand different cultures so flexible services can be provided to customers based on their national cultures and harmony in cooperation with colleagues from different nationalities can be achieved.

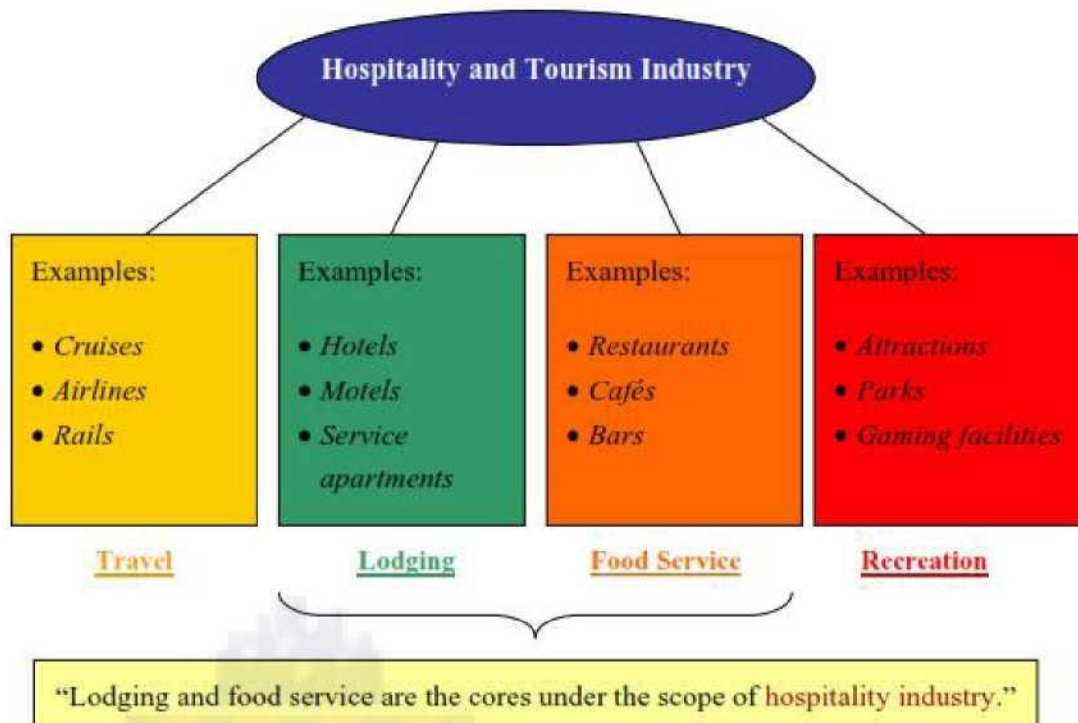
5) Labor Intensive

Since the hospitality industry is service-oriented in its' nature, it requires a huge supply of labors to create a memorable experience for the customers. This characteristic is especially true for those enterprises which target for high-ended customers. For example, staff-to-guest ratios are high in fine dining restaurants and 5-star hotels which aimed at providing one-on-one services to their customers. Although the advancement in technology do contribute to the replacement of some simple tasks in the whole service process, customers who concern the element of 'care' generally expect high degree of human contacts and personalized services in their consumption experiences. It explains why the industry is always in high demand for labor and is willing to spent time and resources in training and recruiting potential candidates to join the workforce of the hospitality industry.

Relationship between the Hospitality Industry and Tourism

Scope of the Hospitality Industry

"Guests" means those who are away from their homes and it therefore, has generated a perception that the hospitality industry should include or overlap with the tourism industry to a certain extent. Without a clear definition about the scope of the hospitality industry, some suggested that it should not only cover all lodging and food service operations but other tourism related operations, such as airlines and theme parks. Besides, there were also some who considered putting hospitality and tourism into one industry. One example of categorization is shown in Figure 2.



There are two main business sectors in the hospitality industry:

Accommodation - To provide accommodation (and usually food and drink) to people who for whatever reason are away from home

Food and beverage - To provide food and beverage to local, commuting, transient customers and tourists

These two sectors will be covered in more detail in subsequent units.

As we have seen, the hospitality industry includes hotels and restaurants, as well as many other types of organisations or institutions that offer food, drink, shelter and other related services. These products and services are offered not only to people away from home, but also to local customers. A manager in the hospitality industry, therefore, must keep in mind the following three objectives:

- 1) Making the customers feel welcome personally;
- 2) Making things work for the customers; and
- 3) Making sure that the operation will continue to provide service and meet its budget.

Career Prospect of the Hospitality Industry

There are always some pros and cons for working in the hospitality industry. The concern whether a position suits to you or not is mainly dependent on your own character and personal interest. Some general views, both positive and negative, about the career prospects of hospitality industry are summarized below as reference for those who may have intentions to join this unique and challenging

industry.

1. Positive Views

a) Variety of Career Choices

Due to the booming development of the hospitality and tourism industry, many new hotels and restaurants are opened for catering the needs of both the visitors and locals. It facilitates a huge demand of labor in the market, especially in some developing countries. The job natures are broad, ranging from different back-of-the-house to front-of-the-house positions in the hospitality industry. Some positions that can be selected by graduates with their certificates or diplomas relating

Accommodation Sector	Food Service Sector	Other Related Sectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front desk receptionist • Room attendant • Telephone operator • Reservation • Concierge • Bellman/Doorman • Business center associate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiter/waitress • Host / hostess • Cashier • Food runner/Busser • Bartender • Apprentice • Commis • Banquet server 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour guide • Tour escort • Travel agent • Theme park crew • Event sales • Other "customer service" positions

Table 1 — Career Opportunities of Graduates Studying Hospitality Programs

b) Opportunities to Meet People with Different Backgrounds

As mentioned earlier that the success of a hospitality service highly depends on the human contact between staff and customers. Having a chance to work in the industry, particularly in some front line positions means that there would be many opportunities for one to meet and communicate with people

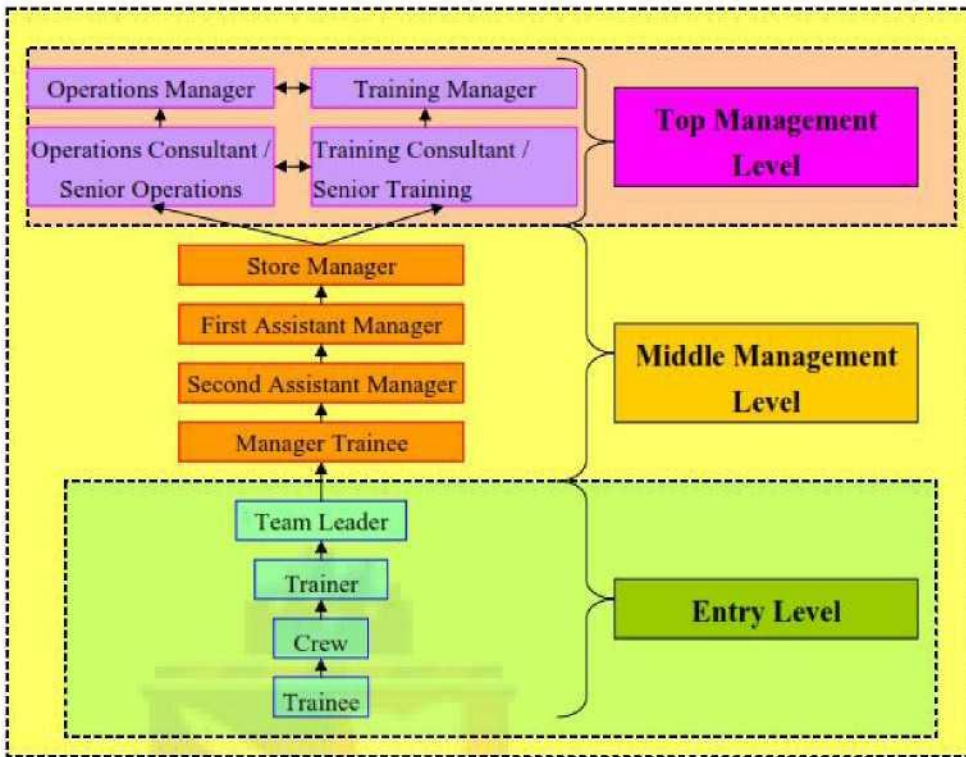
with different backgrounds and cultures. For example, a hotel receptionist can perceive his/her position

as a tourist ambassador, which can be enjoyable and challenging. The job satisfaction through winning customers' smiles, as well as its' interactive nature make hospitality industry attractive to youngsters with an out-going character.

c) Long-Term Career Development

It is common that most people have to start their careers from the entry-level. However, the career paths are always quite clear for employees and there are always opportunities for them to get promoted and proceed to management levels based on their experience and performance. Successful stories are numerous in this sector and someone starting from room attendant can finally turn into the

general manager of a hotel. Figure 3 shows a sample career path provided to employees by a famous fast food chains.



d) Fringe Benefits Enjoyed by Employees

Different from other business and service operations, staff working in hotels and food service operations can usually enjoy some other benefits in addition to the basic salaries, annual bonus and insurance coverage. For example, hotel and restaurant staff are normally provided with 2 duty meals in their work days. Some hotel staff are also allowed to enjoy a discount rate or associate rate for booking rooms, which can be even applied to hotel outlets under the same brand all over the world.

2. Negative Views

a) Long and Non-Regular Working Hours

Shift works are very common in food and beverage and accommodation sectors. Despite of morning and evening shifts, some positions require staff to work overnight, such as night auditors in the front desk and security officers. As there are no such things of public holidays, staff are always required to work on weekends or special days, such as Christmas and Easter, etc. "Long working hours" seem to be the implicit norm of many positions in the hospitality industry. Over-time works due to the shortage of labors and peak seasons of businesses are frequent to both operational staff and managers. The concerns about the bad effects on one's health and family life lead to people's hesitation

b) Work Under Pressure

In most situations, staff are expected to provide "quick" and "high quality" services without keeping their customers from waiting. The pressure of maintaining the service efficiency and consistency, especially in peak seasons could be tremendous. The need for frequent communications with customers has especially created intense pressure to staff in front line positions. Receiving complaints or handling angry customers are resistances for people in starting their careers in this industry.

c) Low Starting Salary

Hospitality industry offers many relatively low-skilled entry level jobs. With the exceptions of management or positions which require fluency of languages or specific skills, staff with no experience generally have low starting salaries. The differences between large-scaled and small-scaled hotels or food service operations lead to further variations in staff salaries.

d) Perceptions of Low Job Status

As mentioned above that many positions are low-skilled in the hospitality industry, some people would

think their job status are relatively lower when compared with other industries, such as banking and finance. The misperceptions of 'being a servant to others' in the Chinese culture plus other negative views introduced above have also discouraged many graduates from joining the industry.

The Accommodation Sector

Classification of Accommodation Establishment

There is no generic rule for classifying accommodation establishments globally. One method is to divide

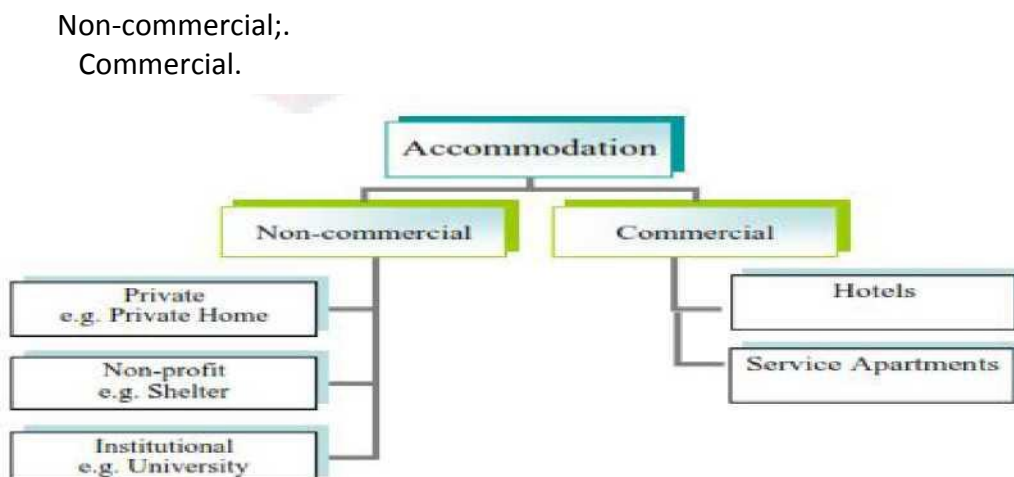


Fig: 4

Hotels and Their Classifications

As Hotel is the predominant type of commercial accommodation we, therefore, will discuss in depth about how hotels can be classified.

"Hotel" means an establishment held out by the proprietor as offering sleeping accommodation to any person presenting himself who appears able and willing to pay a reasonable sum for the services and facilities provided and who is in a fit state to be received.

A hotel is classified as a commercial establishment providing accommodations, meals and other guest services. Originally guests had two choices:

- Luxury hotels; or
- Budget hotels.

In some countries, hotels were built to serve middle-class families and, when the economy in general boomed and room supply increased; hoteliers then focused on setting themselves apart by offering specialised accommodation for:

- Conventioneers;
Business groups; and
- Special weekend events and families.

As diversity flourished so did competition and brand loyalty. Anyone who can pay (within reason) can rent a room for a night in a hotel. Hotels vary greatly in style and services, from luxury, business, resort, townhouse to boutique and budget. A standard room will have a bed, bathroom facilities, shower, telephone, TV, lounge area and mini-bar. Housekeeping services available include laundry and dry-cleaning. Nowadays guests would usually have access to a wireless computer network and also to a business centre. Most major hotels will have restaurants and bars available for guests and if they are situated in a large city they are usually located near the business districts, tourist destinations and/or airports.



Fig: 5

Types of Accommodation

The following chart shows various types of accommodation used by travelers and their respective characteristics:

Name(s)	Characteristics
City centre hotels	These hotels are located within the heart of a city. The type may vary greatly from business,suites, residential, economy, mid-scale to luxury.
Suburban hotels	Suburban hotels tend to be smaller properties which usually provide full-service, and locate in suburban area.
Airport hotels	These hotels are designed especially to accommodate airtravelers. They offer a mix of facilities and amenities. The majority offer customers transportation to and from the airport.

Highway hotels or Motels	They are designed for overnight stays for car travelers, often with very basic facilities. The rooms usually have direct access to an open parking lot. They are often smaller than most hotels. They are located on the outskirts of towns and cities.
Convention hotels	These hotels can provide a large quantity of rooms. In addition to accommodation, they provide extensive meeting and function space for holding conventions. There are banquet areas within and around the hotel complex. Most of them provide an in-house laundry, a business centre, airport shuttle service, and 24-hour room service. They are often in close proximity to convention centres and other convention hotels.
Commercial hotels	They are located in downtown areas. They tend to be smaller than convention hotels. Meeting and function space are smaller, and there are fewer banquet areas.
Resort hotels	These hotels are located in picturesque, sometimes remote settings. Customers travel long distance to resorts. Usually, they tend to stay longer. Resorts typically provide a comprehensive array of recreational amenities, as well as a variety of food & beverage outlets ranging from informal to fine-dining restaurants.
Spa hotels	They are located in resort-type settings or as part of city spa hotels. They provide accommodations, spa treatments, programs and cuisine. Programs offered vary widely. They may include relaxation/stress management, fitness, weight management, grief/life change and pilates/yoga. Spas have professional staff that often include dietitians, therapists, masseurs, exercise physiologists, and in some cases, physicians.
Casino hotels	They have gambling operations which are the major revenue centres. They also provide live entertainment. A wide variety of luxury amenities, hotel services including fine and casual dining and shopping centres are typically available on site.

All-suite hotels	The guest rooms in these hotels are larger than normal hotel rooms, with separate areas for working, sleeping and relaxing. A living area or parlour is typically separated from the bedroom, and some properties offer a kitchen set-up in the rooms. The amenities and services can vary widely. They can be found in various locations such as urban, suburban, or residential.
Boutique hotels	Boutique hotels differentiate themselves from traditional hotels and motels by providing personalized accommodation and services/facilities. They are sometimes known as "design hotels" or "lifestyle hotels". The price varies greatly. They are very different in their "look and feel" from traditional lodging properties. They are more intimate, and, perhaps, more luxurious, and stand out as an individual. The amenities vary greatly depending on what the hotel's environment and theme chosen. For example, a boutique hotel may not offer Wi-Fi Internet, air conditioning, or cable/pay TV if it is focus on comfort and solitude.
Timeshares or Vacation ownership	This is a type of shared ownership where a buyer purchases the right to use the property for a portion of each year. In many cases, when the timeshare is purchased, the buyer receives a deed. This indicates that the buyer can use the property each year at the time specified for the number of years based on the deed and the purchase can be handed down to the buyer's heirs.
Historic conversion hotels	These properties have historic significance. They have been converted into lodging establishments with retention of their historic character.
Extended-stay hotels or Serviced Apartments	These properties cater to customers who stay for an extended period. They usually offer full kitchen facilities, shopping services, business services and limited housekeeping services.

Bed and breakfast inns (B&Bs)	They are usually family-owned. They are private homes whose owner lives on or near the premises and rents out rooms to overnight customers. The paid accommodation typically includes breakfast. A popular term is "B&Bs" (i.e. bed and breakfast provided). The host often provides customers with assistance regarding directions, and information regarding the local area including sightseeing suggestions. It is usually located in rural areas and villages.
Guest houses	Guest houses are similar to bed and breakfast inns. They range from low-budget rooms to luxury apartments. They tend to be like small hotels in bigger cities. Though the facilities are limited, most rooms are air-conditioned with en-suite shower and toilet.
Hostels	They are very cheap accommodation. The sleeping arrangements are usually in dormitory style and there may also be self-catering facilities on site.
Cabins	They are bedrooms on a ship or train for passengers.
Villas or Chalets (usually found in skiing and beach resorts)	They are self-catering accommodation in a private bungalow, usually rented to prestigious or renowned customers. In many cases, it refers to a small cottage with an overhanging roof in a seaside resort, e.g. beach houses.

Table 2—Types of Accommodation

Managing Front Office Operations

Regardless of the class or type of the hotel, the front office is its most central and vital focal point. The core of the front office and the most active part is the reception desk, which is ideally located in the front lobby of the hotel. It is the hotel's communication nerve centre, which is where the most contact with guests occurs. Guests interact with the hotel for the first time, when they interact with the staff of the front office and they get a first impression regarding the hotel, depending upon the efficiency, behaviour, and competency of the front office staff.

The reception carries out tasks, such as, the sale of rooms, registration of guests, room allocation, handling guest requests, maintaining guest accounts, cashiering, mail handling, and providing information. The financial tasks handled at the front desk include accepting cash payments, taking of guest folios, check verification, foreign currency handling, and credit cards. This Unit will acquaint you with all of the facets of front office management.

The **front office** is the focal point of the hotel establishment. Its two most important functions include accounting and communication. Efficient communications - with employees, guests, and other hotel departments - are supreme in creating a hospitable image. Answering inquiries regarding hotel services, providing information on room availability to the sales, and marketing departments, replying to housekeeping department inquiries concerning guest reservations are but a few of the routine tasks performed continuously by the front desk in its function as the communications centre. Additionally, guests might want to settle their accounts at any time throughout the day or night, so accounts must be up - to - date at all times. Keeping the data organised is the top priority for hotels, in order to have an efficient front office management.

Front Office Functions

The main job of the front office is that of a facilitator between the guest and various departments of the hotel. A second job is to provide support and aid in making services available to the guests. The number of interactions and transactions between the hotel and guest during the stay establishes the kind and nature of the front office operation.

The stages during a stay of the guest are:

- S The pre-arrival
- S The arrival
- S The occupancy
- S The departure

Interaction between the Hotel and Guest



Interaction between the Hotel and Guest

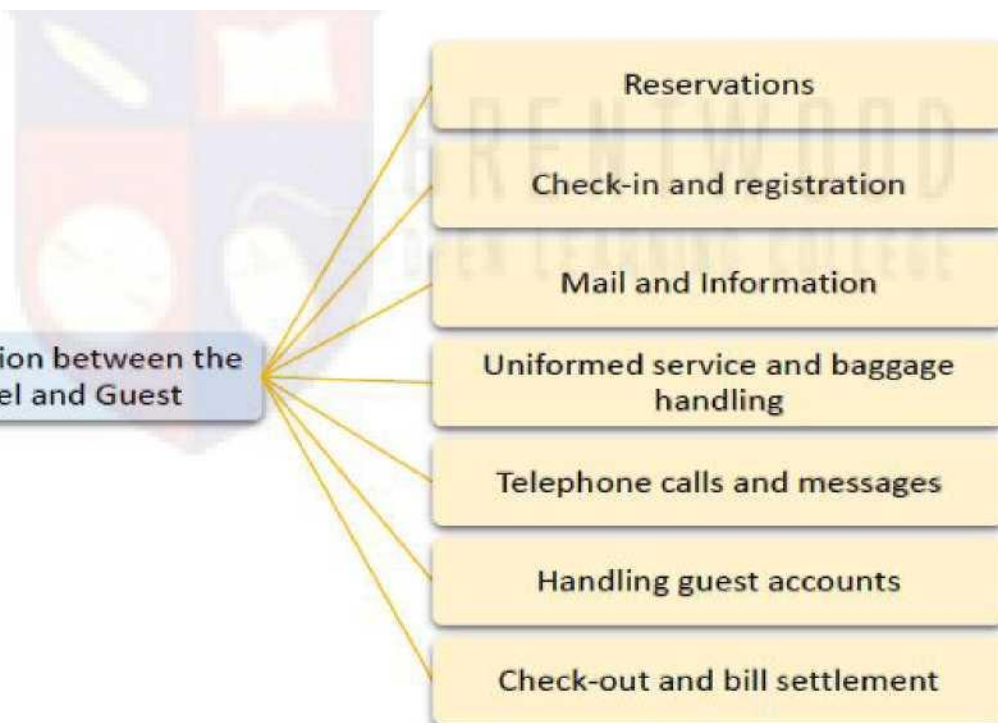


Fig: 7

All of these detailed transactions and services are taken care of by the front office department. The duties and services of the front office department can be distinguished by the area in which they are

being carried out. Some of the duties are carried out at the reception desk as front-of-the-house operations and the remaining duties are conducted as back-of-the-house operations.

Front-of-the-House Operations

Front-of-the-House Operations are called this because these activities are carried out in front of the guests. Hence, these activities are linked either to direct interaction with the guest or they are being conducted in front of the guest. The front office duties begin as soon as the guest calls or sends a request for reservation/accommodation. The front office staff start their interaction with the potential guest by taking in information and reservation of the guest, which leads to confirmation of reservation and lastly, to the handling of guest upon arrival and check-in.

So, decisions pertaining to the room sale to a specific guest, availability and allocation of a room, up-keep of account of the guest by coordinating with housekeeping, and room service are the chief Front-of-the-House duties. Finally, the account clearance or deciding on the time of the account's clearance is typically a part of the check-out process, carried out by the front office. To put it simply, we can say that front office is the first and the last place (during check-in and check-out) when a guest interacts with the hotel.

Back-of-the - House Operations

As the name implies, these are the activities that do not take place in front of the guests. Upon a guest's check-in time, his or her account is activated. This account maintains a track of the guest's financial interaction with the hotel. Such financial interactions include reserving a room, room services, laundry, food and beverage from the hotel, and any other facilities that the guest uses during his or her stay. For example, these monetary transactions might begin while the guest is still waiting for assigning of a room. The night auditors help back of the office department in the hotel every night in maintaining guest accounts. A lot of the hotels extend credit lines to their guests or the companies by which they are employed. A predetermined credit limit exists and the hotel allows the guest to build up the amount before requesting full or partial payment.

This type of an agreement saves the guest a lot of checkout time. It additionally coordinates with housekeeping and room sales to preserve the status of occupied and vacant rooms. Lastly, the guest record or personal data is preserved by the front office, which is primarily a back-of-the-house activity. So, the guest cycle which started with the guest booking, arrival of guests, providing for their stay, and charging them upon departure is completed.

Front Office: Organisational Structure

The Figure 2.2 organisational chart shows a standard front office organisational staff for the manager. It includes - the desk clerk, reservations manager, cashier, night auditor, concierge, telephone operator,

room key clerk, bell staff, and elevator operator. It is not necessary to find all these positions in every single lodging business. In some operations, the front desk clerk acts as a cashier, desk clerk, telephone operator, and reservations clerk, depending on the volume of business. A lot of larger hotels employ a complete staff, as shown on the chart. Staffing the front desk positions incurs a cost to the lodging establishment. The front office manager, with agreement of general manager, normally prepares the personnel budget that is in accordance with salary levels throughout the lodging business.

The duties of the front office staff are very different. The desk clerk can consist of a number of jobs, which usually includes confirming guest reservations, registering guests, allocating rooms, passing out keys, communicating with housekeeping staff, attending telephones, giving information about directions to local attractions, taking cash and returning change, and acting as a liaison between the lodging business and the guest along with the community.

The cashier's position involves processing guest checkouts. This post is found in many lodging establishments, and it aids in making the work load of the front desk manageable when the hotel is totally booked or busy. There are times when several guests need to check out at the same time. At times the best planned systems - such as, an express checkout, where the guest makes use of computer technology in a guest's room or a computer in the lobby of the hotel to check out; prior, approved credit, the use of credit card to confirm credit worthiness; or bill-to-account, an internal billing process - the lines at the cashier station can be long and the guest may be in a rush.

The reservations manager is a position that many lodging businesses have. This individual takes the incoming requests for rooms and jots down any special requests for service. The specifics of this position are endless, it is geared towards giving the guest the requested information and services along with accurate confirmation of these items. It is the reservation manager job to keep a correct account of room inventory by employing the reservation module of a property management system. This individual has to communicate very efficiently with the sales and marketing department. Slow and peak sales periods have to be dealt with through good planning.

The night auditor balances the financial transactions daily. He or she might also serve as desk clerk for the night shift (11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). He or she must also have a good understanding of the accounting principles and the skills to figure out financial inconsistencies. The post requires experience of a desk clerk and good communications with the controller.

The job of a telephone operator is rather important in the hotel and lodging business. This individual has to be able to locate a registered guest or management staff at a moment's notice. He or she must be prepared to deal with life-threatening crises or other emergencies. W Call accounting, which is a computer technology application that tracks guest phone calls and posts billing charges to lodging establishments, has made the job of telephone operators much simpler, since tracking telephone charges to registered guests can be accomplished with ease. This individual can also help the desk clerk and cashier when needed.



Fig: 8: This organisation chart lists positions found in a front office.

The bell captain, with the help of door attendants and bellhops, is the stronghold of the lodging establishment. The job of bell staff begins where the computerised property management system stops. They are the individuals who carry the baggage, acquaint the guests with the new environment, do minor jobs, deliver supplies, and pass out information to guests about local attractions. They additionally act as the hospitality link between the lodging business and the guest. They are a huge advantage to a well-run hotel business.

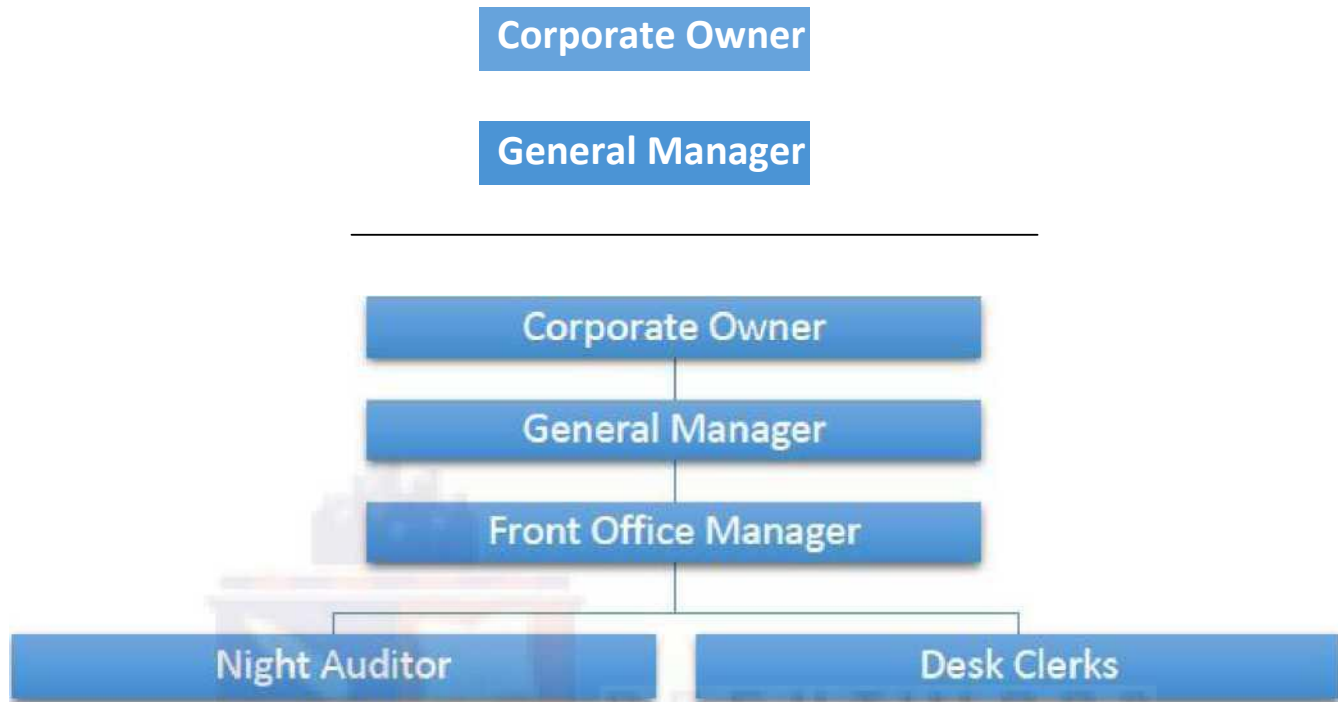
The key clerk is usually found in very large, full-service hotels that, as of yet, don't have electronic key systems. His job is to issue keys to registered guests and for linked security measures. Frequently, he or she will sort out incoming mail for registered guests or managerial staff. In most hotels, this position has become obsolete.

The elevator operator is the individual who operates the mechanical controls of an elevator, but this is almost extinct in the hotel business nowadays, as well. The job of this person has been replaced by self-operated elevators and escalators. Some of these individuals have been moved to the job of traffic managers, who are the people who guide guests to elevators in the lobby. In big, full-service hotels, the traffic managers can be a welcoming sight; the chaos of check-ins or check-outs can be reduced when they are on duty.

It is the duty of the concierge to make information, regarding entertainment, amusements, sports, tours, transportation, church services, and baby-sitting, in the area available. He or she must be very knowledgeable and has to be able to satisfy each guest's individualised needs. This individual also buys theatre tickets and makes reservations in restaurants for guests. Typically, the concierge is based at a desk in the lobby of the hotel property.

The desk clerk carries out a number of duties, such as, reservations and registrations and they also take on the positions of cashiers, telephone operators, and so on. Whatever the guest requires is made available and it is the front desk clerk, who is called upon to make hospitality available with efficiency and professional dignity. In limited-service establishments, the general manager may also assist, if

needed, to help process reservation requests, check-in guests at arrival, and check them out upon departure.



The front office staff in a limited-service hotel, includes a very minimal number of employees.

Fig: 9

Introduction to Housekeeping

Housekeeping

Efficiently managed housekeeping departments ensure the cleanliness, maintenance, and aesthetic appeal of lodging properties. The housekeeping department not only prepares clean guest rooms on a timely basis for arriving guests, it also cleans and maintains everything in the hotel. Kappa, Nitschke, and Schappert (1997)

As implied by the name, housekeeping activities are linked with the maintenance of a hotel establishment.

The main duty of housekeeping department is to maintain the cleanliness of the hotel, including both back-of-the-house and front-of-the-house areas. Setting good standards in room cleaning and public area cleaning can ensure a comfortable, safe, and hygienic environment for hotel guests and staff in the property.

In the traditional structure, these works present information that say housekeeping oversees four chief areas of obligation:

- Management of people, equipment, and supplies;
- Preservation of building finishes, fabrics, and furnishings;
- 3. Cost control; and
- 4. Record-keeping

Organisation of Housekeeping Department

To operate even a small hotel of thirty rooms, huge amounts of linen and a medium sized staff for cleaning and keeping the hotel hospitable for the visitors will be needed. Typically the housekeeping department is the largest department in a hotel and has a great number of staff members. Thus, this department in every hotel must have a highly organized setup regardless of the size. Some of the department's main responsibilities can be abridged as follows:

- a) **Housekeeping Manager:** This position may also be referred to as the Head or Executive Housekeeper and is the one ultimately accountable for the staff deployment, development, profitability, and operating standards of the department. A successful housekeeping manager needs to be able to delegate, offer community guidance, and direction. Such skills are a must to become a housekeeping manager. It is the housekeeping manager, who has the overall responsibility for the standards of cleanliness, maintenance, and the financial accomplishments within the department.
- b) **Floor Supervisor:** This position is otherwise known as the floor housekeeper, has charge of a given floor and set number of rooms. His/her chief job is to make certain the quality and efficiency of the room attendants. Once the room has been inspected and meets the set standards, it is "handed" to the front office for renting to a guest. Additionally, the floor

supervisors provide training to the new room attendants while re-training the existing staff for corrective methods. Finally, they are responsible for the apparatus and controlling costs within their domains of responsibility, and liaison with other departments like maintenance and front office. Linen management, refuse and cleaning gear is also the duty of the floor supervisor. Dispatching used linen for cleaning and getting clean linen for the following day's room cleaning is vital aspect of the job. Keeping exact count of the linen also has to be kept at all times in the linen closet.

- c) **Room Attendants:** Room attendants are also called housekeeping assistants. They are essentially required to keep very high standards of cleanliness in the rooms allotted to them. Cleaning a room includes vacuuming it, rubbing down toilets, replenishing used toiletries, changing linen and towels and ensuring that the basic set-up of the room is proper. Making a report of any maintenance issues to the appropriate department personnel is another key function carried out by room attendants. At times, guests place their queries regarding the local amenities or about hotel facilities to the room attendants and while answering these queries they play their role in customer relations. All of these duties have to be carried out in an allotted amount of time as they are assigned a specific number of rooms to maintain.



Fig:10

The Functions Of the Housekeeping Department

Cleaning of the bedroom floors situated outside of the bedroom is an extended function of housekeeping and this can include the staircases, public cloakrooms and other public areas of the property. At times agencies from outside are employed for the cleaning of the public areas like the lobby and restaurant area in addition to men's and women's restrooms. Such activities are conducted at odd hours or times when there is minimal public found in these areas. The standard of cleanliness must be upheld and it is the responsibility of the executive housekeeper to ensure that pre-set standards of cleanliness are followed in every area of the hotel whether it is the fire-exit stairwells or goods lifts or any other area in the public domain. To make sure this happens, the executive housekeeper begins his/her day with rounds, followed by an assistant housekeeper of all areas that are visited by the public.

For this to happen, the department has to make an effort to maintain the set standards after they have been set and approved.



Fig: 11

- 1) **The Lost and Found Department:** Quite often, during the cleaning process, a room attendant will come across personal items left behind by the guests. The value of the items may range from almost nothing to thousands of pounds, such as, in the case of Rolex watches, etc. All such items found in the process of cleaning the rooms need to be handed over by the attendants to the floor supervisors. They, in turn, make a list of all articles found against specific room numbers.
- 2) **First Aid:** If guest requires first aid, it is provided by the housekeeping department which maintains the first aid kit.
- 3) **Floral Arrangement:** Another duty of the housekeeping department is to maintain fresh floral arrangements all around the hotel. All arrangements in the public areas like the lobby or restaurants and private areas like the guest bedrooms are displayed by the housekeeping department.
- 4) **Laundry Services:** The laundry services available to the guests staying in the hotel are typically offered by housekeeping. The laundry needing washing is collected from the guest's room; washed, dried, and ironed and brought back to the room of the guest. Previously, all hotels maintained in-house laundry services but, now many hotels outsource this service both for the hotel linen along with the guest laundry.

5) Purchasing: this role of the housekeeping department is one involving the transaction of a lot of funds. Hence, it is an important section where profitability of the hotel may be affected if the range of products are not purchased with care and supplies not managed. The chief purchasing areas under the umbrella of Executive housekeeping area include:

- a) Bedroom supplies: e.g., laundry bags, breakfast, cards, and shoeshine, etc.;
- b) Bathroom supplies: e.g., toiletries;
- c) Linen: bed sheets and towelling;
- d) Tea and coffee making facilities (TCMF): e.g., tea/coffee sachets, sugar, milk, and biscuits;
- e) Working replacements: e.g., shower curtains, crockery, glassware, vacuum cleaners, and trolleys, etc.;
- f) Cleaning supplies: e.g., air freshener, bleach, and cleaning product; and
- g) Uniforms: e.g., for the room attendants/porters.
- h) It is necessary for the Executive housekeeper to ensure that the supplies and their consumption are monitored. The list of items in the purchasing list can be further classified into:

Consumable: bedroom supplies, cleaning supplies, and TCMF

Assets: uniforms, working replacement, and linen.

(Source: Accommodation Management, edited by Constantinos S. Verginis and Roy C. Wood).

Different policies are maintained for the two distinct groups of purchasing by the Executive Housekeeping. The true usage of the first group (consumable) purchases can be projected according to the occupancy rate of the hotel. Since it is vital to maintain these items in stock, the staff can request their requisitions on a daily weekly basis. So, the Executive Housekeeper has to not only establish the demands, but also, needs to control the use of consumable items as well through the maintenance of detailed invoices and requisitions. The numbers of consumable items are numerous and if the proper monitoring is not carried out, needless to say, it will affect the overall profit statement of the hotel. Now, computers help to carry out this function.

"Assets," while not in the true sense, include things like uniforms and are not consumed on a regular basis, and have no need for a daily replacement. However, the upkeep of the uniform is the duty of the staff and they need to show up immaculately dressed daily. Other items such as vacuum cleaners or crockery are passed out over a given amount of time and are recorded as depreciation. Hotel's linen is hard to manage; since in a large hotel roughly 5,000 dirty linens are sent for cleaning every day. To count and recheck the linen from and to laundry is a very difficult job. Additionally, guests have a tendency to pilfer things like towels from hotels. To keep a check on the linen stock, maintain it and when the need arises restock it becomes a top priority for the housekeeping manager.

Management of Guest Amenities

Every hotel keeps a list of amenities that they make available to their guests in every room. The housekeeping department is the go between that supplies these consumable goods in every room.

Table 3: Specific Amenities

	600 Room Deluxe Class Hotel, City Centre location, Mainly Business Bookings	300 Room Medium Class Hotel, Sub-Urban location, Mainly Group Bookings
Entrance	"Do Not Disturb" card	"Do Not Disturb" card Breakfast menu Fire escape plan
Desk Top	Telephone directory Fire escape plan Typhoon safety regulations IDD booklet Guidebook Breakfast menu Sewing kit Ball pen Food and beverage information	Guest directory Guidebook Tent card promotion Ashtray Match box Folder with standard stationeries
Desk-top Folder	Letter paper/envelopes Telex/Fax forms Thank you and postcards Cable Television guide Blotting paper Limousine service Health spa information	
Closet	Laundry bags and list Dry cleaning bag and list Leather shoehorn Leather clothes brush Shoe shine kit Shoehorn Hangers	Laundry bags and list Shopping bag Wooden hangers
Mini Bar Services	Glasses and ice bucket Bottle opener Water (mineral/distilled) Coasters Mini bar on request	Ice bucket Opener Glasses with coaster Red wine glasses — 2 on request Champagne glasses 304 glasses — 2 306 glasses - 2 Tumbler — 1 Napkins — 2 Stirrers — 2

		Drink voucher Rattan basket with liquor
Bedside Table	Int'l direct - dialing telephone Control panel/switches Radio channels	Int'l direct dialing telephone Control panel/switches Radio channels Phone directory
Sitting Area	Television set Remote control Magazines/Newspapers Flowers	Television set Remote control Magazines/Newspapers Flowers
Bathroom	Bath towels - 2 Hand towels - 2 Face towels - 2 Tissue box and tissues Tumblers with coaster Soap dish with soap Foam bath and shampoo Rubbish bin Sanitary bag Shoe shine mitt Shaving socket Bathrobes Slippers Glass jar and cotton buds Bath salts Bottle opener Vase(bud) Emery board Mild clothes detergent Shower cap Hair dryer	Bath towels - 2 Hand towels - 2 Face towels - 2 Tissue box and tissues Tumblers with coaster Soap dish with soap Foam bath and shampoo Rubbish bin Sanitary bag Shoe shine mitt Shaving socket Plant
Upon Request	Swimming goggles Adaptors/Transformers Heaters Iron (with board) Baby supplies/crib Extension cord Clothes rack Luggage rack Comb Disposable razor Shaving cream	Adaptors Heaters Iron (with board) Baby supplies/crib

(Source: Hotel Management, Sue Baker)

Just giving these amenities is not sufficient. It is the job of the housekeeping department to manage and maintain these goods. The housekeeping staff has to keep a check on the usable items in the rooms to determine their success in terms of profit or loss to the hotel. The hotel needs to come up with a set standard of maintaining the room. A very simple and systematic method of delivering standardised service is to make use of a checklist.

Room Status Codes

Special codes and terminologies are widely used by hotels in enhancing the inter-departmental communications. Room status codes are mainly applied by the housekeeping and front office departments in verbal or in words and can always be seen in reports of rooms' division and computer systems.

One typical example of how these special codes and terminology are used is that when a guest check-out from the front desk and settles his account, the front desk computer system will automatically change the room status to 'Vacant Dirty' or 'VD.' This enables housekeeping staff to make up the room promptly for arriving guests. Once the 'Vacant Dirty' room is made ready for rent, the housekeeping department will notify the M front desk through changing the room status to 'Vacant Clean' ('VC') or 'Inspected Clean' ('I').

Terminologies	Codes	Descriptions
Occupied Clean	OC	The room is occupied and has been cleaned by room attendant
Occupied Dirty	OD	The room is occupied and hasn't been cleaned by room attendant
Vacant Clean /	VC/VR	The room is vacant and has been cleaned by room attendant or ready for sale
Vacant Dirty	VD	The room is vacant and hasn't been cleaned by room attendant
Do Not Disturb	DND	The guest has requested no disturbances

Out of Order	OOO	The room is under maintenance, refurbishment or extensive cleaning
Extra Bed	XB	An extra bed is being used in the guest room
Light Baggage	LB	An occupied room with no large baggage, e.g. trunk
No Baggage	NB	An occupied room with no baggage
No Need Service	NNS	The guest has requested 'no service' for the room
Sleep-out	SO	The guest is supposed to be staying in the room but the bed has no signs of being used
Check-out	CO	The guest has paid the bill and checked out his/
Expected Departure	ED	It is the same as 'due-out' which means the guest would depart prior to the check-out time of the following day
Inspected Clean	1	The room is double checked by the floor supervisor after the cleaning of room attendant
Did Not Check	DNCO	The guest has paid or made payment arrangement but has not completed the check-out processes or informed the front desk while leaving
Late Check-out	/	The guest has requested and is approved to check out later than the standard check-out time

Skipper	/	The guest has not paid and left without informing the front desk
Complimentary	/	The room is occupied for free
Stay-over	/	The guest is not checking out today and will remain at least one more night
Lock-out	/	The occupied room has been locked which disallows the guest to re-enter until he/she comes into contact with hotel staff to clarify his/her status

Table 4 — Room Status Codes and Terminologies